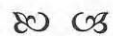


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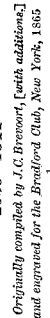
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NARRATIVES *of the career*
of HERNANDO DE SOTO

IN THE
CONQUEST OF FLORIDA *as told by a KNIGHT*
OF ELVAS *and in a Relation by* LUYS HERNAN-
DEZ DE BIEDMA, *Factor of the Expedition*

TRANSLATED BY BUCKINGHAM SMITH
TOGETHER WITH AN ACCOUNT OF

DE SOTO'S EXPEDITION

BASED ON THE DIARY OF
RODRIGO RANJEL, HIS PRIVATE SECRETARY
TRANSLATED FROM OVIEDO'S HISTORIA GENERAL
Y NATURAL DE LAS INDIAS

EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION

By

EDWARD GAYLORD BOURNE
PROFESSOR OF HISTORY IN YALE UNIVERSITY

ILLUSTRATED

VOLUME II

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* Originally published by the Bradford Club, 1866.

RELATION
OF THE
CONQUEST OF FLORIDA
PRESENTED BY
LUYS HERNANDEZ DE BIEDMA
IN THE YEAR 1544
TO THE
KING OF SPAIN IN COUNCIL

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL
DOCUMENT
BY BUCKINGHAM SMITH

ACCOUNT
OF
THE ISLAND OF FLORIDA¹

WE arrived at the port of Baya Honda, where we landed six hundred and twenty men and two hundred and twenty-three horses. As soon as we went on shore we found out, from some Indians taken, that there was a Christian in the country, one of the people who had come into it with Pánfilo de Narvaez, and we started in search of him. He was in the possession of a chief, some eight leagues distant from the harbour. We met him on the way, for the Cacique, hearing that we had left the ships, asked the Christian if it was his desire to go where we were; who answered that it was, and he sent him off with nine Indians. He came naked like them, with a

¹The original text was first published by Buckingham Smith in his *Coleccion de Varios Documentos para la Historia de la Florida y Tierras Adyacentes*. Tomo I. London [1857]. 47-65. (B.)

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bow and some arrows in his hands, his body wrought over like theirs. They who discovered the natives thought they were come to spy out the condition of our people, and dashed after them. The Indians fled towards a little wood near by, but the horsemen coming up with them, one Indian received a thrust from a lance, and the Christian, having nearly forgotten our language, himself would have been slain, had he not remembered to call upon the name of Our Lady, whereby he was recognized. We brought him with great rejoicing before the Governor.

Twelve years had passed since the Christian had come among the Indians. He knew their tongue, and, from the long habit of speaking that only, he was more than four days among us before he could connect an idea without putting to every word of Spanish four or five words of Indian, though he came after a while to recover our speech entirely. His knowledge of the country was so limited that he could tell us of nothing twenty leagues off, neither from having seen it nor by hearsay; however, from first seeing us, he said there was no place at which to find gold.

We left Baya Honda to explore inland, taking with us all the people that had come on shore excepting twenty-six cavalry and

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sixty infantry left in charge of the port until the Governor should be heard from, or should send orders for them to join him. We took our way towards the west, then turned to the northwest, having information of a Cacique named Hurripacuxi, who lived about twenty leagues from the coast, to whom the Indians said they all paid tribute. Thence we went, through swamps and over rivers, fifteen or twenty leagues, to a town which the Indians represented to us as very wonderful, and where the inhabitants, by shouting, caused birds on the wing to drop. On arrival there we found it to be a small town, called Etocale. We got some maize, beans, and little dogs, which were no small relief to people who came perishing with hunger. We remained seven or eight days, and in that time made several forays, to catch Indians for guides to the Province of Apalache, which had great fame wheresoever we went. Three or four men were taken, of whom the best informed knew nothing of the country two leagues in advance. We went on still in the direction of New Spain, keeping some ten or twelve leagues from the coast.

In four or five days' march we passed through several towns, and came to a moderately large one, called Aguacalecuen. The inhabitants were all found to have gone off

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affrighted into the woods. We remained six or seven days, to hunt some Indians for guides, and while engaged in the search we caught ten or twelve women, one of whom was declared to be the daughter of the Cacique. The consequence was, that her father came to us in peace. He promised we should have interpreters and guides; but, as he did not give them, we had to take him along with us. With the intent of wresting him from us, at the close of six or seven days' march there came upon us about three hundred and fifty warriors, with bows and arrows, of whom we killed some and captured the remainder. Among them were Indians who had knowledge of the country farther inland, yet they told us very false stories.

We crossed another river, in a Province called Veachile, and found towns on the farther bank which the inhabitants had left, though we did not fail, in consequence, to find some food in them, which we needed. We set out for another town, named Aguile, which is on the confines of Apalache, a river dividing the one from the other province. Across this stream we made a bridge, by lashing many pines together, upon which we went over with much danger, as there were Indians on the opposite side who disputed our passage; when they found, however, that we had

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landed, they went to the nearest town, called Ivitachuco, and there remained until we came in sight, when as we appeared they set all the place on fire and took to flight.

There are many towns in this Province of Apalache, and it is a land abundant in subsistence. They call all that other country we were travelling through, the Province of Yustaga.

We went to another town, called Iniahico. There it appeared to us to be time we should know of those who remained at the port, and that they should hear from us; for we proposed to travel so far inland that we might not be able to hear of them again. The distance we had now marched from them was one hundred and ten leagues, and the Governor gave orders that they should come to where we then were.

From that town we went to look for the sea, which was about nine leagues off, and we found, on the shore, where Pánfilo de Narvaez had built his boats. We found the spot whereon the forge had stood, and many bones of horses. The Indians told us, through the interpreter, what others like us there had done. Juan de Añasco put signals on some trees standing near the water, because he was commanded to return to the port, and bid the people there come on by the way we had

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marched, while he should sail in the two brigantines and the boat that were left, and we would await his arrival, at the Province of Apalache.

Juan de Añasco sent the people on by land, while he came by sea, as the Governor had ordered, encountering much fatigue and danger; for he could not find the coast he had observed from the land before leaving, discovering no marks whatsoever from the sea, as these were in shallow inlets, that with the rise of tide had water in them, and with the ebb were bare. We made a piragua, which went out every day two leagues to sea, looking for the brigantines, to show them where to stop. I was thankful when the people arrived, not less for those that came by land than those by water.

On the arrival of the brigantines, the Governor directed that they should sail westwardly to discover a harbour, if one were near, whence to ascertain, by exploring the coast, if any thing could be found inland. Francisco Maldonado, a gentleman of Salamanca, had the command. He coasted along the country, and entered all the coves, creeks, and rivers he discovered, until he arrived at a river having a good entrance and harbour, with an Indian town on the seaboard. Some inhabitants approaching to traffic, he took one

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of them, and directly turned back with him to join us. On this voyage he was absent two months, which appeared to us all to be a thousand years, inasmuch as it detained us so long from advancing to what we understood was to be found in the interior.

After Maldonado got back, the Governor told him, that, as we were about to set off in quest of the country which that Indian stated to be on another sea, he must return with the brigantines to Cuba, where the Doña Ysabel de Bobadilla, his wife, remained; and if within six months' time he should hear nothing of us, to come with the brigantines, and run the shore as far as the River Espiritu Santo, to which we should have to resort. The vessels went to the Island, and we took our way again northward, going to seek after what the Indians had told us of.

We marched five days through an uninhabited country, when, coming to a great river, as we could not build a bridge over it, because of the stiffness of the current, we made a piragua. With this we reached the opposite shore, where we found a Province called Acapachiqui, very abundant in the food to which the Indians are accustomed. We saw some towns, and others there were we did not visit, because the country was one of very large swamps. There was a change in the

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habitations, which were now in the earth, like caves: heretofore they were covered with palm-leaves and with grass. We continued on, and came to two other rivers, over which we had to make bridges, in our usual manner, by tying pine-trees together. Arrived at another Province, called Otoa, we found a town rather larger than any we had seen to that time. We went thence to towns of another province, which may be about two days' march distant, where we took some persons not on the look-out, they never having heard of us. The people agreed to come and serve us peacefully for the return of the captives, whom the Governor gave up, keeping only a part as interpreters and guides, for the use of the way.

We were five or six days going through this Province, called Chisi, where we were well supplied by the Indians from their slender stores; and having marched three days more without seeing any large town, we came to the Province of Altapaha. Here we found a river that had a course not southwardly, like the rest we had passed, but eastward to the sea, where the Licentiate, Lucas de Ayllón, had come; whence we gave still more credit to what the Indian said, and we came to believe as true all the stories that he had told us. This province was thickly peopled, and the inhabitants all desired to serve us. The

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Governor inquired of them for that province, Cofitachyque, of which we came in pursuit; they said it was not possible to go thither, there being no road, and on the journey we should famish, there being no food. We went on to other caciques, of the names Ocuti and Cafaquí, who gave us of what they had to eat. They said if we were going to make war on the Lady of Cofitachique, they would give us all we should desire for the way; but we should understand there was no road over which to pass; that they had no intercourse, because of their enmity, except when they made war upon each other, which was carried on through obscure and intricate parts, out of which no one would be expected to issue, and that they were on the journey from twenty to twenty-two days, eating in the time only plants and the parched maize they took with them. Seeing our determination, they gave us eight hundred Indians to carry our loads of clothing and provisions, and also others as guides.

We were taken directly to the eastward, and thus travelled three days. The Indian who deceitfully led us had said, that he would place us whither we were going in that time; and notwithstanding, towards the close, we began to discover his perfidy, the Governor did not desist from the course, but commanded

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that we should husband our provisions as much as possible, since he suspected we should find ourselves—which did actually come to pass—in embarrassment and want. We went on through this wilderness, and at the end of thirteen days arrived at some cottages. The Indians had now become so bewildered, that they knew not in what direction to turn. The road had given out, and the Governor went around to regain it, but, failing to find it, he came back to us desperate. He directed that the people should return some half a league to a great river, and there he began to give out rations of fresh pork from the hogs we drive with us, a pound to each man, which we ate boiled, without salt or other seasoning.

The Governor sent in two directions to find a path, or any mark indicating inhabitants—one person up the river to the north and northeast, and the other down along it to the south and southeast, and he allowed to each ten days in which to go and return. He that went to the south and southeastward came in, after being gone four days, with the news that he had come upon a little town having some provisions. He brought three or four people from it, who, speaking with our perfidious Indian, he understood them. This was no little relief to us, because of the difficulty

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there is everywhere in the country of being understood; and once more the guide repeated the falsehoods he had before told us, which we believed, because we heard him talk the language with those Indians. We directly set out, with all our people, for that little village, to await there the return of those who had gone in other directions to seek for paths. We tarried four or five days, until all had come together. About fifty hanegas of maize were found in the place, and some parched meal; there were many mulberry-trees loaded with fruit, and likewise some other small fruits.

Thence we set out for the town of Cofitachique, two days' journey from the village, seated on the banks of a river, which we believed to be the Santa Elena, where the Licentiate Ayllón had been. Having arrived at the stream, the Lady of this town sent to us her niece, borne in a litter, the Indians showing her much respect, with the message that she was pleased we had arrived in her territory, and that she would give us all she could or might possess. She likewise sent the Governor a necklace of five or six strings of pearls. We were furnished with canoes in which to pass over the river, and the Lady gave us one-half of the town; but after staying three or four days, she suddenly went off into the woods. The Governor caused her to be

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sought, and not finding her, he opened a mosque, in which were interred the bodies of the chief personages of that country. We took from it a quantity of pearls, of the weight of as many as six arrobas and a half, or seven, though they were injured from lying in the earth, and in the adipose substance of the dead. We found buried two wood axes, of Castilian make, a rosary of jet beads, and some false pearls, such as are taken from this country to traffic with the Indians, all of which we supposed they got in exchange, made with those who followed the Licentiate Ayllón. From the information given by the Indians, the sea should be about thirty leagues distant. We knew that the people who came with Ayllón hardly entered the country at all; that they remained continually on the coast, until his sickness and death. In strife for command, they then commenced to kill each other, while others of them died of hunger; for one, whose lot it was to have been among them, told us that of six hundred men who landed, only fifty-seven escaped—a loss caused, to a great extent, by the wreck of a big ship they had brought, laden with stores. Having remained in the town of this Lady some ten or eleven days, it became necessary that we should go thence in quest of a country which might furnish food, as the quantity where we were was

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sufficient only for the necessities of the Indians, and we, our horses and followers, consumed it very fast.

Again we took the direction of the north, and for eight days we travelled through a poor country, scarce of food, until arriving at one called Xuala, where we still found some Indian houses, though a thin population, for the country was broken. Among these ridges we discovered the source of the great river whence we had taken our departure, believed to be the Espiritu Santo. We went on to a town called Guasuli, where the inhabitants gave us a number of dogs, and some maize, of which they had but little. From there we marched four days, and arrived at a town called Chiha, which is very plentiful in food. It is secluded on an island of this river of Espiritu Santo, which, all the way from the place of its rise, forms very large islands. In this province, where we began to find the towns set about with fence, the Indians get a large quantity of oil from walnuts. We were detained twenty-six or twenty-seven days to refresh the horses, which arrived greatly fatigued, having worked hard and eaten little.

We left, following along the banks of the river, and came to another province, called Costehe, the towns of which are likewise on islands in the river, and thence we went to

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Coça, one of the finest countries we discovered in Florida. The Cacique came out in a hurdle to receive us, with great festivity and many people, he having numerous towns subject to him. The next morning we saw all the inhabitants, and having detained the Cacique, that he might give us persons to carry our loads, we tarried some days until we could get them. We found plums like those here in Castile, and great quantities of vines, on which were very good grapes. From this we went to the west and southwest, passing through the towns of the Cacique for five or six days, until we came to another province, called Italisi. The people being gone, we went to look for them. Some Indians came to us, by whom the Governor sent to call the Cacique, who, coming, brought to us a present of twenty-six or twenty-seven women, skins of deer, and whatever else they had.

From this point we went south, drawing towards the coast of New Spain, and passed through several towns, before coming to another province, called Taszaluza, of which an Indian of such size was chief that we all considered him a giant. He awaited us quietly at his town, and on our arrival we made much ado for him, with joust at reeds, and great running of horses, although he appeared to regard it all as small matter. After-

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ward we asked him for Indians to carry our burdens; he answered that he was not accustomed to serving any one, but it was rather for others all to serve *him*. The Governor ordered that he should not be allowed to return to his house, but be kept where he was. This detention among us he felt—whence sprang the ruin that he afterwards wrought us, and it was why he told us that he could there give us nothing, and that we must go to another town of his, called Mavila, where he would bestow on us whatever we might ask. We took up our march in that direction, and came to a river, a copious flood, which we considered to be that which empties into the Bay of Chuse. Here we got news of the manner in which the boats of Narvaez had arrived in want of water, and of a Christian, named Don Teodoro, who had stopped among these Indians, with a negro, and we were shown a dagger that he had worn. We were here two days, making rafts for crossing the river. In this time the Indians killed one of the guard of the Governor, who thereupon, being angry, threatened the Cacique, and told him that he should burn him if he did not give up to him those who had slain the Christian. He replied that he would deliver them to us in that town of his, Mavila. The Cacique had many in attendance. An Indian was always behind him with a fly-

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brush of plumes, so large as to afford his person shelter from the sun.

At nine o'clock, one morning, we arrived at Mavila, a small town very strongly stockaded, situated on a plain. We found the Indians had demolished some habitations about it, to present a clear field. A number of the chiefs came out to receive us as soon as we were in sight, and they asked the Governor, through the interpreter, if he would like to stop on that plain, or preferred to enter the town, and said that in the evening they would give us the Indians to carry burdens. It appeared to our Chief better to go thither with them, and he commanded that all should enter the town, which we did.

Having come within the enclosure, we walked about, talking with the Indians, supposing them to be friendly, there being not over three or four hundred in sight, though full five thousand were in the town, whom we did not see, nor did they show themselves at all. Apparently rejoicing, they began their customary songs and dances; and some fifteen or twenty women having performed before us a little while, for dissimulation, the Cacique got up and withdrew into one of the houses. The Governor sent to tell him that he must come out, to which he answered that he would not; and the Captain of the body-

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guard entered the door to bring him forth, but seeing many Indians present, fully prepared for battle, he thought it best to withdraw and leave him. He reported that the houses were filled with men, ready with bows and arrows, bent on some mischief. The Governor called to an Indian passing by, who also refusing to come, a gentleman near took him by the arm to bring him, when, receiving a push, such as to make him let go his hold, he drew his sword and dealt a stroke in return that cleaved away an arm.

With the blow they all began to shoot arrows at us, some from within the houses, through the many loopholes they had arranged, and some from without. As we were so wholly unprepared, having considered ourselves on a footing of peace, we were obliged, from the great injuries we were sustaining, to flee from the town, leaving behind all that the carriers had brought for us, as they had there set down their burdens. When the Indians saw that we had gone out, they closed the gates, and beating their drums, they raised flags, with great shouting; then, emptying our knapsacks and bundles, showed up above the palisades all we had brought, as much as to say that they had those things in possession. Directly as we retired, we bestrode our horses and completely encircled the town, that none might thence

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anywhere escape. The Governor directed that sixty of us should dismount, and that eighty of the best accoutred should form in four parties, to assail the place on as many sides, and the first of us getting in should set fire to the houses, that no more harm should come to us: so we handed over our horses to other soldiers who were not in armour; that if any of the Indians should come running out of the town they might overtake them.

We entered the town and set it on fire, whereby a number of Indians were burned, and all that we had was consumed, so that there remained not a thing. We fought that day until nightfall, without a single Indian having surrendered to us—they fighting bravely on like lions. We killed them all, either with fire or the sword, or, such of them as came out, with the lance, so that when it was nearly dark there remained only three alive; and these, taking the women that had been brought to dance, placed the twenty in front, who, crossing their hands, made signs to us that we should come for them. The Christians advancing toward the women, these turned aside, and the three men behind them shot their arrows at us, when we killed two of them. The last Indian, not to surrender, climbed a tree that was in the fence, and

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taking the cord from his bow, tied it about his neck, and from a limb hanged himself.

This day the Indians slew more than twenty of our men, and those of us who escaped only hurt were two hundred and fifty, bearing upon our bodies seven hundred and sixty injuries from their shafts. At night we dressed our wounds with the fat of the dead Indians, as there was no medicine left, all that belonged to us having been burned. We tarried twenty-seven or twenty-eight days to take care of ourselves, and God be praised that we were all relieved. The women were divided as servants among those who were suffering most. We learned from the Indians that we were as many as forty leagues from the sea. It was much the desire that the Governor should go to the coast, for we had tidings of the brigantines; but he dared not venture thither, as it was already the middle of November, the season very cold; and he found it necessary to go in quest of a country where subsistence might be had for the winter; here there was none, the region being one of little food.

We resumed our direction to the northward, and travelled ten or twelve days, suffering greatly from the cold and rain, in which we marched afoot, until arriving at a fertile province, plentiful in provisions, where we could stop during the rigour of the season. The

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snows fall more heavily there than they do in Castile. Having reached the Province of Chicaza, the warriors came out to interrupt the passage of a river we had to cross. We were detained by them three days. Finally, we went over in a piragua we built, when the Indians fled to the woods. After seven or eight days, messengers from the Cacique arrived, saying that he and all his people desired to come and serve us. The Governor received the message well, and sent word to him to do so without fail, and that he would present him with many of the things he brought. The Cacique came, having with him a number of persons, who bore him upon their shoulders. He gave us some deer-skins and little dogs. The people returned, and every day Indians came and went, bringing us many hares, and whatever else the country supplied.

In the night-time we captured some Indians, who, on a footing of peace, came to observe how we slept and guarded. We, unaware of the perfidy that was intended, told the Cacique that we desired the next day to continue our march, when he left, and that night fell upon us. As the enemy knew whereabouts our sentinels were set, they got amongst us into the town, without being observed, by twos and fours, more than three hundred men, with

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fire which they brought in little pots, not to be seen. When the sentinels discovered that more were coming in troop, they beat to arms; but this was not done until the others had already set fire to the town. The Indians did us very great injury, killing fifty-seven horses, more than three hundred hogs, and thirteen or fourteen men; and it was a great mysterious providence of God, that, though we were not resisting them, nor giving them any cause to do so, they turned and fled; had they followed us up, not a man of all our number could have escaped. Directly we moved to a cottage about a mile off.

We knew that the Indians had agreed to return upon us that night; but, God be praised, in consequence of a light rain, they did not come; for we were in so bad condition, that, although some horses still remained, we had no saddles, lances, nor targets, all having been consumed. We hastened to make them, the best we could with the means at hand; and at the end of five days, the Indians, coming back upon us with their squadrons in order, attacked us with much concert at three points. As we were prepared, and, moreover, aware of their approach, we met them at the onset, beat them back, and did them some injury; so that, thank God, they returned no more. We remained here perhaps two months, get-

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ting ready what were necessary of saddles, lances, and targets, and then left, taking the direction to the northwest, toward a Province called Alibamo.

At this time befell us what is said never to have occurred in the Indias. In the highway over which we had to pass, without there being either women to protect or provisions to secure, and only to try our valour with theirs, the Indians put up a very strong stockade directly across the road, about three hundred of them standing behind it, resolute to die rather than give back. So soon as they observed our approach, some came out to shoot their arrows, threatening that not one of us should remain alive. When we had surveyed that work, thus defended by men, we supposed they guarded something—provision perhaps—of which we stood greatly in need; for we had calculated to cross a desert of twelve days' journey in its extent, where we could have nothing to eat but what we carried. We alighted, some forty or fifty men, and put ourselves on two sides, arranging that at the sound of the trumpet we should all enter the barricade at one time. We did accordingly, carrying it, although at some cost, losing on our side seven or eight men, and having twenty-five or twenty-six more wounded. We killed some Indians, and took others, from

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whom we learned that they had done this to measure themselves with us, and nothing else. We looked about for food, although at great hazard, that we might begin our journey in the wilderness.

We travelled eight days with great care, in tenderness of the wounded and the sick we carried. One mid-day we came upon a town called Quizquiz, and so suddenly to the inhabitants, that they were without any notice of us, the men being away at work in the maize-fields. We took more than three hundred women, and the few skins and shawls they had in their houses. There we first found a little walnut of the country, which is much better than that here in Spain. The town was near the banks of the River Espiritu Santo. They told us that it was, with many towns about there, tributary to a lord of Pacaha, famed throughout all the land. When the men heard that we had taken their women, they came to us peacefully, requesting the Governor to restore them. He did so, and asked them for canoes in which to pass that great river. These they promised, but never gave; on the contrary, they collected to give us battle, coming in sight of the town where we were; but in the end, not venturing to make an attack, they turned and retired.

We left that place and went to encamp by

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the riverside, to put ourselves in order for crossing. On the other shore we saw numbers of people collected to oppose our landing, who had many canoes. We set about building four large piraguas, each capable of taking sixty or seventy men and five or six horses. We were engaged in the work twenty-seven or twenty-eight days. During this time, the Indians every day, at three o'clock in the afternoon, would get into two hundred and fifty very large canoes they had, well shielded, and come near the shore on which we were; with loud cries they would exhaust their arrows upon us, and then return to the other bank. After they saw that our boats were at the point of readiness for crossing, they all went off, leaving the passage free. We crossed the river in concert, it being nearly a league in width, and nineteen or twenty fathoms deep. We found some good towns on the other side; and once more following up the stream, on the way to that Province of Pacaha, we came first to the province of another lord, called Icasqui, against whom he waged severe war. The Cacique came out peacefully to meet us, saying that he had heard of us for a long time, and that he knew we were men from heaven, whom their arrows could not harm; wherefore, he desired to have no strife, and wished only to serve us. The Governor received him

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very kindly, and permitting no one to enter the town, to avoid doing mischief, we encamped in sight, on a plain, where we lay two days.

On the day of our arrival, the Cacique said that inasmuch as he knew the Governor to be a man from the sky, who must necessarily have to go away, he besought him to leave a sign, of which he might ask support in his wars, and his people call upon for rain, of which their fields had great need, as their children were dying of hunger. The Governor commanded that a very tall cross be made of two pines, and told him to return the next day, when he would give him the sign from heaven for which he asked; but that the Chief must believe nothing could be needed if he had a true faith in the cross. He returned the next day, complaining much because we so long delayed giving him the sign he asked, and he had good-will to serve and follow us. Thereupon he set up a loud wailing because the compliance was not immediate, which caused us all to weep, witnessing such devotion and earnestness in his entreaties. The Governor told him to bring all his people back in the evening, and that we would go with them to his town and take thither the sign he had asked. He came in the afternoon with them, and we went in procession to the town, while they followed us. Arriving there, as it

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is the custom of the Caciques to have near their houses a high hill, made by hand, some having the houses placed thereon, we set up the cross on the summit of a mount, and we all went on bended knees, with great humility, to kiss the foot of that cross. The Indians did the same as they saw us do, nor more nor less; then directly they brought a great quantity of cane, making a fence about it; and we returned that night to our camp.

In the morning, we took up our course for Pacaha, which was by the river upward. We travelled two days, and then discovered the town on a plain, well fenced about, and surrounded by a water-ditch made by hand. Hastening on as fast as possible, we came near and halted, not daring to enter there; but going about on one side and the other, and discovering that many people were escaping, we assailed and entered the town, meeting no opposition. We took only a few people, for nearly all had fled, without, however, being able to carry off the little they possessed. While we yet halted in sight of the town, before venturing to enter it, we saw coming behind us a large body of Indians, whom we supposed to be advancing to the assistance of the place; but going to meet them, we found they were those we had left behind, among whom we had raised the cross, and were fol-

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lowing to lend us their succour, should we need any. We took the Cacique to the town, where he gave the Governor many thanks for the sign we had left him, telling us the rain had fallen heavily in his country the day before, and his people were so glad of it that they wished to follow and not leave us. The Governor put him into the town, and gave him every thing found there, which was great riches for those people—some beads made of sea-snails, the skins of cats and of deer, and a little maize. He returned home with them, much gratified. We remained in this town twenty-seven or twenty-eight days, to discover if we could take a path to the northward, whereby to come out on the South Sea.

Some incursions were made to capture Indians who might give us the information; particularly was one undertaken to the northwest, where we were told there were large settlements, through which we might go. We went in that direction eight days, through a wilderness which had large pondy swamps, where we did not find even trees, and only some wide plains, on which grew a plant so rank and high, that even on horseback we could not break our way through. Finally, we came to some collections of huts, covered with rush sewed together. When the owner of one moves away, he will roll up the entire

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covering, and carry it, the wife taking the frame of poles over which it is stretched; these they take down and put up so readily, that though they should move anew every hour, they conveniently enough carry their house on their backs. We learned from this people that there were some hamlets of the sort about the country, the inhabitants of which employed themselves in finding places for their dwellings wherever many deer were accustomed to range, and a swamp where were many fish; and that when they had frightened the game and the fish from one place, so that they took them there not so easily as at first, they would all move off with their dwellings for some other part, where the animals were not yet shy. This Province, called Caluç, had a people who care little to plant, finding support in meat and fish.

We returned to Pacaha, where the Governor had remained, and found that the Cacique had come in peacefully, living with him in the town. In this time arrived the Cacique from the place behind, at which we had put up the cross. The efforts of these two chiefs, who were enemies, each to place himself on the right hand when the Governor commanded that they should sit at his sides, was a sight worth witnessing.

Finding that there was no way by which

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to march to the other sea, we returned towards the south, and went with the Cacique to where was the cross, and thence took the direction to the southwest, to another Province called Quiquate. This was the largest town we found in Florida, and was on an arm of the Rio Grande. We remained there eight or nine days, to find guides and interpreters, still with the intention of coming out, if possible, on the other sea; for the Indians told us that eleven days' travel thence was a province where they subsisted on certain cattle, and there we could find interpreters for the whole distance to that sea.

We departed with guides for the Province called Coligua, without any road, going at night to the swamps, where we drank from the hand and found abundance of fish. We went over much even country and other of broken hills, coming straight upon the town, as much so as if we had been taken thither by a royal highway, instead of which not a man in all time had passed there before. The land is very plentiful of subsistence, and we found a large quantity of dressed cows' tails, and others already cured. We inquired of the inhabitants for a path in the direction we held, or a town on it, near or far. They could give us no sort of information, only that if we wished to go in the direction where there were

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people, we should have to return upon a west-southwestern course.

We continued to pursue the course chosen by our guides, and went to some scattered settlements called Tatil Coya. Here we found a copious river, which we afterwards discovered empties into the Rio Grande, and we were told that up the stream was a great Province, called Cayas. We went thither, and found it to be a population that, though large, was entirely scattered. It is a very rough country of hills. Several incursions were made; in one of which the Cacique and a large number of people were taken. On asking him about the particulars of the country, he told us that in following up the river we should come upon a fertile Province, called Tula. The Governor, desiring to visit there, to see if it were a place in which he could winter the people, set off with twenty men on horseback, leaving the remainder in the Province at Cayas.

Before coming to the Province of Tula, we passed over some rough hills, and arrived at the town before the inhabitants had any notice of us. In attempting to seize some Indians, they began to yell and show us battle. They wounded of ours that day seven or eight men, and nine or ten horses; and such was their courage, that they came upon us in packs, by eights and tens, like worried dogs. We killed

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some thirty or forty of them. The Governor thought it not well to stay there that night with his small force, and returned on the way we had come, going through a bad passage of the ridge, where it was feared the natives would beset us, to a plain in a vale made by the river. The next day we got back to where the people lay; but there were no Indians of ours, nor could any in the province be found, to speak the language of these we brought.

Orders were given that all should make ready to go to that province. We marched thither at once. The next morning after our arrival, at daybreak, three very large squadrons of Indians came upon us by as many directions: we met them and beat them, doing some injury, so much that they returned upon us no more. In two or three days they sent us messengers of peace, although we did not understand a thing they said, for want of an interpreter. By signs we told them to bring persons in there who could understand the people living back of us; and they brought five or six Indians who understood the interpreters we had. They asked who we were, and of what we were in search. We asked them for some great provinces where there should be much provision (for the cold of winter had begun to threaten us sharply), and they said that on the route we were taking they knew

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of no great town; but they pointed, that if we wished to return to the east and southeast, or go northwest, we should find large towns.

Discovering that we could not prevail against the difficulty, we returned to the southeast, and went to a Province that is called Quipana, at the base of some very steep ridges; whence we journeyed in a direction to the east, and, having crossed those mountains, went down upon some plains, where we found a population suited to our purpose, for there was a town nigh in which was much food, seated by a copious river emptying into the Rio Grande, from whence we came. The Province was called Viranque. We stopped in it to pass the winter. There was so much snow and cold, we thought to have perished. At this town the Christian died whom we had found in the country belonging to the people of Narvaez, and who was our interpreter. We went out thence in the beginning of March, when it appeared to us that the severity of the winter had passed; and we followed down the course of this river, whereon we found other provinces well peopled, having a quantity of food, to a Province called Anicoyanque, which appeared to us to be one of the best we had found in all the country. Here another Cacique, called Guachoyanque,

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came to us in peace. His town is upon the River Grande, and he is in continual war with the other chief with whom we were.

The Governor directly set out for the town of Guachoyanque, and took its Cacique with him. The town was good, well and strongly fenced. It contained little provision, the Indians having carried that off. Here the Governor, having before determined, if he should find the sea, to build brigantines by which to make it known in Cuba that we were alive, whence we might be supplied with some horses and things of which we stood in need, sent a Captain in the direction south, to see if some road could be discovered by which we might go to look for the sea; because, from the account given by the Indians, nothing could be learned of it; and he got back, reporting that he found no road, nor any way by which to pass the great bogs that extend out from the Rio Grande. The Governor, at seeing himself thus surrounded, and nothing coming about according to his expectations, sickened and died. He left us recommending Luis de Moscoso to be our Governor.

Since we could find no way to the sea, we agreed to take our course to the west, on which we might come out by land to Mexico, should we be unable to find any thing, or a place whereon to settle. We travelled seven-

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teen days, until we came to the Province of Chavite, where the Indians made much salt; but we could learn nothing of them concerning the west: thence we went to another province, called Aguacay, and were three days on the way, still going directly westward. After leaving this place, the Indians told us we should see no more settlements unless we went down in a southwest-and-by-south direction, where we should find large towns and food; that in the course we asked about, there were some large sandy wastes, without any people or subsistence whatsoever.

We were obliged to go where the Indians directed us, and went to a Province called Nisione, and to another called Nondacao, and another, Came; and at each remove we went through lands that became more sterile and afforded less subsistence. We continually asked for a province which they told us was large, called Xuacatino. The Cacique of Nondacao gave us an Indian purposely to put us somewhere whence we could never come out: the guide took us over a rough country, and off the road, until he told us at last he did not know where he was leading us; that his master had ordered him to take us where we should die of hunger. We took another guide, who led us to a Province called Hais, where, in seasons, some cattle are wont to

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herd; and as the Indians saw us entering their country, they began to cry out: "Kill the cows—they are coming;" when they sallied and shot their arrows at us, doing us some injury.

We went from this place and came to the Province of Xacatin, which was among some close forests, and was scant of food. Hence the Indians guided us eastward to other small towns, poorly off for food, having said that they would take us where there were other Christians like us, which afterwards proved false; for they could have had no knowledge of any others than ourselves, although, as we made so many turns, it might be in some of them they had observed our passing. We turned to go southward, with the resolution of either reaching New Spain, or dying. We travelled about six days in a direction south and southwest, when we stopped.

Thence we sent ten men, on swift horses, to travel in eight or nine days as far as possible, and see if any town could be found where we might re-supply ourselves with maize, to enable us to pursue our journey. They went as far as they could go, and came upon some poor people without houses, having wretched huts, into which they withdrew; and they neither planted nor gathered any thing, but lived entirely upon flesh and fish. Three or

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four of them, whose tongue no one we could find understood, were brought back. Reflecting that we had lost our interpreter, that we found nothing to eat, that the maize we brought upon our backs was failing, and it seemed impossible that so many people should be able to cross a country so poor, we determined to return to the town where the Governor Soto died, as it appeared to us there was convenience for building vessels with which we might leave the country.

We returned by the same road we had taken, until we came to the town; but we did not discover so good outfit as we had thought to find. There were no provisions in the town, the Indians having taken them away, so we had to seek another town, where we might pass the winter and build the vessels. I thank God that we found two towns very much to our purpose, standing upon the Rio Grande, and which were fenced around, having also a large quantity of maize. Here we stopped, and with great labour built seven brigantines, which were finished at about the end of six months. We threw them out into the water, and it was a mystery that, calked as they were with the bark of mulberry-trees, and without any pitch, we should find them stanch and very safe. Going down the river, we took with us also some canoes, into which

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were put twenty-six horses, for the event of finding any large town on the shore of the sea that could sustain us with food, while we might send thence a couple of brigantines to the Viceroy of New Spain, with a message to provide us with vessels in which we could get away from the country.

The second day, descending the stream, there came out against us about forty or fifty very large and swift canoes, in some of which were as many as eighty warriors, who assailed us with their arrows, following and shooting at us. Some who were in the vessels thought it trifling not to attack them; so, taking four or five of the small canoes we brought along, they went after them. The Indians, seeing this, surrounded them, so that they could not get away, and upset the canoes, whereby twelve very worthy men were drowned, beyond the reach of our succour, because of the great power of the stream, and the oars in the vessels being few.

The Indians were encouraged by this success to follow us to the sea, which we were nineteen days in reaching, doing us much damage and wounding many people; for, as they found we had no arms that could reach them from a distance, not an arquebuse nor a crossbow having remained, but only some swords and targets, they lost their fears, and

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would draw very nigh to let drive at us with their arrows.

We came out by the mouth of the river, and entering into a very large bay made by it, which was so extensive that we passed along it three days and three nights, with fair weather, in all the time not seeing land, so that it appeared to us we were at sea, although we found the water still so fresh that it could well be drunk, like that of the river. Some small islets were seen westward, to which we went: thenceforward we kept close along the coast, where we took shell-fish, and looked for other things to eat, until we entered the River of Pánuco, where we came and were well received by the Christians.

LUYS HERNANDEZ DE BIEDMA.