

# History of the Spanish Conquest of Yucatan and of the Itzas.pdf/182



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yard of water; we went ploughing through it and at each step there was more water, and it took a long time to cross it, causing us pain enough in our wounds. But with the care that we took not to get submerged, we forgot that feeling, since the earth of the said marsh was so spongy that though we doubled up the reeds which grew there in large number, so as to step over it, so that the water might hold us up, yet if we stopped a moment, the overflowed earth drew and sucked us in in such a way, that if we should fall, we could not help one another, since he who should stop to help the other, would be submerged with him.

**Miracle of the Bent Branch.** "At the end of a long stretch of this trouble, we reached some little woods, with trees of considerable height, which were as much, or more, covered with water as what we had passed through. We passed through these as well as we could, having in mind that that was now coming to an end, when suddenly we came across a very large *aguada* of the kind they call *Kaxek*, in which no bottom is found. Armed with patience, although with some trouble from the fact that the sun was about to set, considering that we had to stay there that night, I made an Indian climb one of the said trees, so as to see where the *aguada* ended, or where we could make a short cut through the said *aguada*; and the said Indian not discovering a passage in any part to our great sorrow, we, looking towards one side, saw a branch of a tree broken, like those which the

Indians break so as not to lose themselves in the woods. We attributed this sign to a miracle, as it was not probable that a human being could place that sign in that place. We followed that sign in an easterly direction, which was that towards which the said branch was bent, until, when, at a little distance, we came upon another branch bent in the same way and very recently. At this we were consoled by the miracle which God kept continuing. We went on with sticks in our hands, trying the shallow places, because, when we least expected it, we came on many holes of alligators (since they are found in abundance in the said overflowed woods) and then we were submerged almost to our heads. We discovered a piece of level ground, about as large as the ante-room of a cell, and thinking that it was solid, we started to pass over it,



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