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978-1-108-01474-8 - The Chronicle of the Discovery and Conquest of Guinea, Volume 1

Gomes Eanes de Zurara

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The Chronicle of the Discovery and Conquest of Guinea

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VOLUME 1

GOMES EANES DE ZURARA



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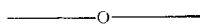
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THE CHRONICLE

OF

THE DISCOVERY AND CONQUEST
OF GUINEA.

VOL. I.

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THE CHRONICLE
OF THE
DISCOVERY
AND
CONQUEST OF GUINEA.

WRITTEN BY

GOMES EANNES DE AZURARA ;

NOW FIRST DONE INTO ENGLISH

BY

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LATE FELLOW OF MERTON COLLEGE, OXFORD ; CORRESPONDING MEMBER
OF THE LISBON GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY ;

AND

EDGAR PRESTAGE, B.A. ONON.,

KNIGHT OF THE MOST NOBLE PORTUGUESE ORDER OF S. THIAGO ; CORRESPONDING
MEMBER OF THE LISBON ROYAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES,
THE LISBON GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY, ETC.

VOL. I

(CHAPTERS I—XL).

With an Introduction on the Life and Writings of the Chronicler.

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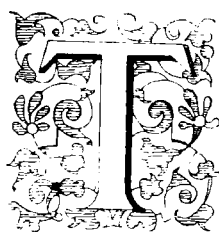
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EDITORS' PREFACE.



THE following translation of Azurara's *Chronicle of the Discovery and Conquest of Guinea* is the first complete English version that has appeared of the chief contemporary authority for the life-work of Prince Henry of Portugal, surnamed the Navigator; and we may remind members of the Hakluyt Society, and other readers, that we have but lately passed the fifth centenary of the Prince's birth (March 4th, 1394).

The first volume includes about half of the text, together with an Introduction on the Life and Writings of Azurara, which it is hoped will be found more exhaustive and accurate than any previous notice of the historian.

In the second volume (which is due for the year 1897) will be given the rest of the Chronicle, with

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an Introduction on the Geographical Discoveries of the Portuguese, and Prince Henry's share in the same. It will also contain notes for the explanation of historical and other questions arising out of certain passages in the text of both volumes. To illustrate the condition of geographical knowledge in the period covered by the present instalment, we have included four reproductions of contemporary (or almost contemporary) maps: (1) Africa, according to the Laurentian Portolano of 1351 in the Medicean Library at Florence. This is the most remarkable of all the Portolani of the fourteenth century. Its outline of W. and S. Africa, and more particularly its suggestion of the bend of the Guinea Coast, is surprisingly near the truth, even as a guess, in a chart made one hundred and thirty-five years before the Cape of Good Hope was first rounded. (2) N.-W. Africa, the Canary Isles, etc., according to the design of the Venetian brethren Pizzigani, in 1367. (3) The same according to the Catalan Map of 1375 in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris. The interior of Africa is filled with fantastic pictures of native tribes; the boatload of men off Cape Bojador in the extreme S. W. of the map probably represents the Catalan explorers of the year 1346, whose voyage in search of the "River of Gold" this map commemorates. (4) The same, with certain other parts of the world, according to Andrea Bianco in 1436. In the succeeding volume, we hope to offer some illustrations

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of the cartography of Prince Henry's later years, as well as a likeness of the Prince himself, either from the Paris portrait (MSS. Port. 41, fol. 5 *bis*) or from the statue at Belem. We had expected to be able to furnish our readers with a copy of the portrait of the Prince from the important oil-painting on board preserved in a corridor of the extinct monastery adjoining the Church of S. Vicente de Fora in Lisbon, but the photograph, which was taken by Senhor Camacho with the permission of His Eminence the Cardinal Patriarch, proved unsatisfactory, owing to the position of the picture and want of sufficient light.

We may add that a considerable part of the Paris manuscript of the *Chronicle of Guinea* has been collated for the present edition with the printed text as published by Santarem, and the result proves the accuracy of the latter.

We have to thank Senhor Jayme Batalha Reis, who has looked through the present version as far as the end of vol. i, and has kindly offered many suggestions. Among other Portuguese scholars who have been of service to us, we would especially mention Dr. Xavier da Cunha, of the Bibliotheca National, Lisbon; Senhor José Basto, of the Torre do Tombo, and General Brito Rebello. In a lesser degree we owe our acknowledgments to D. Carolina Michäelis de Vasconcellos and Dr. Theophilo Braga, the chief authorities on all that pertains to Portuguese literature, as well as to the

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late Conselheiro J. P. de Oliveira Martins, whose untimely death robbed his country of her foremost man of letters.

C. R. B.

E. P.

October, 1896.



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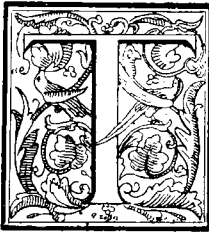
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THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF AZURARA.

LIFE.

“Lidar sem descanso parece ter sido o moto d'Azurara”.

VIEIRA DE MEYRELLES.



THE materials at hand for a study of the life and work of the second great Portuguese Chronicler are, considering the age in which he lived and the position he held, somewhat disappointing, and no one of his countrymen has been at the pains to work them up satisfactorily. They naturally fall into three divisions—his own writings, documents directly relating to his life or merely signed by him in his official capacity, and the witness of historians. There exists but one contemporary description of Azurara, that by Mattheus de Pisano, author of the Latin history of the Capture of Ceuta, though this is supplemented by the contents of two letters addressed to the Chronicler by Affonso V and the Constable D. Pedro respectively, as well as by what can

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be gleaned from documentary sources and from Azurara himself. In the next century—the 16th—some assistance may be derived from the traditions preserved by Barros, the historian of the Indies, as also from his critical judgments together with those of Damião de Goes, the famous Humanist and friend of Erasmus. These are all in a sense primary authorities, while the others who have discoursed of, or incidentally mentioned him are but secondary, namely, Nicolau Antonio, Jorge Cardoso, Barbosa Machado, João Pedro Ribeiro, the Viscount de Santarem, Alexandre Herculano, Vieira de Meyrelles, Innocencio da Silva, Sotero dos Reis, and Rodriguez d’Azevedo.

Gomes Eannes de Azurara, to give the modern spelling of his name, though he always signed himself simply “Gomes Eanes” or “Gomes Annes”,¹ was the son of João Eannes de Azurara, a Canon of Evora and Coimbra; but, beyond the fact of this paternity, we know nothing of his father, and only by conjecture is it possible to arrive at the name of his mother, as will hereafter appear. He is said to have come of a good family, on the ground of his admission into the Order of Christ.

As with several other Portuguese men of letters, the respective years of Azurara’s birth and death are unknown,² and two localities dispute the honour of

¹ In the *Chronica de Guiné*, ch. 97, he calls himself “Gomes Eanes de Zurara”.

² Barros, writing before 1552, says, “I know not how long he lived.”—*Asiá*, Dec. 1, liv. ij, ch. 2.

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having given him to the world; but there seems little doubt that this “bonus Grammaticus, nobilis Astrologus, et magnus Historiographus,” as his friend Pisano calls him,¹ was born in the town of his name, in the Province of Minho, at the very commencement of the 15th century. In proof of this it should be stated that Azurara expressly declares in his *Chronica de Ceuta*, which was finished in 1450, that he had not passed “the three first ages of man” when he wrote it.²

The dispute as to his birthplace between the Azurara in Minho and the Azurara in Beira³ is not easy to settle, but tradition favours the former, and until the end of the last century no writer had ventured to doubt that the ancient town at the mouth of the River Ave, which received its first charter, or “foral”, from the Count D. Henrique in 1102 or 1107, was the early home of the Chronicler.⁴ Such evidence as exists in favour of the latter place is

¹ “De Bello Septensi,” p. 27 (in the *Ineditos de Historia Portugueza*, vol. i, Lisbon, 1790).

² *Chronica de Ceuta*, ch. 23.

³ This place is in Beira Alta, twelve kilometres east of Vizeu, famous (*inter alia*) for the great picture of St. Peter as Pope, lately reproduced by the Arundel Society.

⁴ The first to mention Azurara’s birthplace was Soares de Brito (born 1611, died 1669), who, in his *Theatrum Lusitaniæ Litterarium*, p. 547, says: “Gomes Anes de Azurara ex oppido, sicuti fertur, cognomine in Diocesi Portucalensi,” voicing the tradition of his time (MS. v of the Lisbon National Library, dated 1645).

The first who suggested Beira in place of Minho seems to have been Corrêa da Serra, editor of the *Ineditos*, *ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 209.

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slight, consisting only of inferences drawn from a document, dated August 23rd, 1454, in which Affonso V grants certain privileges to two inhabitants of Castello Branco, who were accustomed to collect the Chronicler's rents and bring them to Lisbon. From this it has been argued by such able critics as Vieira de Meyrelles and Rodriguez d'Azevedo that these rents must have issued out of family property situate at the Azurara in Beira, which happens to be in the district of Castello Branco, and hence that the Chronicler was a native of Beira rather than of Minho.¹ The conclusion seems far-fetched, to say the least, for it is just as likely that these two men were agents for a benefice, or "commenda", at Alcains, in the same district, which Azurara possessed at the time this grant was made.²

The early life of the Chronicler is almost a blank. Until the year 1450, in which he wrote his first serious Chronicle, though not, perhaps, his first book, we have little beyond the meagre information, supplied by Mattheus de Pisano,³ that he began to study

¹ *Vide* the articles on Azurara in the *Instituto de Coimbra*, vol. ix, p. 72, *et seq.*, by Vieira de Meyrelles, and in the *Diccionario Universal Portuguez*, vol. i, p. 2151, by R. d'Azevedo.

² Azurara is named in this document "Commander of Alcains and Granja de Ulmeiro".—*Chanc. de D. Affonso V*, liv. x, fol. 113, Torre do Tombo.

³ According to Azurara, Pisano was tutor (*mestre*) to Affonso V, and "a laurelled Bard, as well as one of the most sufficient Philosophers and Orators of his time in Christendom."—*Chronica de D. Pedro de Menezes*, ch. 1 (*Ineditos*, vol. ii).

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late—"dum maturæ jam ætatis esset"—and that he had passed his youth without acquiring the rudiments of knowledge—"nullam litteram didicisset"¹—to which some later authorities have added—he spent his early years in the pursuit of arms, a statement likely enough to be true. It seems probable that he obtained a post in the Royal Library during the brief and luckless reign of D. Duarte (1433-1438), or shortly afterwards, as assistant to the Chronicler Fernão Lopes, whom he succeeded, for he was actually in charge of it early in the reign of Affonso V, in 1452, and finished the *Chronica de Guiné* in that place in 1453.

Tradition has it that he entered the Order of Christ as a young man, for he came to be Commander therein, a position only obtainable at that time by regular service in the Order, and by seniority; but the nature of these services, and the advancement which Azurara gained by them, cannot precisely be determined, because the early private records of the Order, together with the roll of its Knights, have been lost, those that exist only reaching back to the commencement of the 16th century.² This Order was founded by King Diniz in 1319, on the suppression of the Templars, and it inherited most, if not all, their houses and goods throughout Portugal. Its members were bound by the three monastic vows of chastity, poverty, and

¹ *De Bello Septensi*, p. 27.

² So says Corrêa da Serra—*Ineditos*, vol. ii, p. 207.

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obedience, which prevailed in Azurara's time, although Commanders and Knights of the Order were at a later period allowed to marry, by grant of Pope Alexander VI.¹ The Commanders were bound to confess and communicate four times in the year, to recite daily the Hours of Our Lady, to have four Masses said annually for deceased members, and to fast on Fridays, as well as on the days ordained by the Church. Membership of the Order was an honour reserved for Nobles, Knights, and Squires, free from stain in their birth or other impediment; while the Statutes directed a number of enquiries to be made before a candidate was admitted, one being, was he born in lawful wedlock? —a question our Chronicler could possibly not have answered in the affirmative.² Besides this, aspirants were required to be knighted before their admission, and then to profess. A gift of one or more "Commendas", or benefices, followed in due course, but, to prevent the abuse of pluralities which thus crept in, Pope Pius V afterwards decreed that no Knight should hold more than one Commenda, and this he was to visit at least once in every three years. The Knights possessed many privileges, the most notable being that, in both civil and criminal cases, they were exempt from the jurisdiction of the Royal Courts, and subject only to those of their Order,

¹ *Vide* Ruy de Pina, *Chronica de D. Duarte*, ch. 8.

² Because Azurara is found to have been the son of a Canon, it does not necessarily follow that he was illegitimate, and, in fact, no letters of legitimation exist in respect of him.

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which had all the old prerogatives of those of the Temple and Calatrava, together with such as had been granted it by name.¹

According to one authority, Azurara began his career as author in the reign of D. Duarte by compiling a detailed catalogue of the Miracles of the Holy Constable, Nun' Alvares Pereira.² The MS., which is said to have existed in the Carmo Convent in Lisbon as late as 1745, has disappeared, but the substance of this curious work may still be read in Santa Anna's *Chronica dos Carmelitas*, together with a number of contemporary popular songs about the Constable, extracted from MSS. left by Azurara.³

More than ten years now elapse without any mention of Azurara's name, and we hear of him for the first time, definitely, in 1450. On March 25th of that year he finished at Silves, in the Algarve, his *Chronicle of the Siege and Capture of Ceuta*, an event that took place in 1415, and formed the first of a long line of Portuguese expeditions, and the starting-point in their career of foreign conquest. Fernão Lopes, the Froissart of his country, and the father of Portuguese

¹ *Definições e Estatutos dos Cavalleiros e Freires da Ordem de N. S. Jesu Cristo com a historia da origem & principio della.* Lisbon, 1628.

² D. Carolina Michaëlis de Vasconcellos, however, is of opinion that this, and the popular songs hereafter referred to, are pious frauds, invented in the first half of the seventeenth century to form materials for the canonisation of Nun' Alvares.

³ *Chronica dos Carmelitas*, vol. i, pp. 469, 486. Lisbon, 1745

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history, was still alive at the time Azurara wrote this work, but had become too old and weak to carry on his history of the reign of João I, to which it is a sequel. After paying a tribute to Lopes as a man of “rare knowledge and great authority”,¹ Azurara tells us that Affonso V ordered him to continue the work, that the deeds of João I might not be forgotten; and this he did, culling his information from eye-witnesses as well as from documents, with that honesty and zeal which are his two most prominent features as an historian.² He began the *Chronicle*—which was printed once only, and that in the 17th century—thirty-four years after the capture of Ceuta, *i.e.*, in the autumn of 1449, and concluded it, as the last chapter states, on March 25th, 1450. It was, therefore, written in the short space of about seven months, which, says Innocencio, seems well-nigh incredible, considering how deliberately and circumspectly histories were compiled in those days.³ The narrative is, with a few exceptions, full and even minute.

¹ *Chronica de Ceuta*, ch. 2.

² Azurara's chief informants were D. Pedro, Regent in the minority of Affonso V, and D. Henrique, in whose house he stayed some days for the purpose by the king's orders; “for he knew more than anyone in Portugal about the matter” (*Chronica de Ceuta*, ch. 12). To this fact must be attributed the prominent place he gives D. Henrique in his narrative. The same circumstance is noticeable in the *Chronica de D. Duarte*, which was begun by Azurara and finished by Ruy de Pina, of which hereafter.

³ *Diccionario Bibliographico Portuguez*, vol. iii, p. 147.

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We know not the precise date at which Azurara had begun to apply himself to the study of letters, and he makes no allusion whatsoever, in his writings, to his early life; but it is clear, from the *Chronica de Ceuta*, that his self-training had been lengthy, and his range of study wide.¹ In the Preface to this, his first literary essay still existing, he quotes from many books of the Old and New Testament, as well as from Aristotle, St. Gregory, St. Anselm, and Avicenna; while in the body of the work he compares the siege of Ceuta to that of Troy, talks of “Giovanni Boccaccio, a poet that was born at Florence”, mentions the *Conde Lucanor*, and wanders off into philosophical musings that forcibly recall passages of the *Leal Conselheiro* of D. Duarte, and prove him to have been no tyro in the learning of the age. He was equally well versed in astrology, in which he believed firmly, as in history, and of the latter he says: “I that wrote this history have read most of the Chronicles and historical works.”² To understand how this was possible, it must be remembered that the Portuguese Court, in the first half of the 15th century, was an important literary centre, and that João I and his sons, besides being themselves authors of books, possessed libraries among the most complete in Europe.³ The

¹ Pisano testifies of Azurara, “scientiæ cupiditate flagavit”.—*De Bello Septensi*, p. 27. ² *Chronica de Ceuta*, ch. 38.

³ *Vide* Theophilo Braga, *Historia da Universidade de Coimbra*, Lisbon, 1892, vol. i, ch. 4, for the catalogues of these libraries and an account of the books they contained.

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atmosphere of learning that he breathed made Azurara what he was, and it explains the ascendancy he gained, as a pure man of letters, over the mind of Affonso V.

Three years elapsed between the writing of his second and third books, and there can be little doubt that Azurara spent this period partly in the Royal Library and partly among the Archives, which were then housed in the Castle of S. Jorge in Lisbon, continuing his study of the history of his own and foreign countries in the chronicles and documents those places contained.

Some time in the year 1452 the King, who was then in Lisbon, charged him with the book which constitutes his chief title to fame, owing to the importance of its subject, and the historical fidelity and literary skill that distinguish its presentment, namely, the *Chronica de Guiné*, or, as it might be called, the *Life and Work of Prince Henry the Navigator*. From the subscript we find it was written in the Royal Library, and finished there on February 18th, 1453. Azurara sent it to the King, five days afterwards, with a letter which has fortunately been preserved, since it shows how friendly and even familiar were the relations subsisting between them, and how these were maintained by a regular correspondence. It appears that Affonso had urged Azurara to obtain all the information possible about the life and work of D. Henrique, and, this done, to write as best he could, "alleging a dictum of Tully, that it sufficeth not for a man to do a good thing,

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but rather to do it well". Then the letter proceeds, addressing the King : " For it seemed to you that it would be wrong if some example of such a saintly and virtuous life were not to remain, not only for the sake of the Princes who after your time should possess these realms, but also for all others of the world who might become acquainted with his history, by reason of which his countrymen might have cause to know his sepulchre, and perpetuate Divine Sacrifices for the increase of his glory, and foreigners might keep his name before their eyes, to the great praise of his memory."¹

The following is a summary of the contents of the *Chronicle* :—

Azurara begins (Chapter 1) by some reflections on well-doing and gratitude, the conclusion to which he illustrates by quotations, and then goes on to tell the origin of his work, which lay in the King's desire that the great and very notable deeds of D. Henrique should be remembered, and that there should be an authorised memorial of him, even as there was in Spain of the Cid, and in Portugal itself of the Holy Constable, Nun' Alvarez Pereira.² The Chronicler justifies his task by summing up the profits that had

¹ This letter defines the scope of the book, which was not meant to be a general history of the Portuguese expeditions and discoveries. It is printed in Santarem's edition of the *Chronica de Guiné*, and precedes his Introduction.

² This charming old chronicle of the life of the noblest and most sympathetic figure in Portuguese annals was written anonymously, and first printed in 1526.

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accrued from the Prince's efforts—firstly, the salvation of the souls of the captives taken by the Portuguese in their expeditions; secondly, the benefit which their services brought to their captors; and thirdly, the honour acquired by the fatherland in the conquest of such distant territories and numerous enemies.

Chapter II consists of a long and most eloquent invocation to D. Henrique, and a recital of his manifold good deeds to all sorts and conditions of men and his mighty accomplishments. Azurara presents them to us as in a panorama, and his simple, direct language reveals a true, though unconscious, artist in words.

Chapter III deals with the ancestry of D. Henrique, and Chapter IV describes the man himself, "constant in adversity and humble in prosperity", his appearance, habits, and manner of life, all with much force of diction.

In Chapter V we have an account of the early life of D. Henrique, of his prowess at the capture of Ceuta, and during its siege by the Moors, with his fruitless assault on Tangiers, which resulted in the captivity of the Holy Infant. His peopling of Madeira and other islands in "the great Ocean sea", and presence at the gathering that ended in the battle of Alfarrobeira are referred to, as also his governorship of the Order of Christ and the services he rendered to religion by the erection and endowment of churches and professorial chairs. The chapter ends with a description of the Town of the

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Infant at Cape St. Vincent, "there where both the seas meet in combat, that is to say, the great Ocean sea with the Mediterranean sea", a place designed by the Prince to be a great mercantile centre, and a safe harbour for ships from East and West.

In Chapter VI, Azurara returns to his laudations of the Infant, whom he apostrophises thus: "I know that the seas and lands are full of your praises, for that you, by numberless voyages, have joined the East to the West, in order that the peoples might learn to exchange their riches"; and he winds up with some remarks on "distributive justice", the non-exercise of which had been attributed to D. Henrique as a fault by some of his contemporaries.

Chapter VII is occupied with a recital of the reasons that impelled the Infant to send out his expeditions. They were shortly as follows. First and foremost, pure zeal for knowledge; secondly, commercial considerations; thirdly, his desire to ascertain the extent of the Moorish power in Africa; fourthly, his wish to find some Christian King in those parts who would assist in warring down the Moors; and last but not least, his purpose to extend the Faith. To these reasons Azurara, quite characteristically, adds a sixth, which he calls the root from which they all proceeded—the influence of the heavenly bodies, and he essays to prove it by the Prince's horoscope.

The narrative of the expeditions really begins in Chapter VIII, which opens with an account of the reasons why no ship had hitherto dared to pass

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Cape Bojador, some of them being at first sight as sensible as others are absurd. The fears of the mariners prevented for twelve years the realisation of their master's wish, and for so long the annual voyages were never carried beyond the terrible cape.

Chapter IX relates how at length, in 1434, Cape Bojador was doubled by Gil Eannes, a squire of D. Henrique, and how, on a second voyage with one Affonso Gonçalvez Baldaya, Eannes reached the Angra dos Ruivos, fifty leagues beyond it.

In the next Chapter (x) Baldaya passes one hundred and twenty leagues beyond Cape Bojador to the Rio d'Ouro, and a short way beyond; but failing to take any captives, as the Prince wished him to do, he loads his ship with the skins of sea-calves and returns to Portugal in 1436.

Chapter XI is a short one, and merely tells that for three years, *i.e.*, from 1437 to 1440, the voyages were interrupted by the affairs of the Kingdom, which required all the attention of D. Henrique. These affairs were the death of D. Duarte, and the struggle that followed between the Queen, supported by a small section of the nobles, and the Infant D. Pedro, backed by Lisbon and the people as a whole, over the question of the Regency and the education of the young King Affonso.

Chapters XII and XIII relate how Antam Gonçalvez took the first captives, and how Nuno Tristam went to Cape Branco.

In Chapter XIV Azurara dwells on the delight

D. Henrique must have felt at the sight of the captives, though he opines that they themselves received the greater benefit: "for, although their bodies might be in some subjection, it were a small thing in comparison with their souls, that would now possess true liberty for evermore."

Chapter xv contains an account of the embassy sent to the Holy Father by D. Henrique to obtain "a share of the treasures of Holy Church for the salvation of the souls of those who in the labours of this conquest should meet their end." The Pope, Eugenius IV, granted a plenary indulgence, on the usual conditions, to all who took part in the war against the Moors under the banner of the Order of Christ; and D. Pedro, the Regent, made D. Henrique a present of the King's fifth to defray the heavy expenses he had incurred by the expeditions.

In Chapter xvi Antam Gonçalvez obtains the Infant's leave for another voyage, and is charged to collect information about the Indies and the land of Prester John. He receives ten negroes, in exchange for two Moors whom he had previously taken, together with some gold dust, and then returns home.

In Chapter xvii Nuno Tristam goes as far as Arguim Island and makes some captures; this in the year 1443.

Chapter xviii begins the relation of the first expedition on a large scale, and the first that sprang from private enterprise—namely, that of Lançarote and his six caravels from Lagos. Azurara takes the

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opportunity to insert here a short but interesting sketch of the change that had taken place in public opinion with reference to these voyages. In the beginning, they were decried by the great not a whit less than by the populace, but the assurance of commercial profit had now converted the dispraisers, and the voyage of Lançarote gave a tangible proof of it.

The next six Chapters (XIX to XXIV) relate the doings of this expedition, which ended in the capture of two hundred and thirty-five natives.

Chapter XXV, which treats of the division of the captives at Lagos, is the most pathetic in the book, and one of the most powerful by virtue of the simple realism of the narrative.

Chapter XXVI gives a lucid summary of the after-lives of the captives, and their gradual but complete absorption into the mass of the people.

Chapter XXVII narrates the ill-fated expedition of Gonçalo de Cintra and his death near the Rio d'Ouro; while, in the next, Azurara refers the accident to the heavenly bodies, and draws a profitable lesson from it, which he divides into seven heads, for the benefit of posterity.

Chapter XXIX contains a short notice of a voyage undertaken by Antam Gonçalves, Gomez Pirez, and Diego Affonso to the Rio d'Ouro, which had no result.

Chapter XXX deals with the voyage of Nuno Tristam, who passed the furthest point hitherto discovered, and reached a place he named Palmar. Azurara confesses himself unable to give more

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details about this expedition, “because Nuno Tristam was already dead at the time King Affonso ordered this Chronicle to be written”—a statement which proves that he did not rely only on documents for the facts he related, but was careful to glean as much as possible from the actors therein.

Chapter XXXI tells how Dinis Dyaz sailed straight to Guinea without once shortening sail, and how he was the first to penetrate so far, and take captives in those parts. He pushed on to Cape Verde, and, though he brought back but little spoil, he was well received by the Infant, who preferred discoveries to mere commercial profits.

Chapters XXXII to XXXVI recite the expedition of Antam Gonçalves, Garcia Homem and Diego Affonso to Cape Branco, Arguim Island and Cape Resgate, where, besides trafficking, they took on board a squire, Joham Fernandez, who had stayed full seven months at the Rio d'Ouro, among the natives, to acquire for the Infant a knowledge of the country and its products.

Azurara refers in Chapter XXXII to Affonso Cerveira, whose history of the Portuguese discoveries on the African coast, now lost, was used by him in the compilation of this Chronicle; and in the next chapter he employs one of those rhetorical periphrases of which his other works afford many an example, though they are rather scarce in this his masterpiece in point of style.

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xviii

THE LIFE AND WRITINGS

Chapters xxxvii to xlviII relate the doings of the first expedition from Lisbon, which was under the command of Gonçalo Pacheco, and penetrated to Guinea, or the land of the Negroes, the result being a large number of captives, seemingly the chief object it had in view.

Chapters xlix to lxvii contain the acts of the great expedition of fourteen sail which set out from Lagos in 1445, under the leadership of Lançarote, for the purpose of punishing the Moors on the Island of Tider and avenging Gonçalo de Cintra. In all twenty-six ships left Portugal that year, being the largest number that had perhaps ever sailed down the Western side of the Dark Continent at one time.

After accomplishing their object some returned home, but others, more bold, determined to explore further South, if perchance they might find the River of Nile and the Terrestrial Paradise. Arriving at the Senegal they thought they had found the Nile of the Negroes, and went no further. A curious description of the Nile, and its power according to astronomers, forms the subject of Chapters lxi and lxii, where Azurara has collected all the learning and speculation of the Ancients and Mediævals on the question.

Chapters lxviii to lxxv describe the doings of the remaining ships that left Portugal in 1445, and relate descents on the Canaries and the African coast, and the voyage of Zarco's caravel to Cape Mastos, the furthest point yet reached.

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Chapters LXXVI and LXXVII contain valuable notes on the life of the peoples south of Cape Bojador, together with an account of the travels of Joham Fernandez, the first European to penetrate far into the interior of Africa.

In Chapter LXXVIII Azurara adds up the sum of the African voyages, and finds that up to 1446 fifty-one caravels had sailed to those parts, one of which had passed four hundred and fifty leagues beyond Cape Bojador.

Chapters LXXIX to LXXXII are taken up by a description of the Canary Islands, while Chapter LXXXIII deals with the discovery and peopling of the Madeiras and Azores.¹

Chapter LXXXIV tells how D. Henrique obtained from the Regent a charter, similar to the one he had previously secured in the case of Guinea, to the effect (*inter alia*) that no one was to go to the Canaries, either for war or merchandise, without his leave; and the following chapter (LXXXV) relates a descent on the Island of Palma.

In Chapter LXXXVI Azurara narrates in feeling terms the death of the gallant Nuno Tristam in Guinea-land.

In Chapter LXXXVII we read how Alvaro Fernandez sailed down the African coast past

¹ Azurara's laconism with reference to the history of the discovery of the Madeiras and Azores is really regrettable. In many respects his narrative needs to be supplemented from other sources.