MY VOYAGE AROUND THE WORLD
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BY FRANCESCO CARLETTI
A 16TH CENTURY FLORENTINE MERCHANT

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN
BY HERBERT WEINSTOCK

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Francesco Carletti, trader, voyager, and chronicler, was born at Florence about 1573 and died there in 1636. When eighteen, he was sent to Seville to learn the intricacies of international maritime trade. With his father, he set out from Spain in 1594 on what was intended to be a relatively brief slave-trading voyage but lengthened out into a circumnavigation of the globe. Had all gone well eight years later with the last lap (from Goa around the Cape of Good Hope to Lisbon) of this remarkable journey, Carletti would have returned to Florence in the summer of 1602 as a rich man. But misfortune in the shape of Dutch ships and a disastrous sea battle befell him off the island of Saint Helena. And by the time he finally saw Florence again in July 1606 after some years of almost fruitless litigation in the Low Countries and a brief visit to the court of Henry IV at Paris, he had lost most of the wealth he had garnered by astute trading. As a native Florentine who had seen many wonders in the islands off West Africa, in both Americas (Panamá, Peru, and Mexico), in the Philippine Islands, Japan, Macao (where his father died), Malacca, and Goa—and who was extremely articulate about them—he was
highly welcome at the court of Ferdinando de' Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany, who was nursing plans to make the port of Livorno (Leghorn) an important depot of international—and particularly Oriental—trade. To the Grand Duke, Carletti first made the verbal reports of his experiences which later were written down as the *Ragionamenti* (Chronicles) here translated.

Most of what is known about Francesco Carletti appears in his own Chronicles. Additionally, his name appears in the Medici archives—he served as a court official under Cosimo II after the death of Ferdinando in 1609. Also, some legal documents bearing his signature, including his last will and testament, survive. The original manuscript of his *Ragionamenti*, however, is lost. A much-polished and heavily edited version of it was published in 1701; several later Italian editions have followed. Recent Italian scholars and students of Carletti generally have agreed, however, that a manuscript copy of the *Ragionamenti* in the Biblioteca Angelica at Rome is closer to the lost original than the 1701 edition or the later versions derived from it. The present translation is of that Roman text, Codice 1331 (T.3.22).

Carletti speaks so clearly and firmly for himself that an editor or translator has little need or excuse to speak for him. He was first and always a trader in pursuit of profit. By nature he was a keen and realistic observer. In his Chronicles he romanticized nothing, but reported most engagingly what he had seen and heard. He was one of the earliest men to circumnavigate the globe as a passenger in several ships rather than as chartering or commanding a ship of his own. He was not able to see more of China than Macao; the Chinese section of the Chronicles is unique as an instance of his setting forth materials absorbed from books and hearsay rather than from personal observation and experience. Of Japanese life, on the other hand, he saw a great deal with his own fascinated eyes, and his reporting of it is vivid, a somewhat shocking close-up not long before the islands were shut tight against all outsiders for centuries.

A cross-section of the world as it lived, looked, ate, worked, made love and war, and did business more than three centuries and a half ago is the gist of Carletti's pages. We do not doubt the accuracy of what this Florentine trader tells us. His Chronicles inspire confidence, so that, reading them, one says to oneself: "How fascinating. So that is the way it was."

HERBERT WEINSTOCK
FIRST CHRONICLE OF THE WEST INDIES

Contains the departure of the aforementioned Carletti from Florence for Spain and from there to the Cape Verde Islands, and some earlier events

The fact, Most Serene Prince, that I lost, along with my worldly goods, all my writings and memoranda about the voyages I made while going around the world will explain why I shall not be able to recount to Your Highness in minute detail all the particulars of what I had seen and observed and had noted in the abovementioned writings. Nothing of them remains to me but a few memories, and they afflicted by the miseries I underwent. I shall try to the best of my ability to go over them again and to remember only those things which I did and saw in my abovementioned voyages and all the things that befell me until I was back in this city of Florence in Your Serene Highness’s presence on this day, July 12, 1606.

To begin with, Most Serene Prince, I say that in the year of our Redemption 1591, on May 20, being eighteen years of age, I left this city of Florence to go to Spain in company with and in the service of Nicolò Parenti, a Florentine merchant with whom I embarked at Leghorn on the galleon of Pietro Paolo Vassallo, a Genoese, which, after twenty days of happy sailing, reached Alicante. From that place we proceeded overland to Seville, a city in the province of Andalusia,
where the aforesaid Parenti was to make his home, and where, by my father's orders, I was to remain in his service in order to learn from him the profession of merchant. Afterwards, I having been there until the year 1593, my abovementioned father, Antonio Carletti, arrived from Florence at the city of Seville, where, in order to increase his wealth, he took thought and decided to send me on the voyage to Cape Verde—that is, to the islands otherwise called Hesperides—with the aim of buying black slaves in order to take them to the West Indies and sell them there.

When, following thereafter, I had been able to put in order everything needed for such travel and commerce, and was ready to leave, so many difficulties arose that my father himself decided to go along on the voyage, which at first he had decided that I was to make alone. And because voyages and navigation in the Indies could not be made by men not subjects of the Spanish nation itself, we as Italians and foreigners fell under the shadow of losing all the possessions we had put into that commerce if they ever should become known as being ours. In order to remedy this difficulty, my father ordered that everything be negotiated under the name of a third person, the wife of Cesare Baroncini of the Pisan nation, who had married in Seville. And she gave me a proxy and full authority to administer this commerce as her agent. Then, at a secret meeting, another document setting forth the truth of this situation was prepared.

So as to carry out this voyage, we rented a small ship of little more than four hundred tons burden entirely for ourselves. Aboard it, after receiving sailing orders from the office in charge of dealings with the Indies, which is located in Seville, I embarked according to its custom. And my father also embarked, but secretly, he having no license allowing him to pass over to the Indies. I noted and set down the number of

the other sailors. And at the beginning of the year 1594, on January 8, after officers of the King first had made their visitation and had checked the persons embarking on the ship, we left the port of Sanlúcar de Barrameda, located at the mouth of the Baetis River, commonly called the Guadalquivir (meaning "big river" in the Moorish tongue). And from there, having unfurled our sails to the wind, we directed our way, alone and without any convoy, toward the abovementioned Cape Verde Islands.

First we saw the Fortunate Islands, called the Canaries, which are seven, called Lanzarote, Fuerteventura, Gomera, Hierro, Gran Canaria, Tenerife, and La Palma. All of them are inhabited and all belong to Spain and are very fertile in vines and cattle. We also approached the mainland of Africa at Cape Blanco, where we stopped for three hours and caught at a depth of six or seven "seaman's arms" some good, fat, rose-colored fish known as pagros by the Spaniards. And then, continuing our voyage, after nineteen days of happy navigation we reached the aforementioned Cape Verde Islands and made port at one of them called São Tiago, which is situated in among the others, which altogether are six—that is, the one called Sal, which is seen first, and then that of Boa Vista near the island called Maio, and that of Fogo, with Viana not very far away. Four others, grouped together, are located between the seventeenth and eighteenth degrees north of the Equator, and they are called São Antão, São Vicente, São Nicolão, and Santa Luzia.

But the island of São Tiago, where we landed, lies sixteen degrees distant from the equinoctial line toward the north, about fifteen hundred miles distant from Spain and three hundred miles from the terra firma of Cape Verde on the continent of Africa. On that island there is a little city called Nome de Deus, which has a not very large harbor facing toward the
south. It has its bishop and inhabitants numbering about fifty houses of married Portuguese men, some with white women from Portugal, some with black women from Africa, and others with mulatto women born there of white men and Moorish (or black, as we should say) women. Their Portuguese men love these black women more than their own Portuguese women, holding it as a certain and proved fact that to have commerce with them is much less harmful and also a much greater pleasure, they being said to have fresher and healthier natures. For it happens that in this climate, persons from Europe cannot keep themselves in good health for an hour, so that the Portuguese men and women always appear to be staggering through the streets at each step, and have a color so pallid or, to say it better, so yellow that they seem more dead than alive, and particularly during the period of the rains, which there last four months on end, starting at the beginning of May and lasting through all of August. During that period, the Portuguese abandon the city and go to live in the country and on the highest part of the island, in certain of their villas, in order to enjoy the coolness of the air and the palms, which are cultivated, and which bear those fruits, as large as a man’s head, which they call cocos, but which commonly are known as Indian nuts. They also enjoy the freshness of another plant, which has very green leaves, so large that a person can be in the shade under them, and which produces a certain sort of fruit one hand’s-breadth long and sometimes less, which they call badanas, fat as citriolos and having smooth skin, they being peeled like our domestic figs, but being much fatter and more solid. And one eats what is inside, and it is of a flavor sweet and pleasing to the tooth, almost like a very ripe melon, but dried and without juice. They also eat these roasted and cooked in embers, like pears, and then they put a little white wine on them, and it is a thing very welcome and delightful to

the taste. When this fruit is green, it is roasted, the peeling having been removed first, and whereas it would be impossible to eat them raw because of their tartness, they become so good when cooked that they are served in place of bread. Finally, with these fruits they make and can make various dishes, as the Castilians do in the West Indies, who call them plantanos, whereas the Portuguese in the East Indies know them as figos, there being an infinity of varieties, some of them so small as to be eaten in a single mouthful.

During the rainy season, much fishing is done for various kinds of fish, of which an abundant quantity is found in that sea. But it is necessary, once a fish is taken, either to salt it or to eat it, it being impossible to preserve it out of the water for an hour because of the intemperateness and heat of that air. And it must be advised all the more that fish taken at night not be left for moonlight to fall on them, as then they suddenly become infected in such a way that they no longer are good for anything except to be given to the black slaves, who eat them as gladly as we eat a fresh one, they being more savory to the taste, which is what they seek, and that is what they do with all other putrid and rotten things, even if they find them in the middle of the streets and in the filthiest places. But in fact all those spoiled things give them many diseases; and for that reason one tries to prevent their eating them.

Further, they divert themselves by hunting various animals. In particular they catch many of those hens which they call Guinea hens and we call pheasant hens, no less good than beautiful, being entirely covered with white spots spread over their black plumage, round in shape, which are very attractive as one sees them and are delectable to the taste. But above all there are in those islands great quantities of goat’s meat, particularly on the island that is called Fogo because of a volcano from which flames constantly escape. There they salt much
of it, and vessels come from Portugal and the Canary and Madeira islands which they call caravels, bearing supplies of farina and wine and vegetables and dried fruits with which the men buy the salted goat's meat from the inhabitants of that island and take it to the inhabitants of the island of São Tomé, located below the Equator, and also to Brazil and to other parts of America. Also on all those islands live lots of cats, those from which they make civet.* To these they feed cooked fish at little cost rather than meat, and thus extract the civet, which is very good.

Similarly, an infinite number is found there of those apes which we call mandrill cats and which have long tails, the Portuguese in that place calling them bugios. They are taught to dance and to perform buffooneries. I have seen some of them learn to stay on a corner of the table at which people eat, each with a candle in its hand, giving light to the people eating and showing a certain extraordinary shrewdness in not letting drops fall on the table and in not making any other mistake. And very often, the candle having burned down and begun to singe them, they pass it from one hand to the other in order not to become cooked, all this before they let it fall, and they would not have dropped it even then if not forced to by being unable to bear any more, and doing it finally with a shaking of the head and clacking of the teeth as if they wanted to explain the cause for having dropped it, and their having had the skill not to let it fall on the table. They do the same with their slaves, who, entirely naked, stand at the head and foot of their table with candles in hand while the masters eat and talk, thus serving as candelabra and valued no less than if they were of silver.

* Translator's note. Civet is a thick yellow matter with a strong odor which is taken from a pouch near the genitalia of civet cats (Viverra or Civetticis) and used in the making of musky perfumes.

But, to return to the discussion of the married men, that is, of the Portuguese who live in those islands, it is a certain thing that they place more value upon a Moorish woman of that region than on a white woman from Portugal. And it seems, in a certain way, that that sky disposes and wishes that they should appreciate more those who are native to the place than those who are foreign to it, as one sees by sure experience that those who do not have native women as wives quickly arrange to have them as concubines. And in the end, overcome by affection, they marry them and live with them much more contentedly than they would with women of their own nation. But it also is true that one finds there Moorish women who in value, in judgment, and in features and disposition of their body and order in their members—their color excepted—much surpass our European women. And in this I confess to being deceived also, because some of them seemed to me very beautiful, and that black covering did not annoy me at all, and thus one becomes like the others, who see nothing else from day to day, and with such frequency it does not appear so strange. And all those who live throughout Africa, Cape Verde, the Congo, and Angola are good witnesses, and especially the men of this island, on which many other merchants and travelers live who do business in that company. And they all recognize obedience to their governor, who is sent there from Portugal, that region having been subjected to acquisition by that crown. And there, and in all the other islands, live only Portuguese, Moors, and mulattos born of a Moorish mother and a Portuguese father or other white man.

Additionally, there is a large number of Moorish slaves, among whom there still are freedmen who act as merchants. And among them are priests, clergy ordained to administer all the Most Holy Sacraments. They maintain themselves there, as also does their bishop, who is Portuguese, by buying and
selling the abovementioned Moorish slaves, who are brought there by Portuguese merchants. And they come from Africa, Cape Verde, and Los Ríos, which is the same as saying from the rivers, which along those African coasts are navigable the year round. By way of commerce they capture very great, innumerable quantities of Moors, whom they then trade for various sorts of merchandise, in particular cloths made from the cotton that grows on those islands.

With which merchandise, and also with much white wine that is brought from the Canary and Madeira islands, they travel by those rivers and harbors, entering and then emerging from the land by means of certain of their barks like frigates, which go both by sail and by oars. And in all those parts there are establishments of Portuguese who acquire by barter the abovementioned slaves and merchandise, which they then exchange with the men of the region for other slaves taken in warfare or stolen among them. And thus they are transported from hand to hand on the abovementioned island of São Tiago, to be sold to those who come thither from Spain with their ships to buy them with moneys of account and to transport them to the West Indies under license of the King of Spain. Whereas our way is to carry part of our fortune in gold doubloons and part in credits made out by Lisbon merchants, for which they give us letters of exchange upon them, the men of the island give slaves instead.

But to speak further of the royal licenses, Your Most Serene Highness must know that one cannot capture Moors, or say blacks, of Africa or any other region of Guinea in order to transport them to the Spaniards' places unless one first has purchased licenses from the Royal Chamber or from those who have them under lease or have been presented with them by the King. These licenses are of two kinds. The first is known as "of liberty," the other as "of the fourth." We bought eighty of the former sort at twenty-five scudos each in money of account. And by each of those licenses we had the right to remove one slave from Cape Verde—that is, from that island—and to transport the slave freely, without paying any other fee to the Crown of Castile except for a few tiny payments in India. But this did not absolve us from paying the fee owed for those slaves to the commercial contractors dependent from the Crown of Portugal, which is paid on the abovementioned island of Cape Verde—sixteen scudos for each slave removed from the place. And if the licenses are of that other sort, called "of the fourth," which cost less by half than those "of liberty," then one must, after reaching India, give the King as a customs duty a fourth part of the slaves that one brings there. But should one be carrying more licenses of either sort than one has slaves, then the licenses can be resold. And if, on the contrary, one has fewer licenses than slaves, one instantly loses all the slaves in excess of licenses—this by confiscation, without any remission.

This is as much as occurs to my memory to tell Your Most Serene Highness about this affair today. Tomorrow, if it so please you, I shall relate to you the manner and way we negotiated on the aforesaid island of Cape Verde and of the way one buys the abovementioned slaves, and of our departure with them and up to our arrival at the city of Cartagena in the Indies.
SECOND CHRONICLE OF THE WEST INDIES

Deals with the method of buying Moorish slaves in the Cape Verde Islands and of transporting them to the abovementioned Indies, to the city of Cartagena.

Yesterday, Most Serene Prince, I promised Your Serene Highness to tell you of the method of doing business that we used on the island of Cape Verde. Having gone ashore there, we rented a house and began to let it be known that we wanted to buy slaves. As a result, the Portuguese, who kept them like herds of animals at their villas in the country, ordered them brought to the city so that we might see them. Having seen some of them and asked the prices, we discovered that we would not be in a way of making so large a profit as we had figured out with pen in hand in Spain. That occurred because many more slaves than usual were being demanded owing to the number of ships that had been arriving there, all of them wanting to take on slaves for the Indies. That caused such a rise in prices that whereas a slave ordinarily was sold for fifty scudos, or at most sixty, we had to buy them at one hundred scudos each, and then blessed those who had them to send, our provocation being the great saying, “Either drink or drown.”

At that price, we bought seventy-five, two thirds of them males and the other third females, old and young, tall and short, all mixed together—as is the custom in that country—in a herd such as that from which, in our country, we buy a bunch of swine, with all those precautions and circumstances of seeing that they are healthy and well set up and without personal defects. Then each owner makes a mark on each slave—or, to say it more accurately, marks each of them with his mark, which is made of silver and is heated in the flame of a tallow candle. The tallow is used to anoint the burned place and the mark, which is placed on the chest or on an arm or on the back so that the slave can be recognized. This thing, which I remember having done under orders from a superior, causes me some sadness and confusion of conscience because truly, Most Serene Lord, it seems to me an inhuman traffic unworthy of a professed and pious Christian. No doubt is possible that it comes to making a profit out of men or, to say it more properly, out of human flesh and blood. And it is the more shameful if they have been baptized, for then, even if they are different in color and in the matter of worldly fortune, nevertheless they have the same souls, formed by the same Maker who formed ours. I beg forgiveness from His Divine Majesty, though I know that because He is aware of my intentions and my will as always feeling that business to be repugnant, such forgiveness is not required. But be it known to everyone and sworn to Your Most Serene Highness that this business never pleases me. Well, be that as it may, we carried it out and also, perhaps because of it, we made penance, as you will learn at the end of the second Account of these voyages and chronicles, which I shall be addressing to Your Serene Highness as telling everything that befell us.

But to return to the business in slaves. I say that when we had the abovementioned seventy-five male and female Moors at the price of one hundred scudos each of first cost, some of them came, with all the expenses, to cost more than one hun-
dred and seventy scudos, this including twenty-five scudos each for the royal license, sixteen scudos each for the right to leave the island of Cape Verde, twenty-one scudos each carrying cost from there to Cartageña of the Indies, and also the cost of food and of other small expenses. Further, the deaths of some of them increased the cost of this business even more.

I was in charge of these slaves, and I ordered that one Moor be the head of each ten of them, selecting from among them one who seemed to me more high-spirited and intelligent, so that he might take care of what I would provide for their needs, food in particular. This was given to them twice each day, being a certain sort of fat beans that grow there, which they cook simply with water and then flavor with a little oil and salt. And thus, until such time as they should be embarked, they were kept entirely separated in two rooms, the men in one and the women in the other, naked and without clothing, their being content with the skin that Nature had given them and hiding only—by means of a small piece of leather or other skin or rag or tree-leaves—that part of the body which Original Sin has made seem more shameful than the other parts. But many of them, males and, in particular, females, did not take that trouble, whether out of necessity or from simplicity or stupidity, but left themselves as Nature had made them, being unaware of the shame for which others cover those parts.

But many of the males showed a certain delicacy of their own, tying up the member with a ribbon or other grassy threads and pulling it back between their thighs, thus concealing it so that one could not tell whether they were males or females. And others covered it by putting it into the horn of some animal or into a seashell. Still others so filled it with rings of bone or of woven grass that it was both covered and decorated. And others painted it or, to say it better, daubed it with some mixture so as to make it red or yellow or green. In those ways and more, they tried to cover up those parts which others of them, without further ceremony, simply left uncovered.

But, going back to speak of the care that I took of our slaves, I did that service only a short time, having been prevented by a very high fever that seized upon me. It was caused by unusual fatigue or, more likely, by the different and pestiferous air of that climate, or to say it better, by the inclement weather of that country, new to me, who had not yet experienced or felt the strange effects of the Torrid Zone. Those effects of excessive heat are noxious for foreigners, though they are most temperate and healthful for people born there, as is true in all countries. That fever sent me to bed in such a way that if the embarking time had not come while I still was sick, I have no doubt that I would have been laid to rest in that earth in which I left a large part of my blood, this having been the first time that my veins were tapped seven days in succession, though even that did not cure me. But when the time for embarking for the Indies with the slaves came round, I went on board sick as I was, the Moorish slaves having been put in the care of two Portuguese men.

The slaves were placed on the aforesaid ship hired by us, the males being accommodated on it belowdecks, packed next to one another in such a narrow space that when they wanted to turn from one side to the other they scarcely could do so. The females were in the open all over the ship, having stowed themselves as well as they could. Once each day we gave them all as much as they wanted to eat, the food being a certain millet of those countries cooked in water and flavored with oil and salt. In the morning, for breakfast, each of them was given a handful of certain seeds resembling anise in its unripe state, but not having its flavor. Something to drink followed
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after they had eaten at noon. Then they drank as much as they could without having to draw a breath. And then, in the evening, if something was given to one of them, he ate it with his comrades, there being ten slaves in each group.

Thus, after having put on board everything that we would need for such a voyage, we left the island of São Tiago on April 19 of that year, 1594, sailing with another ship also loaded with black slaves. We directed our prow toward the west, sailing almost always at the same height of fourteen or fifteen degrees toward the north from the Equator. We plowed through that oceanic space, three thousand miles, happily in thirty days. Then we reached Cartagena, a city of the Indies situated on the coast of what we call terra firma, distant from the equinoctial line by between ten and eleven degrees north. It has a most beautiful harbor. First we had seen the islands that the Spaniards call the Antilles, which occur before one reaches terra firma and are separated and spread out across that ocean by Nature in such order and quantity that they appear to be bulwarks and shelters of the incomprehensible riches and treasures that have been hidden from us for so many centuries in all that new world.

We had nonetheless run great peril of becoming lost, because the ship traveling with us, by inadvertence or stupidity of the sailor in charge of the helm at that hour, had struck our little ship while proceeding during the night with all sails unfurled. And, as it was much larger and heavier, it had come close to sending our ship to the bottom. But from that God saved us in His mercy, even though the shock of the collision broke in one side of our little ship's superstructure and carried away the sail and the lattic yard known as a lepadera. But I, who up to that day had been afflicted by the fever—which, though reduced by a fourth, never had left me—was freed of it at that hour. I believe that this was a result of the

great agitation and terror over such an event, which truly was strange. For our little ship was lightly loaded and it gave way in such a manner to the force of the other ship's striking it that it seemed to want to keel over on its side. But that giving way was helpful to our little ship, as otherwise it would have been sunk and everything would have been smashed.

During the rest of that voyage, as I have said, the navigation was peaceful. But it was disgusting to see one's own slaves thrown into the sea each day, it happening that many died of a flux of the blood caused by their eating badly cooked or almost raw certain fish that we caught in incredible quantities throughout that voyage until we reached the islands called the Antilles. That great catch, though in one sense it caused us that damage, nonetheless was of the greatest help to living and also in supplying entertainment by the ease with which we fished at our posts. It was as if we held the fish enclosed in a pond day and night, and at night we used a harpoon while the ship proceeded and the fish following it glistened in the water, and the sailors, almost like Neptunes posted with tridents in hand on one side of the ship while others were on the lateen yards of the masts, transfixed them—which they also did by day. They were caught with great ease on a large hook suspended on a reinforced cord, around which two pieces of twisted linen cloth were tied like two wings. And this was done to make the hooks resemble certain fish a palm or so long which are called flying fish because they remain above the water on their wings in the manner of the cartilages of bats.

These flying fish, trying to save themselves, rise up in schools, emerging from the water in great numbers, and each time fly forty or fifty paces, but skimming the water, and then plunge in again. And very often while they are trying to escape death by remaining out of the water, they are captured by birds flying through the air. Behind these fish, swimming furi-
ously between the two waters, go the abovementioned large fish. We caught them without other bait, merely by throwing onto the water the abovementioned hook, which resembles that repose which, so as to rest, the flying fish take. There, in order to swallow the hooks, the large fish came open-mouthed, and thus were deceived and caught by our hooks, which were tossed out in great numbers by whoever wanted to fish. And all this was accomplished while the ship moved onward swiftly. And we caught three hundred or four hundred or whatever quantity we wanted each day, mostly in the morning or in the evening, when the big fish went after the flying fish hungrily.

And such destruction was wrought among them that, for amusement, many threw them back into the sea, marking them in some way so as to be able to recognize them; and often were able to catch them again. Those fish weigh thirty and forty pounds each and are called dorados by the Spaniards. They are the best, and they are fish with scales and of the color of gold, of squashed appearance, being much longer than they are fat, and they swim edgewise very swiftly. The other fish are of two sorts, very similar to tunas, round in shape and without scales or any bones other than a backbone. The best and largest of these are called albacoras, the others bonitos: these are not very healthful because they are very bloody fish and eating them causes itching and a flux of the blood. They all are of varieties that never approach land but always seek out the vast, profound, warm sea between one Tropic and the other, swimming in schools so large that many times, finding oneself among them, one sees nothing but the sky full of those which fly and the sea full of fish. These fish, once they have recognized the ship, go along with it no matter how fast it may be going, the great speed seeming better to them for a time. Also, they are great enemies of calms and

still weather, and by natural instinct always look for wind and never abandon the ship until they sense the odor of the land. Thus their leaving and falling behind also is certain notice and indication to the pilots that land is near by or, it may be, that the wind is going to die down.

These fish take the wind from behind, like ships but unlike the fish called dolphins, which always swim to meet it with their piglike muzzles out of the water, almost as if playing with the wind. The sailors say that these fish gladly follow any ship that they encounter at sea, believing it to be some huge fish which, once it has appeared, they can use as a defense against other fish larger than themselves which are trying to eat them. They swim about the ship, first on one side and then on the other, thus using it as a protection. And how close this may be to the truth I do not know, but I often have seen a school of sardines save itself from other fish by swimming around a ship all together.

But be that as it may, it now is time, with Your Serene Highness's good permission, to put an end to the chronicle told today. Tomorrow, if you do not order me to the contrary, I shall come to recount to you the way we proceeded to debark with the slaves in the abovementioned city of Cartagena and of our selling them and of our departure from that place and of all other happenings up to our arrival—by way of the city called Nombre de Dios—at the city called Panamá, which is located on the shores of the Sea of the South, also called Pacific.
In yesterday’s chronicle I left untold to Your Serene Highness the method of our debarking in Cartagena and of what occurred there. In that place, having cast anchor in the harbor, we debarked at once, my father secretly, and I, as the person named as agent of the business, there awaited the inspectors of arriving ships, as is the custom of that region. They, after having made the examination and having learned that we came from Cape Verde with Moorish slaves, ordered that I be taken from the ship, led ashore, and placed in prison. In the Spaniards’ way of creating difficulties—at which, so as to extract money, they are good inventors—they accused me of having carried many slaves without His Majesty’s license. I remained in that prison no longer than three days because of letters that we got there which the ships in a fleet arriving from Spain had brought. These letters had been written by the Most Excellent Don Pietro Medici to the governor of the city, who at that time was Don Pedro Bravo de Acuña, a knight of the Cloak of Saint John of Malta.

Once those letters had been presented to His Excellency, he at once ordered that I leave the prison, in which I had been held though blameless, as I had twelve more licenses than were necessary for the Moors—that is, five left over from the eighty that had been bought, seeing that at Cape Verde we had not loaded or removed from the island more than seventy-five slaves, and the other seven licenses representing Moors who had died on the way. And we debarked only sixty-eight who had remained alive. But many of them arrived badly treated, sick, and half dead. We tried to restore them, not so much out of charity, it must be said, as not to lose their value and price, and even though the supplies for maintaining them were in very short supply there, where we found at the time nothing but a little cazzare, a food as poor as it is displeasing to the taste, being among the worst of all the things eaten throughout those Indies.

This cazzare is brought thither from the Spanish island called Santo Domingo, and is made from certain roots of which the juice is said to be poisonous. But they are prepared by being cooked, and then they become health-giving. And those same roots being ground like sugar cane, the mass of pulp is boiled and made into cakes or buns as large as desired, but only one finger thick. And they try to dry them out very well with fire, and then they eat them instead of bread. But one must be warned to have something pleasant and ready to drink near by, as this substance is so dry and gritty that it always seems to cling to the throat as if to choke one. But our slaves were given their portions softened in veal broth, in which it broke apart like a farina or polenta, and that way it was good.

We restored and maintained those slaves, but the weather and the season were not very favorable. In that climate it then was the rainy season, the rains being very unhealthful, *Translator’s note. Cassava—probably, more specifically, bread made from the root of the manioc or bitter cassava.*
though delightful for the tempering effect that they have on the air's excessive heat, which is hottest at that time because the sun is closer and strikes its rays down in a perpendicular line, so that at noon one has not a particle of shadow, all of which disappears under the feet.

Divine Providence and the reasonable order of Nature, as otherwise it would be impossible to live in those countries. And if things were not thus, that would bear out those ancient philosophers who said that the Torrid Zone is burned by excessive heat and lacks every good, and therefore is uninhabitable. On the contrary, it is very highly populated and overflowing with every and whatever thing is essential to living. And it abounds in waters from rain and snow and in huge rivers and in fresh pastures that are green the year round, and in forests, with trees of innumerable kinds and incredible, unthought-of size which differ from ours in every way, always being in green leaf the whole year through. Nor are fruit-bearing trees lacking to produce constantly either flowers or fruits at all seasons. For either summer or spring reigns there always, never winter or any other cruel season.

From those trees—that is, the largest ones—they make boats all of one piece, which the Indians called canoee, each of which carries twelve or fifteen casks of wine.

Returning to talk about the region, that was the first time that I, finding myself midway between the equinoctial line and the sun, came—when it was in the Tropic of Cancer—to make a shadow toward that part which we call noon,* unlike those who live outside that Tropic, in our hemisphere, who always cast shadows toward the tramontana.†

*Translator's note. Mezzogiorno in Italian, like midi in French—both are common words for midday or noon—is used to mean south.
†Translator's note. The Italian word tramontana—literally, "beyond the mountains"—originally implied "beyond the Alps"; that is, from the Italian point of view, north.

Further, the Indians of that region are very few, it happening that the land is not well inhabited, the larger part of it being deserted because of the great forests and the fevers that are there. Nor is it inhabited more numerously by Castilian Spaniards, the city being small and not yet walled, though in my time they were contriving to erect the walls. And it serves only as a port of call for the ships of the fleet which come from Spain on the way to Nombre de Dios, which therefore is called "The Port," whither they go to unload the merchandise to be sent on to the province of Peru. Of that merchandise, a part is unloaded there in Cartagena—wines in particular, which then are transported to nearby places. They are sent, that is, to the mines of Saragossa, whence, by the toll of the Moorish slaves, they extract a great quantity of gold and, similarly, of emeralds. These are borne by sea to Margarita and to Santa Marta and to Riohacha, sites of the famous fisheries of Occidental pearls—and also to many islands and harbors all along the Cartagena coast. That coast is under the rule of the Crown of Castile, being among the first places conquered by their king in that New World discovered by Christopher Columbus, a Genoese, on October 11, 1492. Every three years, a governor is sent out from Spain with the title of captain general of this city of Cartagena and the galleons, which are to guard against corsairs. And in those galleons they say that the slaves do not generate lice because of the excessive heat and continuous sweating.

We received many courtesies from the governor out of respect for the abovementioned letters of protection, and with him we arranged to be able to stay, travel, and negotiate in all those West Indies just as though we had been native Spaniards of the kingdoms of Castile and had come there with a license from His Majesty. At that time, such licenses generally could be obtained for all those countries mentioned in the Indies,
including all the foreigners to be found there, the ones who were classified as foreigners being all who were not native to the kingdoms of Castile, Aragon, Valencia, and Catalonia, that being the order that the King of Spain had given to all his viceroy and governors. It had been considered that by such a thing the said King was in a position to extract a good treasure, as took place, and with good justice, as from all who came to those areas from Spain without the license, His Majesty was able to take all their goods by confiscation according to the prohibitions made and published concerning those voyages and navigations.

But the King desired to perform an act of mercy toward his vassals and toward the foreigners. So he contented himself with having the tenth part of the riches that each acquired in those lands, and thus he ordered and commanded his ministers, who were ruling for him. But if we had had to give the tenth part of what we had earned, we should not have paid anything, as rather than gaining, we lost on the slaves more than forty per cent of our capital. Instead of selling them, as was usual, at two hundred or three hundred scudos each, we sold them for less than one hundred and eighty scudos each, not to mention those who died after being landed. But so that each time we moved from one place to another we would not have to contend with other ministers of the King who were deputed to make such arrangements, my father made one for only five hundred reales, which may be worth forty-five scudos. And in that the governor of Cartagena acted in a friendly manner. No additional arrangement had to be made in my favor, as I passed as a Spaniard in everything.

We stayed in the city of Cartagena until August 12 of the abovementioned year of 1594, almost constantly ill of a most malignant fever, and it was not a small grace on the part of God that we were not buried there, seeing that so many of the others died, particularly among those who had come with us and in the ships of the fleet. Of these latter it is a certain thing that more than half die each year as soon as they reach that land or that of Nombre de Dios, a place much more damaging to health and having a pestiferous air.

But the treatment and manner of medication is so strange that perhaps, because of its difference from the European usage, I shall not be believed while recounting it, and yet it is the exact truth. And, presuming that my chronicles need not be of anything but those things which I have seen and done, believe me, then, that this thing is entirely true. In the place of pullets and hens, which we are accustomed to eat when unwell, the doctor allowed and ordered that we should eat fresh pork, which in that land, not to tell a lie, truly is as excellent to the taste as can be imagined. And thus they hold it to be excellent for the health because it is formed in the dampest and hottest region and, furthermore, fed on the good things and fodder of that land. Convalescing invalids also are permitted by them to eat fish, which is very good to the taste and perhaps the best there is throughout all of the West Indies, especially the spiderfish and those which they call musciare, which resemble the dorado, but are longer and have, when cooked, very white and agreeable flesh of the most delicate flavor. For the rest, the medications for those fevers are to let much blood and very often to give purgatives and emetics, for which last, during the decline of the fever, the patient is given as much fresh water to drink as he wishes. And thus, besides producing vomiting, they get him to sweat. And with such remedies and manner of treatment we finally escaped it.

Putting together the little that remained to us of return from the slaves sold, we invested it in merchandise that had arrived there from Spain in the fleet, which had come in during the month of February of that year. With that, we embarked,
having the idea of transporting it to the city of Nombre de Dios, located toward the west on that same coast, at ten degrees, 230 miles distant from Cartagena. It was at that time the port to which the ships of the fleet from Spain usually went to unload their merchandise, which then, having been transported overland to Panamá, the port of the other shore of the sea of noon, called the Sea of the South, was shipped in other vessels to the province of Peru, as we wished to do with ours.

Today the fleets go farther down, still on the same mainland coast, to a place that they call Porto Bello, located at nine and three quarters degrees, distant about twenty-five miles from Nombre de Dios. That port, at the moment when I passed it, was beginning to give instructions for settling and building its city, and thus starting to demolish that of Nombre de Dios, which consisted entirely of wooden houses situated in a place as unhealthy and conducive to sickness as can be imagined. It was uncomfortable and lacked all commodity for living, all necessities having to come from outside and by sea because its surroundings consisted of nothing but the densest forest and unhappy, uninhabitable deserts. In that city of Nombre de Dios we stayed perhaps fifteen days, most inconveniently and in extreme want of everything necessary for living—especially bread, which no one could find, so that instead of it we ate that which the Indians make of maize, which we call Turkish grain.

But what was worse was that at night we could not defend ourselves from the mosquitoes, which molested us terribly, those of that place not only occurring in great quantity, but also being much more troublesome than our mosquitoes and producing much more poisonous punctures. And this is true throughout the Indies to such an extent that in many places the people abandon those regions for a time and in other districts anoint the whole body with certain juices from bitter herbs in order to defend themselves from those tiny animals. Also in that city of Nombre de Dios there is an uncounted quantity of frogs and toads frightening because of their size. They are met with at every step through all the streets and they get under people's feet, it being the opinion that they rain down from the sky, or rather, that they are born when the water falls and touches that arid land, which might better be called burned. Also, there are many bats of a very strange nature even though they are formed like ours. At night, the houses being made entirely of wood, they easily enter the rooms and bedrooms, windows and doors always being kept open because of the great heat.

And while the people sleep, these bats come in to find them and, flitting around the beds, make a soft breeze. Without one's feeling it, they bite one at the extreme ends of the fingers and toes or on the forehead or the ears. And then they feed on that tiny piece of flesh which they bear away and on the blood sucked out with it. And there is no way to protect oneself from them, for because of the great heat no one lies covered or enclosed within his bed, so that many people, wanting to hear them and so frighten them off when they come, hang many strings of leaves up around the bed, in the space between one post and another. And when the bats fly into these, they make a noise and are frightened off, so that either one hears them or they go away and do not molest those who are asleep.

Then we embarked again with our merchandise in certain small boats propelled by oars. These are steered and commanded by Moorish—that is, black—slaves, who, twenty-five of them to each boat, navigate along that coast, staying close to shore for sixty miles, and then enter a body of fresh water called the Rio de Chagres, the mouth of which lies at ten degrees toward the tramontana. With those small boats, one
goes up that river against the current, with unspeakable fatigue and in incredible danger because in many places it is very shallow. And if the weather is dry, one nevertheless must expect rain, which at that season infallibly follows from noon onward each day, with incredible noise and the terror of lightning and thunder and heavenly rumbling, in such a manner that I may say that one feels all that more terrifying there perhaps than in any other part of the world. Or, at least, it is more fearsome than any I ever have heard anywhere else I have been.

What is more, many stones fall, those which we call thunderbolts, mixed with fire and water, descending in sudden downpours so great that they very swiftly bring on floods, against which it is necessary to struggle with the poles if one is to advance and win one’s way until that torrent shall have passed. And if, out of bad fortune, the small boat should be stove in or one should be placed in peril in some other manner, it would be impossible to save the people. No place to land appears along the river, the banks of which, from time to time, are closed in and barred by forests so thick and formed of such huge trees that one can neither land there nor find a foothold on shore. All to the contrary, the growth of those same branches forms a bank so impenetrable that it is impossible in any way whatever to reach shore, where the sun’s rays cannot penetrate, not to speak of men. It is believed—in fact, it is held completely certain—that those same trees never have been cut down or penetrated by anyone. It is not known whether there are paths or roads to follow, and it is believed that time alone is renewing the trees, as happens with other things in this corruptible universe.

Those forests include a large proportion of areas that remain fresh and green throughout the year and, it is said, are full of various animals—in particular, wild swine and mandril cats or, as they are called, apes. These, throughout the night, make themselves heard in a strange, big noise that seems, in that solitude and forest thickness, to be a roar issuing from the Inferno. They say that those apes, in order to pass from one side of the river to the other, link themselves together by their tails, taking hold of one another. Then, emerging on the tops of the trees, they cling to the branches, which, as has been said, project. Then, they having let themselves dangle from the branches, the one lowest down launches himself by means of their all swaying together and tries to gain a foothold on the opposite bank of the river, or to catch hold of the other branches and pull all the others over behind him. And they do this when fleeing or overcoming the current of the river, which is very great.

Finally we navigated that river for nineteen days. Living was very difficult because of lack of bread, instead of which I had to eat some of the bananas mentioned above, which are roasted while green and cooked under embers after being peeled.

Then we reached a place called the House of Crosses, where His Majesty has certain magazines for the reception of merchandise, which is transported thence little by little on muleback to the city of Panamá, distant from that Casa de Cruces or magazine by fifteen miles, and from the aforementioned Nombre de Dios sixty miles, traveling across the land that prevents the tramontane sea and the Sea of the South from joining.* And because in that season it does nothing but rain, as happens all over the Torrid Zone, and especially in its northern part, in the already mentioned four months of May, June, July, and August, and because the route is so bad that nothing worse ever can be imagined, they put all of the aforesaid mer-

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*Translator’s note. The Isthmus of Panamá, separating the Caribbean (“tramontane,” i.e., northern) Sea from the Pacific Ocean (“Sea of the South”).
chandise into certain bundles or small parcels. These are put
together so that each weighs no more than one hundred
pounds, so that each of the beasts can carry two of them de-
spite the terrible route, which they can cover, with great dif-
ficulty, in fourteen or fifteen hours. During that time, the
beasts move along constantly sunk in mud up to their bellies.
It is so narrow that if two of them meet, it is possible only
with great difficulty for them to step to one side and pass. Both
sides of the path are wild, shut-in, solid forest containing
no path other than this one, which was made by hand to per-
mit passage.

The drivers who lead the mules all are Moorish slaves, naked
and going along behind, constantly sunk in the mud up to mid-
thigh, beating the beasts. And this labor is performed only by
them, being a fatigue and torment that never could be borne
by white men or done by others the way they do it, on foot.
But not even they last long in it, but soon die, miserably para-
lized and covered with sores, which in that climate become
incurable with a little scratching because of the heat and the
excess of humidity of the region. And the beasts too very
often are left behind, skinned along the way, there where
their loads likewise remain even, as often happens, if they
are of silver or of gold. But these are in no danger of being
stolen, there being no place to bear them off to. So they must
perform be returned to Panamá, whence they come, or taken
to Nombre de Dios, to which that same path leads.

The rest, as has been said, is all a thicket of impenetrable
forests. Besides which, throughout all the West Indies one
finds this happiness, that there one encounters neither as-
sassins nor people who commit robbery on the way or even
in the houses. And one can go from one place to another with
silver and with gold, as they say, in hand without carrying
arms of any sort for defending oneself. For the Indians do
not carry them either, not being given to it, and the sword
and other instruments of war as used among us are new
things to them, as before the Spaniards reached those regions
there were no metal arms of any sort, and they used as knives
certain sorts of stones, which cut like razors. And the Span-
iards do not give themselves over to the infamy of robbing,
not even those who have been known as disreputable men in
Spain, but who, it is observed, having reached the Indies, are
completely changed in character, becoming virtuous and trying
to live civilly. So it often happens that he who changes skies
changes, besides his fortunes, the nature of his character also,
being driven to it, I believe, by the stars.

But to return to the subject of the bundles, I say that in
order to protect them from the rain, which is certain to come
on that very day, rain being infallibly certain, they wrap the
bundles up in certain leaves that they call biao, which Nature
has provided and caused to grow there very large and there-
fore suitable for such a need and a result. And with one
giùlio* of them, each bundle is protected from the water. And
for three scudos, two of these bundles, forming a load, are
transported from the abovementioned House of Crosses to
Panamá. We had ours transported that way, and with them
each of us on a mule that had no mountings or bridle other
than a saddle and a halter held in the hand. We traveled the
abovementioned fifteen miles with such weariness and misery
that we thought never to reach the desired city of Panamá.
Yet on the very evening of the day on which we set out from
the aforesaid Casa de Cruces, we arrived, soaked and melan-
choly. And that was in the month of September of the said
year of 1594.

The city of Panamá is situated on the other side of that

*Translator's note. A giùlio, so called because first minted by Pope Julius
II (1443-1513), is said to have a value of thirteen soldi and four denari.
strip of land which divides the western ocean from the ocean called Pacific. And it is distant from the equatorial line by nine and one half degrees toward the tramontana. It is the noblest port of call for everything that goes to and comes from the regions of Peru. All the silver and gold brought back from those regions is unloaded there, and this usually amounts each year to three or four million gold scudos. And thence it is taken to Porto Bello, on the shore of the other sea, whence, loaded onto the King’s galleons, it is borne to Havana, a port and fortress situated on the island of Cuba, opposite the mainland of Florida, at twenty-two and one half degrees of the northern part and distant 850 miles, more or less, from the said port of Porto Bello. Thence, thereafter, together with other treasures arriving from the provinces of New Spain and other parts of the said Indies, these things finally are transported to Seville, in Spain.

The houses of this city of Panamá are made of wood, and the men who live in them all are Spanish merchants who are very rich, especially in cattle. And some of the men there cannot count their cattle, which are too great in number. The city, which is governed by a number of judges who make up a tribunal that they call the Audiencia Real, is without other outsiders or any other sort of men except the slaves who serve the Spaniards. Of those slaves, all of whom are Moors, many have fled, having retired to a strong location in the midst of those forests, where, so as not to be oppressed, they have founded and constructed a settlement. And the Spaniards are content to let them live in their manner, in that liberty which they have taken, under the condition that they remain peaceful and do no harm and do not receive new fugitives into their settlement.

This port of Panamá is marvelous for the enormous flood and ebb of that sea, which, when retiring, leaves bare three or four miles of that coast. And then the new water returns with such fury every twelve hours—taking six hours to wane and six to wax—that a man on a running horse could escape only with great difficulty from the waves at the beginning of that flood. For that reason, large ships cannot remain in that port, but stop at the islands that they call Las Perlas, so named because of the fishing that they do in that sea, about forty-five miles distant from Panamá. Then, wanting to take on cargo for Peru, they approach another island, which they call Pericos, named so because of certain small parrots that are born there in abundance. That island is much closer and handier to the city of Panamá.

There we stayed until the month of November of the aforesaid year, enjoying the veil that, in abundance and at very low prices, they also eat on the Sabbath Day and three days each week during Lent—that is, Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday—by permission of the Church. This is permitted because of the lack in that place of fish and of every other sort of Lenten food. No sorts of vegetables grow there. Everything is brought in from outside, even the wheaten flour for making bread, which comes from Peru and is cheaper when it reaches there than that which is brought from Spain. This is a result of the great expense there is in transporting it by land from Porto Bello to Panamá. And from that place, if thus Your Serene Highness will be served, tomorrow I shall narrate our departure and the navigation that we made over that Pacific Ocean of the South, toward Peru, until we reached the city of Lima, the chief one of that very large and very rich kingdom of infinite provinces.
FOURTH CHRONICLE OF THE WEST INDIES
In which is recounted the voyage made from Panamá to Peru,
up to the arrival at the city of Lima

If memory does not deceive me, in the last narration that I made to Your Serene Highness, I promised you to recount our departure from the city of Panamá and everything that followed on the voyage and navigation that we made through that sea called Pacific until we arrived at Callao, port of Lima, which is called the city "of the Kings" and is the center of all that kingdom of Peru.

Beginning, then, I say that we embarked at the beginning of November in the year 1594 together with our merchandise on one of those ships which are arranged and suitable for making such voyages, but are different from other ships because in order to reach Peru it is necessary to sail constantly against the wind, keeping the bow close to the wind. For in that sea no wind but the south wind, sirocco, or gabrino—which the Spaniards call south, southeast, and southwest winds—breathes throughout the entire year. Including day and night, we were advancing little by little, twelve or fifteen miles traveled during a day, and this by making a turn toward the land during the daylight, another turn out to sea by night. In that voyage, it being no more than 1,200 miles of travel, one puts in no less than two months and a half of time. And be-
equinoctial line, beginning at the end of December and continuing till March, is the sky covered with thick clouds from which is distilled a sort of dew so fine that they call it garza and we would call it sailors' fog or wasted mist. But inland, fifteen or twenty miles within that entire area located between the Tropic and the abovementioned line, it rains a lot during that period when the sun is traversing that region.

Along the aforesaid coast, the inhabitants are not obliged to cover their houses with tile to protect themselves from the rain, but only with certain mats woven from cane and covered with earth, which shelter them from the air and from the sun. And therefore the houses of the city of Lima are made from crude bricks not plastered on the outside. Nor is it the custom to make the houses high, but all low and of only one story, and not of hard stones, as they could be built if the people wished. And the reason why they do not do so is the great and terrifying earthquakes, which are felt with the greatest frequency throughout all those regions, where whole cities are ruined by such catastrophes. In that year of 1595, when I was in Lima, came one so great that, we being at table eating supper, everything was turned upside down. And, terrified by such awful events, we all fled into the streets, as all the others do, retiring to open spaces and into the gardens and plazas so as to avoid the ruins of the houses and other buildings, in which they all live on the ground floors. But this earthquake caused no damage, and lasted only a short time.

Turning back to the navigating, I say that on that route one makes stops and takes on provisions all along that coast, the harbors of which are inhabited by native Indians, now Christians subjected and tributary to the Spaniards. From them, with our ship at anchor, we took on provisions, especially at two places. At a port called Santa,* where I disembarked with some Spaniards on certain rafts of seven or eight timbers tied together, lighter than cork and eight or nine arms long, which those Indians use when going fishing, moving them by means of oars, which they handle like ladies, and also by means of sails. With those rafts they take to the ships that pass there various supplies of the region, such as fish, hens, pigs, sheep, calves, and many fruits of the region, and in particular certain roots called patatas, white in color. These, when boiled or roasted under embers, have a better, more delicate and agreeable flavor than our chestnuts, and can be served in place of bread. They bring bread made of maize flour, in cakes as thin as leaves and toasted, so that one seems to be eating something like our long wafers and very pleasing to the taste.

There I saw two things that seemed as marvelous to me as I had been told in advance that they would be: that there were certain wells of water from the surface of which is dug a grease or bitumen something like liquefied pitch, but much greasier, thin and liquid. The Spaniards use this for tarring and smearing the ropes and shrouds of their ships. A huge quantity of this bitumen is taken out, thus making a profit for the owners of the land that generates it, and in their language they call it coppee.† The other marvel was a tooth as large as a fist and a tibia or leg bone longer than half a man. Those two things, the tooth and the tibia, the Indians said came from a huge man who had died there; and they asserted that in other times there had been a large quantity of such men who had arrived as strangers and then had been undone and killed by the many natives of the region, receiving

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*Translator's note. Evidently, as lying too far north, not the present small port of that name located about sixty-five miles southeast of Trujillo, Peru.
†Translator's note. This was, of course, asphalt.
that treatment for their bad behavior and the ill-omened ways with which they had used the Indians. But be that as it may, I saw one thing and the other, and they seemed to me to be of the human sort, as the Indians asserted them to be.

Later I returned to the ship with the others. That same evening, again unfurling our sails to the wind, we continued our voyage, always coasting along the land. Then we did not stop until another port, called Paita, farther on, at about the midway point of the entire route, a place five degrees from the equinoctial line toward the Antarctic pole. It lies in a benign climate of the purest, most brilliant, and most limpid sky that can be seen or imagined, and it has air so mild that the inhabitants, not being driven by it, are content to live on the sand, into which they drive bunches of cane bound together in the manner of basketwork, making from them the walls and then forming with them the rooms of their poor houses. These they later cover with mats or with the leaves of trees, thus protecting themselves from the sun and from the brightness of the air. In that air, shining in its clarity, the moon is clearer and renders more light than in any other part of the world whatever which I have seen, and in such a way that a common saying in that region for a man wanting to affirm that something is not to be doubted is: "It is clearer than the moon of Paita." In its splendor and brilliance it equals the light of the sun, and this comes about because of the reflection from the fields of sand which are there.

We stayed eight days in that place at exactly the time of the full moon, and thus saw its effect, which certainly was a wonderful thing. We were provided with every sort of refreshment; things abound there, especially salted fish of many kinds, all of them good, which are taken on there as merchandise and carried to the city of Lima to be sold. Many of our passengers landed at the place, it being possible to go on from there overland easily even though it is necessary to pass through a sandy desert for three or four days. For that reason, one must carry drink and food for oneself and for the animals. As for the rest, it is a safe region and inhabited only by peaceful Indians who are subject and tributary to the Spaniards. But we, returning to our ship, were pleased to pursue our voyage by sea. And without any further stop, we arrived at the port of Lima, called Callao, two miles away, located twelve degrees toward the austral pole from the equinoctial line.

The city, also called "of the Kings," is situated alongside a stream called the Lima, from which it takes its name. There, in all majesty, as the chief man of the entire province, resides the viceroy, sent from Spain to govern that kingdom for three years, during which he is paid three or four hundred thousand scudos. And very often the viceroy who has governed Mexico, headquarters of the kingdom of New Spain, succeeds to the government of the abovementioned city of Lima, headquarters, beginning, and end of all the traffic of that area. In that city live and remain many households of important Spanish gentlemen and merchants. They live with more cleanliness and splendor than in any other part of the West Indies, being served by male and female Moorish slaves, usually bought when they do not know either how to speak or how to do anything, and therefore at a price of four hundred scudos each. And we sold four of ours who had continued to be sick, but who—cured and brought thither—brought us six hundred scudos of thirteen guilder each plus one-fourth more. And if we had brought all of our slaves to that kingdom, it would have been good for us. Of such slaves, as fancy strikes them, they sometimes buy a female, not beautiful but knowing how to do something, for seven or eight hundred scudos. And while I stayed there I
saw a dealer in wine and foods buy one for the abovementioned low price.

But on festive days it is stupefying to see those Moors as they go about superbly dressed in silk and with pearls, and even with gold. And the dances that they assemble together to do in the plazas of the city are no less pleasing to the eye. Of even greater wonder is to see the grandeur and splendor of dress of the wives of the Spaniards, and of everything else that denotes vainglory. The amounts of silver and gold, the expenditures and ostentation, all are so large that any who lack a capital of fifty or one hundred thousand scudos are given no thought, being unable to measure up to the grandness of the others, and from that point on are called mercachifles* rather than merchants, by a saying of the region.

All over the city and in all the shops, one constantly sees silver in great quantities. And there is no cobbler who does not eat off it, for all of it from the mines of Potosí and all the other provinces comes there. Many merchants, having a treasure of three and four hundred bars and ingots of silver, each worth about five hundred scudos, pile them up and then, spreading mattresses on them, use them as beds for sleeping. These same merchants often purchase huge quantities of goods coming from Spain, and of all kinds mixed together, spending from one to two hundred thousand scudos, and doing so with greater security and ease than one of us buys a bit of salad. They accept these things as packed, without seeing either their quality or their condition, and depend for both measure and weight or quantity upon the documents and notes of whoever sells the merchandise to them. And they agree to the price and promise to pay a certain percentage of profit above cost and expenses on the part of the merchant selling to them. At other times, when the merchandise is well assorted and includes things good for these regions—such as linen fabrics, woolens, silk and gold stuffs, which are the chief ones—they buy, as they call it, at the impost price. This is an ancient method of valuation used with every sort of merchandise, to which they further add, above the stated amount of the valuation, ten or twelve per cent according to the assortment and quantity there may be of the less desirable things that have a higher impost and of those which are better and have a lower one. This is the way that they contract for the stuff and merchandise that come from Spain. In return for this, they take away from these provinces of Peru nothing but silver and gold, there being no other sort of goods.

Foodstuffs are very costly there, especially fresh fish, this from lack of anyone to go to fish for it, as the Spaniards hold fishing to be a vile thing to do, and the Indians cannot carry it on, being so few—and becoming fewer and fewer from day to day because of the ill treatment accorded to them. Those who remain seem not to care, and if nonetheless they do go to fish, they do it under duress and by order of justice, and do it in such a manner that it seems like a joke and is worth noting. In the morning they come from their houses each carrying on his head a bunch of a certain variety of very small reeds, a sort that grows alongside rivers or in marshes. These are bound together like sheaves of straw that are thick at one end and thin at the other, six or seven arms long. Thus bundled together, a sheaf is put into the water. An Indian gets onto each sheaf, sometimes astride and sometimes seated with his legs pulled in and crossed. And with a certain paddle in hand, pushing this his sheaf forward while it serves him as a little boat to go wherever he most wishes, each of

*Translator's note. Carletti's "mercachifles" is undoubtedly the Spanish mercachifles, peddlers of trilles.
them often travels ten or fifteen miles across that sea, fishing
with nets and with hooks. And they look like marine mon-
sters. And they make their catches and quickly go back to
shore, where they sell what fish they have brought to those
who there are awaiting them. Each of them then recovers his
abovementioned sheaf from the water, takes it to his house,
and there unbinds it, laying the reeds out in the air to dry.
Then they bind them together again as before.

That is the reason why fish are so costly. Hens, further,
are worth ten or twelve giulii each, and their eggs cost half a
giulio each, that half-giulio being the smallest money worth
anything, even though silver quarter-giulii exist. But with
these one scarcely can buy a little salad—of which, as of
every other variety of garden produce, there is an abundance,
especially of lettuce of marvelous size and with leaves incom-
parably longer than ours, and an infinity of local fruits of
strange qualities and shapes, having the most diverse tastes
and names. I shall not try to deal with them, it being difficult
and even impossible to compare them to the fruits of our
regions—which fruits, furthermore, because of the industri-
ousness of the Spaniards, are not lacking. Those of us who
reached there in the month of January of the year 1595 ate
there melons, figs, and grapes, all in perfection and in good
condition. And in the province of Cuzco it is always said
that grapes are to be found fresh upon the vines, which bear
fruit at different times of the year according to the sort and
situation of the land, the air in which they are cultivated,
and the way of harvesting them at different times and seasons,
it being possible to do that when one wishes because it is
always spring and summer, never winter.

There are also trees, and in particular fig trees like ours,
which in one year produce fruit twice, once on the side
facing toward the north, once on the other side, facing toward
the south. And this is said to be because of the movement
that the sun makes, for in that climate it shifts the shadows
twice each year as it goes and comes between the equinoctial
line and the Tropic of Capricorn. Finally, they can have all
the things as they wish them at any time of the year because
it always is the same season. Similarly, they bring in a fine
supply of quince-pears that are very good if eaten raw, but
much better as made into a confection; and also melons that
are exquisite and of the same variety as ours. And no one
leaves there without having found them excellent. That re-
results, I think, from its never raining in that region and from
the strength of the sun, which nonetheless is tempered by
the water that they bring from the rivers, irrigating with
it the fields and whatever land they want to use for their
sowings and other cultivation. The crops, again, become
fattened by those waters, which come from the mountains,
most often tumultuously because up there it rains a lot. And
in that way they bring all their crops to perfection, and in
such abundance that in many places they reap wheat twice
each year. And as for maize, which is the general food of the
natives throughout those Indies, it is gathered four or five
times a year.

Additionally, this whole kingdom abounds today in wines
and oil because of the cultivation of vines and olive trees,
introduced there by the Spaniards, which thrive admirably
there. During the period when I was there, they produced so
much wine that it not only sufficed for the need of that region,
but also accommodated the province of Mexico and other
regions where it is not produced because of the rains that
occur during the aforementioned four months and which do
not permit them to irrigate or to mature grapes well enough
to make wine from them. And it is not practical to bring it
there from Spain, whence it can be carried only at incredi-
ble cost and very inconveniently because it must be transported from one sea to the other in earthen jars on the backs of animals.

So there is no other drink there than the one made from maize, which comes to be bearable. The people of that region call it cucha, and they make it from the aforementioned maize ground up and soaked and then cooked in the water with which it has been infused, a very dirty thing if it is true that the maize first is pulled apart by the teeth and then masticated by old women with slobbering mouths. Be that as it may, the truth is that this drink is disagreeable to the sight and worse to the taste, though of much substance and nourishment, and of such strength and smokiness as to be more intoxicating than wine made from grapes, which in that region they harvest exactly at the time when among us the vines are pruned. And the wine is exactly like that of Spain, and they produce so much of it that in order to make room for the new at the time of the vintage, they throw away the old, so to speak. That the gathering should be done at a different time from ours is not to be marveled at, as it all is caused and governed by the sun, the generating father of all things, which in those months visits and makes his home between the equinoctial line and the Tropic of Capricorn. At the very time when this causes autumn and winter among us, to them on the contrary it brings spring and summer.

Finding myself in those regions during that season, I passed the most comfortable, pleasant, and delectable Lent that could be imagined because of the convenience of the many fruits and greens that come in that period of penitence, during which places for making devotions are not lacking anywhere in the city, which has a cathedral church with its archbishop and other religious. There are the Jesuits, the Franciscans, the Dominicans, and the Augustinians, all of whom—in fine churches, and with sumptuousness and reverence—administer the Holy Sacraments to the Spaniards who are in that region, and do it with the commodity and order already mentioned.

Further, they do not lack jennet horses of the Spanish breed for their use and recreation. And they also have other sorts of beasts, both mules and asses, for their needs, and in such unnumbered quantities that in the province of Chile, located thirty-five degrees toward the Antarctic pole, they do not count the number of these animals, and whoever wants them goes into the country and catches them, and they cost nothing beyond the business of taming them. There, also, they have beasts of burden native to the region, which the Spaniards very wrongly call canneros—that is, rams—but Indians call “packets.”* When I saw these, they at once seemed to me to resemble small camels in everything except the lack of a hump, as they have the neck, the head, and the feet of those animals, but altogether are smaller in both body and strength. Their flesh is good to eat, their wool for making cloth for the Indians. These are very domestic animals, simple and peaceful, but so extraordinarily stubborn and headstrong that they will move along only in their own way and at their own wish. Feeling weary, or having some other humor, they throw themselves down to lie on the ground even if they have burdens on their backs, and it is impossible to make them get up again even if one wants to kill them, such is their obstinacy. And for that reason a custom has arisen in that region of saying to a stubborn person: “You are a llama.”

These animals are employed in transporting light loads, of one hundred pounds in weight, from one place to another,

*Translator’s note. These were, of course, the camel-like animals now variously called llamas, alpacas, vicuñas, and guanacos.
and especially to carry the coca* from Cuzco to Potosí. This is a leaf that the Indians keep constantly in their mouths, chewing it together with a small amount of ground lime, which they always carry at their belts in an animal horn, having this leaf there also, wrapped in a rag. They say that chewing this leaf gives them strength and vigor, and such is the superstition and faith that they have in it that they cannot work or go on trips without having it in their mouths. And, on the contrary, having it, they work happily and walk a day or two without refreshing themselves otherwise or eating anything other than what they swallow of the saliva brought on by chewing the leaves. I have seen these leaves on sale in the aforementioned city of Lima, and they are like those of the almond, but much greener in color and somewhat smaller.

Having made a trial of chewing the leaf, I found—and believe—that it has no flavor beyond a certain delicacy and oiliness that make it into an unguent as one masticates it. They tell it is certain that more than thirty or forty thousand scudos worth of this coca is consumed each year, and most of it is bought by the Indians who labor and dig out silver in the mines of Potosí, in which five thousand Indians and more work uninterruptedly, day and night. And they will not go in without that leaf, and so must have both their mouths and their pockets full. And they must have rubbed their picks with the leaf out of vain superstition, because it seems to them to give strength to iron as it does to men.

About other marvels of that kingdom and about other native customs I have nothing more to tell you, either because I have not seen them or because I did not penetrate inland, than that today they live by the habits and customs of Europe, and in a Christian manner. And as the whole history of how they lived at first has been written by others, in this chronicle I have not thought to tell Your Serene Highness about anything but what I myself saw on these my voyages. And to finish with the city of Lima, I say that it is a very rich place because of the innumerable mines of silver and gold which are in that region, and in particular those of the mountains of Potosí, nine hundred miles distant from that city, being down twenty-two degrees from the Tropic of Capricorn. They were discovered in the year 1545, and from that time to today they are calculated to have rendered up fifty and more millions of scudos, not to mention what has been brought out of other mines such as are discovered every day throughout that entire kingdom.

That region is healthful enough because of the climate, which is so warm and dry that one never finds water by digging in the ground. For that reason, they bring water into this city of Lima in open canals for use in their gardens. These canals, then, running through all the streets, also serve for irrigation, and thus for keeping down the dust and thereby rendering the streets fresh. And public fountains for the purpose of drinking are not lacking in the plazas and all the other pleasant spots of the city. In the churches there, the dryness being so great, in order to bury the dead it is necessary to throw a quantity of water over the grave so that the earth, thus dampened, may be able to consume the body more quickly and leave room for others. This dryness gives rise to a certain variety of small animals that are generated in the rooms of the houses like fleas, and jump like them, though for the rest they have the shape of worms. These, insinuating themselves between the nails and the flesh of the toes, bore in little by little, nibbling at the flesh as a borer does at wood. There they grow so fat that very often they cause a sore that brings about loss of the toes before one notices that the

*Translator's note. This is Erythroxylon coca, vulgarly called "teca," the leaves of which contain small amounts of several alkaloids, including cocaine.
damage has been done and is incurable. And this occurs because they enter when they are very small, and therefore make a hole so tiny that it scarcely is seen or even felt. These little animals are called chigues, and they especially attack those who go barefoot. To free oneself from them it is necessary, once they have been detected, to pay careful attention to digging these little animals out diligently from the toes or wherever they may be, being careful not to break them, as when broken they spread in the sore a quantity of eggs from which so many are born that it no longer is possible to dispose of their seed. But if one digs them out whole and without crushing them, one is easily cured if afterwards one places in the hole a little ink, which thus is used as a medication.

In that city we sold all our merchandise. And having converted it into some bars of silver of seventy or eighty pounds each, we began to think of leaving that place, where we had been from the month of January until that of May of that same year 1595, and of going on to the kingdom and provinces of New Spain. There we thought to buy merchandise with the aforesaid silver and then return to Peru, whence the silver came, as in that region no other sort of merchandise exists except that which comes from Spain and Mexico. That merchandise then is transported throughout those very large provinces—that is, Cuzco, Potosi, Charcas, and other places, being carried by land and sea toward the Strait of Magellan as far as Chile. They also reach the Rio de la Plata, which empties out on the coast of the land called Brazil or Verzino, at a port on that river called Buenos Aires, where they buy merchandise and black slaves from the Portuguese, who bring there merchandise from Spain and slaves from Angola. Then they transport everything over the flat land for a space of 1,500 miles in small carts, with which they get to within 250 miles of Potosi.

This merchandise, as well as that which arrives on the fleets from Spain, is used entirely for the consumption and needs of the Spaniards, and not, as many perhaps believe, for those of the Indians. And it no longer is the time of the Indians' wealth and simplicity, out of which the Spaniards who went there—using bagatelles or baubles, rattles, mirrors, hardware, knives, glass rosaries, and other trifles similarly made—mined their silver and gold, of which, through the violence of firearms, they later became the owners, as they did of the regions and the people themselves. Down to the present time, they enjoy all that without contradiction, as each day they go on acquiring new lands and discovering greater wealth, all of it in the hands of the aforementioned Spaniards.

And to the Indians nothing remains of the silver and gold—of which, furthermore, they have less need, as they content themselves with little. It suffices them to be able to envelop their bodies, not in tight-fitting clothes, but only in pieces of cotton cloth, or perhaps in the wool of their animals called llamas, cloths that cover them from the shoulders down to the middle of the legs. Some wear this cloth projecting in front in the priestly manner, and others wear it over one shoulder, unceremoniously. And the cargoes that the fleets coming from Spain to these Indies bring in such diversity of goods, and which are valued in millions in gold, would remain untouched if disposing of them depended upon the Indians. Of them, nothing further occurs to me to say to Your Serene Highness today, nor of their region—better, of the region that once was theirs—and tomorrow I shall recount to you our departure for that of New Spain, if thus Your Serene Highness will be pleased.
FIFTH CHRONICLE OF THE WEST INDIES
Which follows the voyage and navigation made from the province of Peru to that of New Spain and until arrival at the City of Mexico

Yesterday, Most Serene Prince, I left off my chronicle with the resolve to recount to Your Serene Highness today the departure we made from the city of Lima for that of Mexico in the province of New Spain. In order to effect that departure, it first was necessary to request a license from the viceroy then governing, the Marqués de Cañete, Don Gracia Ustado de Mendoza. For it is the rule in that country that no man may move from one province to another without first having it certified in writing that he does not have anything to pay to the royal treasury (which is like payment to the tax-collector) or to the customs, that he has no business with the civil or the criminal judges, nor with any minors (wards), nor with taking care of the goods of deceased people, nor with the Office of the Holy Inquisition. Finally, it must be certified that a man is not married, for if he is, he cannot depart without a license from his wife or without the abovementioned certificates, as without them he will not be able to locate a master or captain who will wish to take him aboard a ship, it being forbidden to accept passengers who do not have licenses filled in by each of the tribunals.

Well, although the annoyance was great and the cost no less, once we had our license we proceeded with our goods to the port of Lima. There, a ship being ready to sail for the aforesaid province, we embarked on it, it being loaded with quicksilver for the King's account. The King has mines of it in that country, at a place called Huancavelica, a location celebrated for those mines of red lead, which, being treated, becomes quicksilver, a secret not known before to the Indians. From those mines His Majesty takes out each year the value of from four to five thousand scudos, as he does also from a spring that is there, which gushes forth hot. While it irrigates that land with its water, it is at the same time converted into stone so hard that it serves and is good for building the houses of that place. They say that if anyone drinks that water, whether man or beast, he dies because it congeals in the stomach and turns to stone there.

But to return to the ship, we set our sails and directed the prow toward the north. And we stopped two days on the beach at Gaura, sixty miles distant from Callao, the port of Lima, from which we had set sail. There we took on, picked up, and loaded onto our ship a great quantity of salt in pieces as large as rocks, of one hundred and two hundred pounds each. All along that coast for a space of three hundred miles, this salt is found congealed by the sun of those lowlands, and it costs nothing but to go to pick it up and the toil of breaking it into pieces of a size adapted to being carried to the ship. Thence we pursued our way. Once we had recognized the Point or Cape of Santa Elena, on the same section of the coast of Peru, we plunged out into open sea. Having passed the equinoctial line, we reached that other coast, the land of New Spain.

It was after a few days of navigating toward the west by the master quadrant that we spied that coast. And we passed
along it with many troubles and irritations from the fury of the headlong winds bearing rain, that being the weather in that climate then. And the danger and travail were the greater because the ship labored hard on account of the quicksilver, which we were carrying in certain tanned hides called badane. These, joined one to the other, were easy to handle. Thirty-five pounds of quicksilver were put into each skin, and thereafter the skins were placed in large cases, each of which had a capacity of two hundred cantari* of pounds and was lined with leather tanned for shoes.

On that coast, we made our first landfall at Sonsonate, distant 1,600 miles from Lima, at a height of fourteen and one-half degrees toward the Arctic pole. That is the place where cacao grows, a famous fruit of great importance in that province, which is said to consume more than fifty thousand scudos worth of it each year. That fruit also is used as money, to spend for buying small things in the plazas, the equivalent of the value of one giulio being made up by about eight of them, depending upon whether more or fewer of them have been collected. But its principal use is in a certain drink, which the Indians call chocolate. This is made by mixing the fruit, which is as large as an acorn, with hot water and sugar. First the fruits are dried very well and roasted over a fire. Then they are placed on certain stones and are treated in the way we make colors for painters, being ground with a pestle, which also is of stone, lengthwise on a flat, smooth stone. And thus it comes to be formed into a paste that is dissolved in water and served as a beverage. It is drunk commonly by everyone, both the natives of the country and the Spaniards

*Translator's note. Cantaro or cantare is a “measure for various sorts of things, of a weight of about fifty Tuscan pounds, it being more or less according to the locality and the diversity of the stuffs” (Tommaseo-Bellini, Dizionario della lingua italiana, 1865).

—and by those of every other nation who go there. And once one is accustomed to it, it becomes a habit. And it is hard to give up drinking it every morning or, in fact, in the evening after supper when the weather is warm and particularly when one is traveling.

For that reason it is carried in boxes as made into a paste mixed with spices or made into little cakes that quickly dissolve in water in certain cucks made by Nature of large fruits that certain trees of those regions produce. These resemble gourds, but are round and harder than bark. When dried, they become like wood. In them, the people drink the aforesaid chocolate, it being stirred up in them with a wooden stick that is revolved between the palms of the hands and raises a reddish foam. Then they quickly put it to their mouths and draw it in at one swallow with admirable pleasure and satisfaction of the bodily nature, to which it gives strength, nourishment, and vigor in such a way that those who are accustomed to drinking it cannot remain robust without it even if they eat other substantial things. And they appear to diminish when they do not have that drink.

This also happens to all those who are accustomed to taking the smoke of tobacco, also much esteemed and habitually used by all sorts of men throughout those Indies, it being a thing very natural to the land that produces it, all of which is warm and humid except the kingdom of Peru, which in many places is hot and dry. There they are used to taking this tobacco, making it into a powder and inhaling it through the nose. And in one form or the other it is recommended strongly for various kinds of infirmities and for avoiding many. And in particular it cures and wards off the onset of the evil of asthma.

And I, while I remained in Mexico, drank chocolate, which pleased and benefitted me, and I scarcely seemed able
to go through a day without drinking it. But I never was pleased with taking the smoke of tobacco, a leaf so familiar that I shall say nothing more about it. But turning only to the cacao from which the abovementioned chocolate is made, I say that it is a fruit that grows in the aforesaid region of Sonsonate (but is gathered in much larger quantity in the province of Guatemala) on a small, marvelously beautiful tree that is so very delicate that unless the earth is cultivated by working it and freeing it of every weed, and unless the tree is planted and cared for between two other, much larger, trees close at hand (which the Indians call “Mother of Cacao”), and unless it is protected from the sun and the wind, it will not produce its fruit.

That fruit is produced once each year, and is enclosed in a rind as hard as a pine cone. But inside it is divided differently and is much larger than pine nuts with their hard shells. But once this fruit has been taken from its outside shell, it has nothing but the thinnest peeling over the flesh, which it covers and holds together and which is divided like an acorn into many small pieces of flesh joined together. And it is of a dark tawny color and a slightly bitter flavor, having in it a certain oiliness and fattiness that give it substance and worth. So that if one takes one of those crocks (which they call cups) of it in the morning, prepared as I have described, it is a sure thing that one can go through the entire day without any other nourishment. Finally, it is one of the most appreciated gifts in that country, it being esteemed even among the religious and among people of importance.

In the aforesaid locality of Sonsonate, where are a few houses of Spaniards, there was a tree in the middle of the plaza which was of marvelous size. When the sun was at its zenith, that tree threw its shadow forward sixty paces. And it was of very remarkable girth. When in its shadow, the inhabitants of that city could be very comfortable in cool air. But do not think that this tree gave good fruit, either for eating or of any other kind: it was there entirely for comfort and beauty.

After having remained in that place for ten days and having taken on some sacks of cacao, we left, making our way along that coast. And in the month of June we reached the port of Acapulco, large enough to accommodate innumerable ships and never sufficiently praised for its beauty and safety. It is distant from the city of Lima, whence we had departed, more or less two thousand miles, and from the equinocial toward the septentrional sixteen degrees, and from the most renowned City of Mexico, capital of the province of New Spain, 240 miles overland. In that port we disembarked, remaining there some days, very uncomfortably except for the fish, which are caught there in that same harbor in extraordinary quantities and goodness. And what is beautiful and marvelous is that it often happens that the fish come out of the water by themselves, leaping onto the beach, there to remain dry, having been driven there while fleeing from larger fish hunting them. And those larger fish, transported by the fury to make a catch, very often find themselves in the same necessity.

In that port there are no habitations except for perhaps twenty houses of Spaniards. These are made of twigs woven together and filled in with earth and then covered with straw. They are without flooring, in the manner of a hut. They are used only at the times when ships are arriving from the Philippine Islands or from Peru. For the rest of the year, and most particularly during the rainy season—in which we arrived—almost no one lives there, it being a very unhealthful and malarial place, full of undergrowth and trees completely different from ours. Among them I saw the kind from which
they take dragon's blood. And I myself often, for my own amusement, struck a branch or a trunk of one of those with a knife. They are very tender, having a white, smooth bark, and those incisions brought out that red liquid, which really looks like blood coming from a wound. Then the liquid was of no use to me except for scrubbing my teeth, which it cleans and strengthens. Afterward I felt an extraordinary roughness and tightening of my gums. The seed of this tree is wrapped in a leaf in the shape of a dragon, with all its parts delineated masterfully by Nature, a thing to admire and worthy to be seen. And I brought some of those leaves away with me, but they all were lost together with many other curious things.

Similarly, in actual fact that place abounds with gnats and scorpions and other animals and bugs, all very poisonous. If they bite you, you will die. And if by some accident you eat or drink them in wine or water, they will drive you insane. And the gnats so torment one that they are not to be borne. They are of two varieties: one very small, almost legless, is known as a jifen; the other, with very long legs, is called a sancudo. The sancudos appear at the customary time for the arrival of the ships from Peru; the others are present all the year round. And because, that place being a seaport, some women of the world forgather there, they have a saying: "Let the jifen get out; the sancudos are coming." This refers to the Peruvians, almost as if to say: "Get out, you small-town folk and rustics. People weightier and more splendid than you are coming." And in fact that is what happens, because of the quantities of silver which the Peruvians bring to buy various goods coming from Spain to Mexico, as well as things made in that province, especially abundant woolen fabrics and silk cloth. This last they make from silk that comes from China, whence two or three ships reach that port each year via the Philippine Islands with loads of merchandise from that kingdom. Then it is carried to the City of Mexico, where resides the viceroy who governs that province of all of New Spain, sent there by His Catholic Majesty for three years. At the end of that period, if he has governed well, he passes on to govern Peru, as I said earlier, and ends up enriching himself during three more years of residence there.

We departed from that port of Acapulco and went over-land with our silver to the City of Mexico. Along the road we reached a river that can be named among the great ones, and therefore is called Rio Grande by the Spaniards. And because there is no accommodation for crossing it, neither a bridge nor a ferry, it was necessary for us to do what others do. We placed ourselves on a mass of thick, dry gourds, bound together with a netting of cane. On that we placed the saddle of our horse, which swam across. On that saddle we sat down. Then four of those Indians, one at each corner of the raft of bound gourds, swam, pushing it and directing it to the opposite bank of the river and breaking through that current of water. This is a thing no less perilous than tedious, and especially for the great quantity and value of goods that pass there each year. Nevertheless, it must be done, and even the viceroy passes by there with the same difficulty and danger when he goes from Mexico to embark at that port of Acapulco and pass over to governing Peru.

We reached the abovementioned City of Mexico in a few days. It is located at twenty degrees toward the north from the equinoctial, in a place as beautiful and delightful and abundant in every deliciousness as could be imagined or seen in the whole world. The city is well located, and also is built in the modern style by the Spaniards, with the houses of stone and lime, almost all of them with a sidewalk, along the straight, wide streets, wider even than those which Your
Serene Highness has had made in the new Leghorn. These, crossing one another, form very beautiful and perfect squares, with three or four very ample and beautiful plazas, and with fountains there and in places easily available to the public. And finally, it is decorated and crowded with those conveniences that Nature and industry can concede to a well-planned city.

Furthermore, there are many canals of water which flow by diverse routes and enter the lake on which the city is based. And on them the people come and go, conducting their daily lives and everything else of which they have need with much comfort. Above these canals they make fields on branches woven together,* thus recovering land that has fallen to the bottom of the lake. For that reason they move these fields from one place to another, now into the shade, now into the sun, as they please or have need to do. And there they cultivate diverse things with much artfulness. And overland arrives everything that the fleets from Spain bring to Vera Cruz, port of the northern sea, which is distant from the City of Mexico another 240 miles. Thus it falls out that the city is equidistant from the two seas, the South and the North, that is, the seas of noon and of the tramontana.

Also, there are very beautiful churches and convents, in particular of the Augustinian monks. Because of inadvertence on the part of the first founders of their church, it is almost submerged to the height of a man, the foundation not having been placed on timbers, as it should have been. And that same thing has befallen all the other churches, including those of Santo Domingo and San Francisco. But it has not happened to that of the Society of Jesus, the Jesuits having arrived later and, using the experience of what had occurred to the others and joining it to their own shrewdness, having found a way to rest their building on timbers stuck into the water of the lake. And it is built of a certain spongy stone, pink in color and very light in weight,* almost like that of the buildings of the abovementioned Leghorn, but much harder. And in my time they were proceeding with their College, a very sumptuous and beautiful fabric, as is that inhabited by the viceroy, which is located on one of the plazas in which there is also the cathedral, which had not been completed in my time. There one still sees a tablet formed from a huge, thick stone worked in a round shape on which are carved various figures in half-relief, and with a small gutter in the middle through which ran the blood of the men who here were sacrificed in the times of the Mexican nobles, in honor of their idols, of which one sees the remains still throughout the city, walled up in the exterior walls of the buildings erected by the Spaniards, placed there to express the triumph of their foundation.

Finally, to say in a few words everything that occurs to me, I say that in this very beautiful city everything and every good is to be had in supreme perfection and abundance, especially jennet horses of the Spanish race, these because of the benefit from a certain grass that grows in the lake. It resembles rushes, but is stumpy and very tender, and it is green all year. And because of it, the jennets are as plump as could be desired.

Near the City of Mexico is another very large city, today called Santiago, which is entirely inhabited by Indians, who are greatly diminishing in numbers in that area. When I was there, they were dying off rapidly from a certain illness. After having been a little ailing, they lost their blood through

*Translator's note. These are the renowned chinampas or "floating gardens," remains of which still may be seen at Xochimilco.

*Translator's note. This is tezontle, still widely in evidence in Colonial buildings remaining in Mexico.
their noses and dropped dead, a catastrophe visited only upon them, not upon the Spaniards. The latter, through the bad treatment that they give the Indians, also are a cause of their dying off. Coming from Acapulco, I saw along the way that they used them to carry their things, loading them like beasts. And when they reached some hamlet or walled place or village—of which many were to be found all along that road, but most of them without inhabitants—they wanted every one of their needs to be served and taken care of, as the Indians are forced to take care of them by order and command-ment of the administration of that region.

For that reason, no inns being found, it is ordered in each place where there is a population of Indians that a house be set aside and stocked with everything that may serve simply to lodge and feed the travelers. The house is said to be “communal,” but not a single person lives in it. A traveler having arrived, he summons the chief Indian of that people, who is called the toppile. And he appears with great speed and submissiveness, and punctually does whatever is com-manded, which is to bring food for the men and their mounts. Frightened by the Spaniards’ threats, he sees that this is done, ordering from among his Indians here one thing and there another—that is, you or someone bring the bread, you the wine, you the meat, you the straw, and you the oats. And thus the other things as well, so that in a trice everything is put in order and taken to the communal house. And then very often when the accounts are figured, instead of giving the Indians money in payment, they give evil words and worse deeds. Thus, through this and other inhuman treatment, God allows their end. And it is believed that within a short time all of them will have died out, as has occurred on the is-land of Santo Domingo and in other places that were thickly populated when Columbus discovered them, but now remain deserted, quite without inhabitants.

But to return to that country, I say that this province of New Spain is very large, and that each day new lands are discovered. And in the year 1596 they planned to set out on the conquest of New Mexico, thus called because of its resemblance to New Spain. It lies a distance of nine hundred or a thousand miles from Mexico City, all overland toward the north. Marvels are told of that region, speaking of wealth and of the fertility in everything needed for life. And many ships were prepared to go to the land called California, regions that are on the continent on the same coast on which the aforementioned port of Acapulco is located. There they disembarked soldiers to go inland and march to a meeting with those who were to go to New Mexico. This was a truly beautiful undertaking, but I have not heard since then what its outcome was.

And this province of New Spain abounds in mines of gold and of silver, from which they extract gold because gold is the basis of that silver; and they extract silver from the gold, of which it is the basis. And all this is done with aqua fortis.* And although not very much metal is found in either, none-theless it pays the beneficiary, and they extract what they can after it is removed from the earth. The latter, furthermore, is excellent for producing anything useful or beautiful or good which may be desired. They grow much grain, as in the province of Peru, and every other sort of vegetable and fodder brought thither from Spain, and also many things native to the area, which is especially fertile in maize. This serves them, as wheat does us, for bread, and also is used as feed for their animals.

The maize ear is like a cane of straw millet. Some eat it

* Translator's note. Nitric acid.
cooked whole in water, others as it is roasted in embers in hot sand, as in Peru. Others grind it on very large wooden mortars, making a flour that then is made into a paste and formed into certain round or longish leaves. And these, wrapped in green leaves, they place in hot water and boil them. Then, when they are cooked, they take them out and keep them for many days. Others cook the grains and then mash them on stones in the way in which, as I have said, they mash the cacao. When the grains are reduced to the condition of a paste, they pull this out until it is thin, forming it into round, flat cakes as thick as the back of a knife-blade. These are placed between two flat heated pans to be roasted and then are eaten hot with great gusto as moistened with a certain one of the sauces made of red peppers, salt, and water. And these cakes serve them as bread.

The pepper is what we call Indian pepper, a plant that now grows in all the gardens in Italy and other countries. They call it chile, whereas the Peruvians call it asbee or abgee. And so common is it for them to eat it and use it as a spice and condiment in all their foods that for them to do without it would be like our lacking salt. And they consume an incredible quantity of it. And there are no market days (these are held in the City of Mexico thrice weekly, with an abundance of cooked and raw foods and of things to wear) on which one does not see the plaza full of mounds of this pepper. It is dried when ripe, so as to preserve it, and is sold and measured out like fodder. Many of them cultivate whole fields of different sorts of it—that is, here long ones, there round, here large, there small—but all so strong that it burns where it touches and awakens the appetite and helps digestion.

But to return to maize, I say that when it is fresh in its ears, still tender with milk, it is eaten cooked, either boiled in water or else roasted under embers. And it is very flavorful and good, and in Peru, as I have said, they make a wine of it. True wine, that from grapes, is lacking in this country, as is olive oil, because the King does not permit or wish that the land be cultivated. It would excel in producing them, and would support vines and olive trees as good as those of our regions. But the King wishes wine and oil to be brought from Spain—they pay an endless treasure into his customs and to his vassals, who withdraw it from that country. And the people there would have no need of such wine if they would content themselves with that Nature has provided for them, which is very good. This is extracted from a plant that the Indians call maquey,* which is as marvelous as it is excellent in the quantity of benefits that they derive from it. These benefits include water, wine, oil, vinegar, honey, and thread for sewing and for making cord, needles for sewing, wood for burning (it has the property of making fire last a long time), and many other useful things.

The leaf of this plant is thick and long. It resembles—and grows like—that of the aloe that we see in our gardens, plants of which are in Your Serene Highness's stable garden. The skin of these leaves, having been steeped, is made into a flax from which they form thread. And on the tip of each leaf is a point that is used as a needle. The trunk grows to a height of five or six arms, with leaves that are very thick, but empty inside. And in certain months of the year they pierce these trunks at a place near the roots. Applying an earthenware vase at that point, they drain off into it that liquor and juice which is distilled each day in a reasonable quantity, and which then is like a sweet-flavored water. And when it is left thus, as extracted, it quickly sours and becomes good vinegar. And if that juice is cooked first, it be-

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* Translator's note. Agave atrovirens.
comes wine or honey according to how much they retard the fire, which has the faculty of strengthening it, as is done with a must in making new wine.* And operating in these various ways they make all the various articles mentioned above.

This plant veritably deserves praise by others and in my own simple chronicles, which never would reach their conclusion if I were to recount to Your Serene Highness the varied, innumerable sorts of marvelous fruit trees and fruits which are to be found in abundance throughout that great province. Among that infinite number, and included among those which I myself have seen, I cannot fail to mention something about the nopal cactus, not because it is one of the best, but because, in addition to the fact that the plant which produces nopales is fantastic, there grow—or, to say it better, there are generated—on its leaves the so much prized kermes, which the Spaniards call cochinillas, perhaps because of the resemblance of these little animals to those crustaceans which are found under stones in damp places, and which in Spain are called cochinillos.†

The fruit of the nopal cactus grows on the tops of the leaves. The Mexicans call it tuna, and we might call the plant a tree or plant consisting entirely of bumpy, spiny leaves growing out of one another, thick and shaped like two hands together. As they grow, they get fatter and fatter, and gradu-

*Translator's note. In some wine-producing regions, grape juices still are cooked to produce a must or preservative.
†Translator's note. Kermes are the dried bodies of the females of scale insects related to the cochineal (Dactylopius coccus or Coccus cacti). From them, before the development of chemical colors, was extracted a purple-red matter that may be the oldest dyestuff known—and which, at one time, also was used in medicines. Kermes were found on Mediterranean oaks. The related cochineal were native to Mexico. The coccus cacti of which Carletti writes are small ash-colored crustaceans that are native to damp fields and roll up into balls when touched.

ally the leaves that stay at the bottom become a trunk and branches, forming a tree. Hardening, they lose the first shape of the leaves. And inside they are full of a sticky, slimy moisture—like the aloe mentioned in another connection—and they are clear green inside and out. The fruit appears to be a part of the leaf because it has a similar skin—that is, green, bumpy, and spiny—and it is of the size of an egg, but flat on top, where, in the shape of a crown, there are certain protuberances full of spines, so that in this respect it looks like a medlar. Under the skin, which one peels off as if it were a fig, is a very white pulp with many seeds, which do not bother one, and which one eats along with the pulp, which is juicy and very sweet and pleasant and fresh to the taste.

In this province of New Spain, there are whole thickets of these plants that have grown very large, but are wild. Also of another species, which grows one branch from another, and which resembles so many tree-trunks grafted together, one into the other. These are of the same color and substance as the others, bumpy and spiny, and have square branches. They grow much bigger and much more remarkable and marvelous, but do not produce any fruit. Nevertheless, there is no plant that I believe would be more pleasant to see in these regions than this one, if it could be brought here.

Finally, on the leaves of those cacti which produce no fruit, on the wild plants and on those cultivated on good land by the Indians of the provinces of Tlaxcala and of the Mixteca, grow little animals that are attached to them, like those which are generated on the branches of our fig trees, but slightly larger. These, with the greatest diligence and no less slowness, the Indians of the abovementioned provinces collect. And those of the first-mentioned province, to preserve the little animals, kill them with hot water, and
these are called **cochinillas de Nixaca**. The others are spread on quicklime and are called **cochinillas de Mixteca** and are held to be better, not because they are different animals, but because of the way by which they are brought to their end. And in Italy these are called **cherms or cuciniglia canuta** because they are whitish.

The Spaniards buy these kermes from the Indians, who bring them into their markets for sale. And little by little they are gathered into a public storehouse, as in a customs house. There they are registered and put into sacks and sealed with royal seals. Then, in well-made cases, they are borne to Spain on the galleons carrying gold and silver, themselves being of no smaller price and value than one metal or the other. They formerly arrived each year in six thousand **arrobas** of twenty-five pounds each, with sixteen ounces each pound, and their value exceeded 600,000 scudos.

And to close I shall say that this is one of the most beautiful and one of the richest and most abounding regions possessed by the King of Spain, as it has every kind of native and foreign provision. Among the others are chickens like those of Spain, as well as some native to the region, which we call **Indian fowl** and they call Mexican doves. The cattle are not worth much, and in many localities are killed solely for their hides, of which a great quantity is borne off to Spain each year. And they leave the meat to the animals. A gelding is valued at eight **giulii**; the meat of swine is fresh and dry and very good and cheap and abundant.

Finally, the **City of Mexico** is an earthly paradise, full of every good thing and of all sorts of delights. It enjoys everything that comes from Spain, from China, and from other provinces of those lands, and it is populated by many more Spaniards than live in Lima, the city in Peru. But they are not as rich, nor do they comport themselves so superbly. But they do make use of Moorish and Indian slaves, which they call **criames**: very fierce people who live like wild beasts in a desert country, eating every sort of refuse, even to serpents, other poisonous animals, and actually human flesh. And they paint their faces and their whole bodies, perhaps so as to appear fiercer and more terrible in the sight of the others, with whom they make war, and especially with the Spaniards, who never have succeeded in subjugating them to their orders. Only from time to time the Spaniards capture a few of them and use them as slaves. And they, in turn, eat the others whenever they can manage to take them.

Among those Spaniards great wealth is not lacking, and with it they live with much more pomp than elsewhere, it being too a more temperate and fresher land because of the propinquity of water, which can be found immediately by digging down no farther than two arms. For that reason, in order to be able to bury the dead, it is necessary to do the opposite of what is done in Peru—that is, drain the water out of the grave before the cadaver is placed in it, rather than throwing water into it, as I told Your Serene Highness they do in Peru. But the soil of Peru is very dry, quite the opposite of this, on which, when one is in the shade, it seems—and it really is so—that one feels a certain damp freshness that protects one and restores one from the heat that this very burning sun causes when it falls directly on one. And the water, which is kept in the houses in clay vases, also offers this advantage, that, being in the shade, it cools off admirably. This is no small advantage in a region so distempered with heats, and is a thing that does not happen in any of the

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*Translator's note. That is, hoary (literally white-haired) cochineal.*
rest of the Indies, either Eastern or Western.* But it will be good to put an end to this chronicle, lest instead of being a simple discourse, it turn into a history, a thing outside my intentions. And tomorrow I shall go on to tell Your Serene Highness of the resolve that we made to leave that place for the Philippine Islands and of our navigation and arrival in them rather than the return to Peru which had been our design.

*Translator’s note. Carletti seems not to have been aware that part of the phenomenon here described was caused by the fact that Mexico City lies a mile and a half above sea level, whereas he scarcely left sea level elsewhere on his travels.

It seems a matter of destiny, and surely it is so, that men in this world cannot shape or guide their actions except as they have been foreseen by Him who governs all. We, as Your Serene Highness heard in my chronicle of yesterday, left Peru to go to the City of Mexico in New Spain to buy goods to transport to Lima. Nonetheless, that did not take place. Instead of our proposal to return to Peru, God disposed, making my father resolve to go to the Philippine Islands, he having felt that such a voyage would be very useful. People in Mexico are accustomed to make that trip each year on two or three ships that depart from Acapulco. First we surmounted the difficulty that we met about locating passage, which cannot be taken without an express license from the viceroy and which is not given to anyone unless he either goes with the purpose of remaining as an inhabitant of those islands—in which case he is transported there at royal expense—or embarks on a ship to serve in some capacity. We chose this latter means. Having been in the City of Mexico from the month of June until that of March of the year 1596, we therefore began to put our affairs in order.
The matter having been arranged with the captain of one of the two ships that were to leave that year, he arranged to have us as two pretended officers on his own ship—my father as constable of artillery and myself as guardian of the ship, the agreement being that we should turn the salaries over to him and that he would provide two sailors actually to carry out our duties. But not even thus had we finished with overcoming all the difficulties, another being that the King does not wish there to be taken to the Philippine Islands each year more than 500,000 scudos in money of account. And that is allowed only to those who live there or truly are going to that region to live—to the first as return for their merchandise, which they send to Mexico to be sold, and to the second as means to be brought along with them, but to all of them only a fair share of the entire amount. And if any money of account is found outside this registration, it is taken by confiscation. Well, we, who were neither the one nor the other, found ourselves in great danger in wanting to transport our holdings thither. So, under the license that the viceroy gave us as being officers of the ship—which cost very little—we confidently placed the rest in the hands of the ship's captain, who was used to carrying such things for various people who shipped money. And a million gold scudos rode along that way despite the order, and a sender was obliged to pay the captain two scudos out of every hundred. And as for the risk, they commended themselves to good fortune.

With that license we went back with our silver to the port of Acapulco, where two ships were being readied for the voyage. As soon as we arrived there, we embarked. And on the twenty-fifth of the month of March, 1596, we unfurled our sails to the wind and set our route to the west. We furrowed that immensity of sea, which is more than six thousand miles of open water, proceeding always along the same latitude of from fourteen to fifteen degrees in a direct line north from the equinoctial line—so that if our ship had left a mark where it passed and made its way, it would be possible to see a spherical semicircle over the fourth part and more of the entire world. And in prosperous and very happy navigation, we made it without ever moving the sails or slackening the yards, and always with a following wind. This is always the same wind, which smoothly and continuously blows through all the Torrid Zone from the east toward the west, so that it would not be possible to return along that same parallel. And therefore it is necessary to move out of the tropics in order to find southerly or austral winds that will propel you toward the east. That return journey is made in six months, the outward one in a little more than two, as we made it.

At the end of that journey, which took sixty-six days, we arrived in sight of the first islands, located at a latitude of from seven to fifteen degrees toward the north, distant from the Philippine Islands about 950 miles. And the Spaniards call them The Sails or The Thieves.* These names are appropriate to them, the first because of the very large number of little boats that we saw coming out over the sea from those islands, all with sails, as soon as the islanders saw our ship, until they seemed to cover the sea on all sides. Each year when the Spaniards pass by there, these islanders have the habit of approaching the ships, as they approached ours. As for the other ship, which was the flagship, we had left it behind and lost it from view at the outset of our navigation. We did

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* Translator's note. This group of islands—the Velas or Ladrones—actually lies some 1,500 miles east of the Philippines. They were named the Marianas in 1568 in honor of the widow of Philip IV of Spain. The archipelago includes Guam, Saipan, Tinian, Rota, Pagan, Guguan, Agrihan, and Aguljan; it was first sighted by Magellan in 1521.
not see it again until after we had reached the Philippine Islands.

And the islanders started to show us what they had brought with them, which was a quantity of cane, marvelously thick, green, and full of fresh water, each reed having between node and node at least four or five flasks full. They also brought both fresh and salt fish, rice, and fruits of many sorts, as well as divers other things, all to barter for some pieces of iron. These we threw them attached to cords, and those pieces of iron were untied with incredible speed. And when they seemed to have chosen and to have enough, they tied to the same cord something of what they had brought, but only a very little of it, because so many of us had thrown pieces of iron tied to a cord that they waited to untie them and gave something in return to only a few. And for that reason they are also called ladrones.

For a certain length of time we found great pleasure and wonderful diversion in watching their little boats, so well made of the thinnest boards painted and worked with various colors, these mixed with much artistry, and sewed together without nails in a capricious and beautiful way and style, so light that they appeared to be birds flying over that sea.

Their sails are made in the manner of rush mats. And as they are very narrow and long, made that way so that the waves of the sea and the force of the wind striking the sails may not capsize them, they always have on one side of the boat a wooden counterweight almost as thick and long as the boat itself. This is supported on the tops of two poles that run the length of the boat and project beyond it for about three arms. Grazing the water, these buoy up the boat, which can neither capsize nor, even if full of water, go to the bottom. And thus it comes about that the sail always is on one side and the counterweight on the other. And without changing either the one or the other, they sometimes make a prow of the poop and a poop of the prow, navigating with any wind as need be, taking it as they wish without turning the boat, which is made with both ends pointed. And in each one of these go four or five completely naked and very robust Indians who are fat and of a rosy color, burned by the sun. And they do not cover any of the parts that with us are shameful, but which perhaps are not taken to be so among them, they being, as I understand it, very simple and pure in that matter and holding everything in common, even their women.

In that way, navigating with us, they continued their dishonest barter, exchanging for our iron the things mentioned earlier. But all this entertainment was upset by the accident and misfortune that befell a Capuchin friar of Saint Francis, one of those who in Spain are called descalzos.* Moved by a holy and admirable zeal, though with little insight, he felt that those poor people would be lost unless he should teach them to know God. Set to meditating about this with the emotion of an ardent charity and compassion for those people, he decided and resolved with humble simplicity, guided by love for his neighbor, to ask permission of his Father Superior to be allowed to remain in those islands to indoctrinate the people and show them the road to Heaven. The Father Superior, hearing that request made of him by a single friar among the twenty-five that he had under him, was filled with great admiration. To hold the friar to that zeal and resolution, he answered him to follow his own wish and inspiration, even though at the time he did not know how to find a way to carry it out.

But the questing friar, who already had premeditated the

* Translator's note. A member of the discalced orders.
My Voyage Around the World

way of putting his thought into action, now that he had the benediction and permission of his superior, went below quickly to the between-decks room where they all had been. And he took his breviary and a wooden cross on which a crucifixion was painted. Having put all that into the sleeves of his habit, he came up on deck and stealthily went to one side of the ship where many of those little boats were, with the men bartering their things for our iron. And while talking with me, he said: "O qué lástima de esos pobres hombres"—that is, "Oh what a pity about those poor men." And he was about to say more, that they had no one to teach them to know God, when at that very moment, at the place where the boats were nearest to our ship, he let himself drop like lead into one of them.

The barbarians who were in that boat were thunderstruck and almost terrified by that action. They immediately tried to put him out of the boat, perhaps fearing that others were about to do the same thing, and then began to lift up his friar's habit and touch all parts of his body, as if not knowing what sort of man he was. And he, putting his hand into his sleeve, brought out his crucifix. Kissing it, he offered it to them so that they might kiss it. But they, not understanding or knowing about that Mystery, took it and put it somewhere else. Then they put their hands to raising their sails and directing their boat toward one of those islands—to which the padre, by a sign that he made, gave them to understand that they should take him. And they were as quick as lightning.

Well, Your Serene Highness can easily imagine the confusion, the astonishment, shouting, and lamentations that there had to be on our ship on seeing that good, wretched friar being taken away from it by those barbarians, the compassion caused in all by that accident and unforeseen occurrence. To remedy it, after one thing and another had been said, a resolution was made to take hold of one of those boats by means of some treachery, this in order to take the Indians who were in it, and with them see if it would be possible to ransom the friar. A great number of those boats then were everywhere on the sea, many of them close to our ship. And despite that event, they were asking in the friendliest way, rubbing the palm of their hands along the side of their hearts, saying: "Chamarri, her, her," which means: "Friends, iron, iron," with signs of exchanging it for those things which they were carrying.

And because of our offers, they freely came close, with the same sense of security that they had felt in the beginning. So we were able to entangle one of the boats in certain nooses of cord, so that it remained a prisoner. But not the Indians who had been in it, as we had thought and desired. For in an instant, as if they had been so many frogs, they had leaped from their boat into the sea. And for a time they were no longer to be seen, and thus our plan failed. Trying to remedy it, we then made a second effort, as very often happens in matters undertaken on the advice of a crowd affected by sudden happenings and unexpected situations. And so instead of recovering the friar, we lost two other persons, who, with another five sailors and soldiers, were put into the captured, still-empty boat.

The idea was to steer it toward the others moving over the sea, terrified by what was happening to their companions. But they succeeded only as well as those people do who set themselves to doing something voluntarily but without knowing anything about it. And they, not succeeding in finding out how to navigate such a boat, found themselves so entangled that they did not know how to move or even to guide the boat from one place to another. And in the meantime all the other boats scattered. And those Indians who were swim-
ming in the sea, not letting themselves be seen because of fear of our arquebus shots, hid themselves beneath our ship, coming to the surface of the water sometimes on one side, sometimes on the other, in order to get their breath. And then, suddenly, they would plunge back, in that being such excelling swimmers that they had nothing for which to envy fish.

And very often it has happened that, a piece of iron falling or being thrown purposely into the sea, they at the same time throw themselves after it and recover it in the water while it is sinking to the bottom and bring it back to the surface. Certainly that is an act of marvelous dexterity and amazement. But is it a marvel, seeing that those men are always out on the sea and live by fishing in it? Or it may be, as there were many to say, that they do it by means of witchcraft or incantations, as when they were swimming under our ship someone was not lacking to say: "Signore pilot, these people are great sorcerers. Placing themselves under the ship, as you can see that they are doing, it will not be strange if with their incantations they perforate it and send us all to the bottom."

On hearing which, the pilot (most pilots ordinarily do not even know how to read) gave credit for knowledge to someone perhaps less intelligent than himself and suddenly ordered that the rudder for steering the ship be moved so that she would take the wind in her sails. He gave no further thought to those of our people who still were in the boat and did not know how to steer it or make it move in any direction. They, seeing that the ship had filled its sails and was going, and being unable to do anything else, at once abandoned the boat, throwing themselves into the sea. Those who had most courage and spirit swam until they reached the ship, and before it had succeeded in taking the full wind into its sails. And thus they saved themselves. But two of that company, a Flemish sailor and a sailor who was Spanish but a mulatto

— that is, born of a Moorish woman by a white man—lost heart on seeing that the ship was beginning to pick up strength in its motion. And, being unable to swim any more, perhaps because they were exhausted, they turned back toward the boat, by then again in the possession of the barbarians, who had returned to it. And, swimming toward it, they voluntarily put themselves into the barbarians' hands in order to escape from those of Neptune. And those barbarians, having taken them in, directed themselves toward the land to which the friar had been carried.

Now I let Your Serene Highness consider what was in the hearts of those two poor men who, out of pity felt for that religious, found themselves in the same, or perhaps a worse state. They were truly worthy of greater compassion because their penalty was much the greater in that it was not lightened either by wish or by charity that they should die as martyrs, as perhaps the Father desired who out of his own will and his love for Jesus Christ had put himself in their hands, from which, as was proved later, God freed him without any evil having befallen him. They all were ransomed with iron by the ships that passed there the next year, and came to the Philippine Islands. And the friar, who did not even know how to speak the native language, had not found a single fruit of his desire. The other two gave news of those islands, which were all inhabited by poor folk, without gold and without silver or anything else of value. And for that reason it is to be believed that those men will remain for some time without the light of religion, unless God in His mercy provides them in some other way with what the Spaniards use in their conquests. Where they do not hear of riches they do not go, for it is riches that lures on the soldiers to open up by their arms the way for the religious and to defend them from the barbarians, as they say.
But to return to the question of our navigation, after having lost the three men and at the same time all hope of recovering them, we directed our voyage back onto its road. And we were not yet out of sight of those islands when we encountered one of the aforementioned boats coming across the sea. Coming close to our ship, they made show of wanting to give us the fish they were carrying in exchange for iron. But because the sea was a little disturbed, it made that boat collide with our ship in such a way that it became damaged and filled with water and remained submerged. The Indians who had been in it swam about it, trying to raise it up by bailing out the water. And we, at that moment, ordered that the ship’s boat be put out so that it could approach the submerged boat and take prisoner the Indians who were there. But they, greater in diligence and speed than our men, put their boat in order. And when our boat already was out and in the water, they raised their sails and departed, thus bringing our plans to nought. And what they did seemed impossible and almost devilish to all. But so it was, and they escaped, scudding toward their island and we toward the Philippines.

In a few days we saw Cabo Santo Spirito, which is a promontory of the island called Luconia, or Luzon, as the Indians say it, situated below fourteen and one-half degrees north from the equinoctial line, one of the chief and largest of the Philippine Islands. As we sighted the cape, a tempestuous wind struck up and made us miss it by many miles. Then, seeing it no longer, we stayed there, terribly assailed by the sea and the wind, and in peril of going down with the ship. We stayed eighteen days in that danger and torment without showing a sail to the wind and with the topmast and yards all lowered to the bottom. And we made no headway except that which could be made by the ship itself, agitated as it was by the waves and the tempest of wind, which blew with such rage that in order to move about on the ship it was necessary to hold on to the ropes that for that purpose were stretched from the poop to the prow.

So great was the impetus with which the wind blew that it was not possible to show one’s face. But what made us most uneasy was that now the drinking water was running low—that among the two hundred and more persons we were, not more than five or six casks of water for all were to be found on the ship, each cask containing twelve or fifteen barrels, and it half bad. Of it they gave out to each person one-half of a quartuccio* each day. And it was ordered that, so that we should not drink, the cooking be stopped, that we should eat nothing but biscuits dipped in water and in oil, on which a little sugar was sprinkled, a thing very helpful in mitigating thirst. But I discovered that by eating in the morning a sop dipped in wine and then drinking the water on top of it, I could keep myself a whole day without feeling hunger or thirst. Others took a lot of sugar and put it into both salt and sweet water, thus making a drink that was neither very good nor very healthful.

In the midst of these miseries, the evil wind finally dropped and a good one came and led us back to the aforesaid Cabo Santo Spirito. And we entered by a certain very narrow channel between one island and the other, in which the water of the flood and ebb of the sea flows with such speed that one almost cannot imagine a river rushing with greater course or more precipitously. The result was that except when the water was ebbing, and despite having a fresh wind, the ship could make no headway. And while the water was flooding,

* Translator’s note. A sixteenth-century quartuccio seems to have been about equivalent to seven-sixteenths of a modern pint.
we put out the anchor, as otherwise we should have been driven back or truly blocked in that channel.

There, for our restoration, we found all the good things that the Indian inhabitants of that area brought to the ship, again fully supplied with fresh water in huge, thick canes like those already described, which were contenting to see and more so to taste. There is no gold or silver or anything more precious that for the contenting of human nature in need of such things can be compared to the fresh water, chickens, pigs, and the varied fruits of that region, where everything is in the largest quantities and at the lowest prices. The chickens cost no more than two or three crazie* each, in exchange for something, perhaps of less value, that we gave them. Those chickens were of such a good sort that as soon as they were killed and roasted, they were so tender that they seemed to have been slaughtered for four days or more. Similarly, the flesh of the swine was excellent, equal to that of the Indies. That meat is abundant in all those islands, and they make so much lard that it is used instead of butter and oil for flavoring foods and frying fish. And one is permitted to use it also on vigil days and on Friday and Saturday.

They brought an abundance of fish at the lowest prices, and I found that in order to keep it from morning to evening, I had to roast it over the grate until it was half cooked. Then, in the evening, I finished cooking it with water, vinegar, and salt, and in that way it was very good. The fruits too, such as the bananas and others, were much better, beyond any comparison. And truly those bananas in that region seemed to me one of the most delicious fruits to be found anywhere in the world, and in particular certain ones that had a very subtle odor, so that one could desire nothing more welcome or more flavorsome. But the native fruits of that

region which I never had seen before seemed to me as beautiful as they were good, and especially the one that they call giaca,* a fruit as large as a large gourd, longer than it is thick, and of a strong, acute aromatic odor, with a green-yellow skin that is coarse and very rough to the touch, full of milk like that of the fig and not too hard. The inside is golden yellow, arranged in such a way that each of the fruity sections has its own place in the manner in which chestnuts lie within their husks. These fruits are covered with a meaty peeling that is sweet to the taste but a little hard, so that when one masticates it, it crunches between the teeth. And under it there is a chestnut which, when roasted in a fire, gives almost the same flavor as ours, but crude and very harsh, so that one cannot eat it. These giache are born and grow on the trunk and largest branches of the tree that produces them, emerging as gum oozes from the cherry trees or plum trees, but in the form of fruit rather than, as with those, in the form of excrement.

Going back to speak of the voyage and navigation that we made through that channel, I say that we finally arrived in the month of June of the year 1596 at the port of Cavite, a few miles distant from the city of Manila, which is situated on the coast in the middle of the island, between the sixteenth and seventeenth degrees of latitude toward the north. And there resides the governor of all those Philippine Islands, sent there by the King of Spain for five years, with the title of captain general of them. This is the farthest terminus of the conquests by the Crown of Castile, made in 1564 at the time of King Philip. And for that reason they are called after him Philippine. They are subjegated and controlled by Castilian Spaniards who, navigating by way of the West

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*Translator's note. A crazie was an ancient Tuscan coin of very small value.

*Translator's note. Apparently a species of breadfruit.
Indies and proceeding constantly to the west, finally arrived at the outmost Orient from which, earlier, they had departed.

The city of Manila, as to houses and design, is built in the manner of the City of Mexico in New Spain, but further has around it a thick wall with good fortresses. For it has many nearby enemies—both from the terra firma of China and from the infinite number of islands lying in that sea. They assert that the islands number twelve thousand in all, in which number is included also the Moluccas and those of Japan, which last are to be feared more than the others because their people are bellicose and dedicated to constant war among themselves and with their neighbors. The city is inhabited by Spaniards, who have conquered it and who live there comfortably, with many conveniences, absolute masters of the lands, of the men, and also of the women, all of whom pay them tribute. Many of them have under them five hundred or a thousand, each of whom pays at least eight guali per year. And with this, added to the profit from the merchandise that they send to New Spain, they soon are made rich.

A short time ago, they earned 150 per cent on the gold in which these islands abound. Today it is no longer like that. But from the merchandise brought there by the Chinese and then transported to Mexico, they still earn 150 and 200 per cent. Also, to guard the city, there are eight hundred Spanish soldiers and their captains, who live very comfortably. The entire island measures 1,400 miles around, more or less, and is well populated, entirely by two sorts of Indians: one sort whom the Spaniards call moros because, before the Christians arrived from Europe, the ministers of Mohammed had arrived from Asia and these people had received their Koran and professed that religion; and the others, whom they call bisaios, a name native to the country, and these are people who still preserved their ancient gentleness and idolatry, as many still retain them because of a lack of ministers to teach them the truth of the Evangel.

This latter nation differs greatly from the other both in customs and in bodily stature and gestures. The moros are small and badly formed in face and body, of a very brown color and of base and lazy spirit. On the contrary, those others have beautiful bodies, robust and virile, and are much whiter in complexion and more valorous in managing arms. And in that exercise they spend their time, arranging fights between cocks trained in that marvelous art, arming them with iron Pierced through and cutting that part of the claws where the spur is located. And it seems like a real scimitar, and they wound one another with it, often to death, by the blows that they give with these, lacerating sometimes the neck, sometimes the crop, sometimes the breast, and often the stomach, disemboweling their opponents. And when their wounds are not mortal, they are cured with balsams and precious oils and are patted and sprinkled with wine. And they are restored with good things to eat. At these entertainments, which many people come to watch, they gamble, wagering enough money to bring good earnings to those who will profit from the two fighting cocks, which are bred with great curiosity and intimacy. They keep them in their rooms, not letting them associate with the hens, so that they may become the more enamored and jealous of them, the hens being the causes for which they fight one another.

The bisaios men all are very much given to the pleasures of Venus, and their women are no less ardent than beautiful, and they beguile themselves with these women in strange and diabolic ways. And especially one way that I should not dare to relate to Your Serene Highness if I had not seen it myself, not wishing to be taken for a liar. But as, out of
cut in a style of bizarre workmanship and lineaments as well executed as could be done by a skilled and dextrous mathematician. These signs endure, and are always to be seen, because they are made with iron implements that cut the skin as gently as razors. Then, quickly treated with certain of their herb juices, all of this work turns a blue color. And as they mostly go about with their entire bodies naked, they make, in view of their customs, a beautiful and disquieting sight in the presence of their women, just as among us a man presents himself in a beautiful suit embroidered with silver and gold.

The women, on the other hand, go about clothed, and do not hear any part of themselves uncovered except their unshod feet and their legs, which they fill and adorn with bracelets, each according to her ability, using more or less precious metals. They also adorn their arms and necks with metal rings, placing one right next to the other in the style of hoops; these are of round, drawn-out wire as thick as a writing-pen, and most of them are of solid gold. These women also have their left hands painted with very delicate and subtle workmanship and with fantastic inventiveness. This gives them much grace accompanied by a certain flirtatious meekness. And in this they use great artfulness, placing great importance on it and competing to see which of them has the most attractive left hand. And they preserve it and guard it from labor to keep it softer, more delicate, and cleaner. The women, like the men, pierce their ears with great brutality. And by the weight of what they hang in them of round metal disks full of gems and heavy little rings of pure gold, they stretch them out to such length that they reach to their shoulders and even farther down, a thing deforming and ugly to see—more than a palm of ear distended by the heavi-ness of those ornaments of theirs.

curiosity and to be certain about it, I also spent some money to be showed what I had been told about, you therefore can rely upon me. These bisaios, or most of them, by an invention of the Devil and so as to give and receive diabolic pleasure with their women, have the custom of making a hole in their membra virile. And in that hole, which is made at a little more than half of its length, they put a leaden stud that passes through it from one side to the other. On top of the stud there is attached a star, also of lead, which revolves there and covers the whole member and projects a little beyond its edges. At the bottom of the stud there is a hole through which a wedge is passed so that it is firm and cannot emerge from the member.

And with their members thus armed, they like to dally with their women, to whom they give no less pain at first than pleasure later on, when they are well inflamed by the punctures that they are given by that little star, in such a way that for a time they lose all wish for what they desire most. This method of having lustful pleasure was, they say, devised by them for reasons of health—that is, to have fewer occasions to make use of venery and to have their women more sated. But I also heard it said that, on the contrary, this is a pure invention of Satan, done to impede those wretched people from generating children.

They marry, giving the dowry to the woman that they take, or else really buying her by paying a small quantity of gold or silver to her father or mother, and then they buy as many as they want or can buy or give dowries to. And if then they want to get away without having any legal cause, they lose the dowry. And if the woman wants to leave, the dowry must be restored to the husband. The men, so as to appear more comely in the presence of their wives, undergo and martyrize themselves by having their whole bodies, their faces excepted,
They also make use of another extravagant notion, that of
tinting their teeth red with a certain mixture as shiny as a
varnish. This they never remove, but always keep the teeth
polished and healthy, so that one never sees any ugliness
there and the teeth seem made of coral. This is done equally
by men and women, and the people of greater quality and
wealth gild their teeth. First they sharpen them with a file,
and then they apply a small gold leaf.

Their houses are built of very thick split reeds woven to-
gether to form walls and floors, and they make beams and
pillars to hold them up and cover the roofs with palm leaves.
These houses rise six or eight arms above the earth, so that one
can get out only by means of a ladder made of palings which
is let down into position and pulled up again.

They sit on woven rush mats of various colors, which they
spread over the floors of their houses, and on them they
also eat and sleep. The houses are founded on the aforemen-
tioned reeds or wooden poles, and in many places on trees
that raise the houses up as they grow. Underneath the houses
they breed their fowl and swine as in a stable, fencing them
in with the same reeds placed all around the area inside the
four or more poles or trees holding up the house, so that
they cannot climb up onto the platform. From the platform,
which is thin and can be seen through, they throw down to
the swine and fowl all the garbage, also including their own
excretions, without any further politeness. And all this is
picked up by the animals, which become used to it.

The people eat rice, which they gather in abundance and
cook simply with water and salt, and it serves them instead of
bread. And for a meal it is sufficient for them to have fruit
and fish, which they very often eat with only a little salt,
which they have in the form of a large stone, rubbing it off
onto the cooked rice as they eat it. They also make a bread

of fish, macerating it with salt and then forming round loaves
out of that pulp. Then they dry it in smoke. And when they
wish, they can break it up and make a soup of it. Similarly,
they make bread of the pith of certain very thick palms that
they call sagri; the pith is broken up and dried in smoke and
then made into flour by being ground on very large wooden
mortars. Formed into a paste, it then is cooked between two
very hot flat pans, whereupon it has the flavor, color, and
shape of a chestnut cake, but without its excessive sweetness.
However, it is very good to eat.

They also have both domesticated and wild swine, and
buffalo like ours, which they call carabao. They seldom eat
any meat except that of these swine and carabao, which they
often take raw when the animal has just died, with the blood
still warm, and with salt. After having eaten, and at all times
of the day, they are accustomed to holding in their mouths
a certain green leaf from an herb that they call buyo and
which they mix with a fruit that they call bonja. And to
these things they add a slaked lime prepared from marine
shells. And they chew all those ingredients together, swallow-
ing the juice and moisture that oozes from them, which is
green and somewhat bitter at first, but because of the lime
becomes red and of good flavor.*

The moisture of that leaf is very effective for the results
that they wish, it being very helpful to the digestion, to re-
awakening and restoring the senses of Venus, to preserving
the gums, and to giving one a very good and aromatic
breath. That leaf is produced by a plant much like that of the
bean and cultivated the same way, being supported on some
stick or branch or shrub, around which it twines. The Span-
iards, both men and women, also chew it and always have it

* Translator's footnote. Buyo is a mixture of leaves of the areca palm, those
of the betel, and one or another form of calcium oxide.
in their mouths, because once one has had it, he cannot do without it. I chewed it gladly several times, feeling a satisfaction and strengthening of my stomach which gave me more vigor than wine, in place of which the Indians customarily offer this buyo to their friends courteously during visits.

They have several other sorts of drinks, especially two made from different kinds of palms. One of them, called nippa, is best for making wine, and the other, the palm whose fruit we call Indian nuts, abounds throughout all those islands. They make wine from both, cutting the branch that should produce the fruit—that is, the nuts—of which it produces a bunch of many together at each moon. An earthen vase is attached to the branch to receive the liquid that little by little is distilled from that cut. It is of a sweet flavor, and is called sura, and is very pleasant to the taste. Making it into wine, they distill it in an alembic, whereupon it becomes a liquor like aqua vitae in color and flavor. And this is enough about that sort of wine. In another place I shall deal with this tree and its fruit at greater length, as well as with everything else appertaining to it.

Concluding this chronicle, everything good is in those islands: abundances of fish and meat of all sorts, and of feathered birds as well, among them certain small ones, like ortolans in size, but beyond comparison much better, more flavorsome, and more delicate, so tender that they cannot be plucked, for which reason they pull out their feathers while they are alive, so as not to fray them. They say that these small birds fatten in the countryside on locusts, which at times are seen in great numbers in those islands, so great that they cover the earth and, when flying, obscure the sun. I myself have seen them pass by so copiously and in such manner grouped together that they cut off my view of the sun as clouds do. Those Indians eat them roasted in the fire, their admirable taste not requiring any condiment.

Whatever those islands lack is brought there from outside. From Japan comes the wheat flour from which they make bread to serve to the Spaniards; from there also come divers other things that they bring on their ships and sell. And the Chinese—that is, those from the province of China—also come there each year with some fifty ships laden with raw silk that has been spun and woven into pieces of velvet, satin, damask, or taffeta, as well as much cotton cloth and musk, sugar, porcelain, and very many other sorts of merchandise, from all of which they make very noble trade with the Spaniards, who buy it from them to take it to Mexico in New Spain, as we had wanted to do, which was the reason for which we had gone there. But in that year, to our disappointment, not more than ten or twelve of these said ships—which they call somme—reached there, and they with very little merchandise, which was bought up entirely by those who had most favor and authority in the city. Further, those goods were much more costly than usual, at prices hopeless for any good purpose, everything being in short supply at that time because of the misfortune that one night the entire district inhabited by the Chinese and Japanese, which is called the parian and is located outside the walls of the city, was burned.

The parian consisted of houses and shops entirely built of wood and roofed with cane and the leaves of trees. Fire leaped up, and in a few hours consumed an infinite quantity of wealth in diverse goods. The poor Chinese and Japanese underwent inestimable damage and loss because that area was very crowded with shops for precious merchandise of every sort of manufacture and mechanical artisanship. The Chinese and Japanese supplied them, selling to the Spaniards,
under whose rule they lived, with their Spanish protector, who
took their part and attended to all their needs. And while
I was in that city I saw him undertake a defense to make one
laugh, though it was somewhat mysterious.
A Chinese had been caught at the fraud of counterfeiting
money, and for that had been condemned to be banished out-
side the town. And he, so as not to have to leave the city and
the island, committed himself to that protector, saying that
he wished to appeal against that sentence. But this unhappy
man (as regards his earthly existence), rather than getting
a lighter sentence, was condemned instead to the gallows.
And from having been the idolator that he was, at that place
he asked for baptism, and died a good Christian. Your
Serene Highness will understand the way in which God had
predestined him for the water of the Holy Baptism—and, as
a consequence, for Heaven, there to enjoy and have the ad-
vantage of that true Deity whom on earth he never had
known or revered.
But let us turn back again to the matter of the voyage, to
which was added the further difficulty, once we had bought
merchandise, of loading it on the ships. It was the custom
to divide the loading of the merchandise on the ships leaving
for Acapulco among the Spanish inhabitants of the city in
proportion to the merits of each of them, a privilege con-
ceded to them by His Catholic Majesty as a recognition of
the acquisition of those islands and of their having become
the first inhabitants of them. So that all these obstacles made
it difficult for us to return to New Spain that year, as we had
planned to do. And so, in order not to tarry there overlong,
having been there from the month of June to that of May in
the next year, 1597, we resolved to proceed onward and go to
China by way of Japan, and thence to the East Indies and
then to Spain by means of the ships that leave Goa for Lis-
bon.
Difficulties in the way of carrying out this plan were not
lacking. In the first place, we had to have a license from the
Governor of Manila, a thing that he could not give to anyone,
being forbidden by the orders and constitutions of the
Crown of Castile because of a privilege accorded to the
Crown of Portugal. By this it was agreed that no Castilian
coming from the West Indies can enter the dominion and
acquisitions of the Portuguese in the Eastern lands under pain
of having his goods confiscated and the vessel in which he is
traveling burned, and the people being made prisoners and
taken to Lisbon in irons.
In order to overcome all these impediments and not remain
subject to those prohibitions and laws, we gave thought to
leaving Manila without asking the governor for a license.
And we therefore embarked secretly one night on a Japanese
vessel in order to get first to the Japanese islands, a free region
in which neither the Portuguese nor the Castilians rule. It was
our idea that from there we easily and freely could go where
we liked, without any sort of obstacle whatever, and par-
ticularly to China by the service of the Portuguese ships that
come each year to the port and city of Nagasaki from the is-
land of Macao in the kingdom of China, with merchandise
to sell to the Japanese. And on a vessel that had come to
Manila from Nagasaki loaded with flour, and which then was
ready to depart, we embarked with all our wealth in silver
bars and reales, as Your Serene Highness, if it please you,
will hear in tomorrow’s chronicle.