

THE VOYAGE OF
PEDRO ÁLVARES CABRAL
TO
BRAZIL AND INDIA

FROM
CONTEMPORARY DOCUMENTS AND
NARRATIVES

TRANSLATED
WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES
BY
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LETTER OF PEDRO VAZ DE CAMINHA TO
KING MANUEL

WRITTEN FROM PORTO SEGURO OF VERA CRUZ

THE 1ST OF MAY 1500

BEFORE Cabral's fleet departed from the new land which had been found to the west, Pedro Vaz de Caminha wrote a letter to the King of Portugal in which he related what happened during its sojourn there. This letter is the first and by far the most important document which has come down to us describing the discovery of that country. It has sometimes been called the first page in the history of Brazil. In this letter Caminha carefully wrote down each day what appeared to him to be new and curious, as well as almost every act of the members of the fleet in their dealings with the inhabitants. It is very important as the first account of the natives of that country. Later investigations have shown nothing to discredit the narrative from the standpoint of ethnology, and few subsequent writers have given us a better idea of the customs of the people inhabiting the coast of Brazil.

Unfortunately Caminha devotes but little space to that portion of the voyage prior to the arrival in Brazil regarding which there has been such uncertainty. When land was sighted, however, he is most minute in his descriptions. Because he recorded the events as they occurred, there can be no question as to their correctness so far as Caminha knew them.

The letter was addressed to the king, and may thus be considered an official document, although written in the easy style of a narrative. It may have been written either because of instructions from the king before Cabral began his voyage or by Caminha of his own volition, since his personal interest in writing is shown at the end of the letter, where he asks a favour from the king. Both his position and family gave him the right to address a letter to Dom Manuel.

Master John states that Ayres Correia wrote a letter. As chief factor, Correia would have little about which to write to the king from Brazil, and it is possible that this letter, written

by Caminha, was the one referred to as having been written by his superior. The authenticity of this letter cannot be questioned, although it does not seem to have been known to all sixteenth-century writers.

Pedro Vaz de Caminha was the son of Vasco Fernandes de Caminha, a cavalier of the household of the Duke of Guimarães and *mestre da balança da moeda* in the district of Oporto. He inherited this position from his father,¹ and after his death in India it was given to his nephews, Rodrigo de Osouro and Pedro Vaz.² The office was one of honour and responsibility and was held by the family under four sovereigns, from Afonso V to John III. Caminha's career indicated that he was a man who was more interested in trade than in politics or navigation. He had a good education for the time, but apparently had not studied Latin. When the fleet of da Gama returned to Lisbon with the report of the riches and splendour of India, Caminha accepted the position of writer in the fleet which was to follow under the command of Pedro Álvares Cabral. He was to go to Calicut, where he was to take part in the commercial activities at the factory to be established there. Caminha sailed in Cabral's flagship with Ayres Correia, the chief factor, in company with other writers. He was killed in the massacre at Calicut in December 1500.

The chroniclers, Damião de Goes and Fernão Lopes de Castanheda, are the only authors of this period who mention Pedro Vaz de Caminha, and they refer to him only as a writer at the factory in Calicut. Our knowledge of Caminha is obtained, therefore, almost entirely from his own statements, and the only document we have is this letter.

The manuscript³ was found by the Spanish historian Juan

¹ By a royal letter of Afonso V dated the 8th of March 1476, Pedro Vaz de Caminha was named *mestre da balança* in the mint at Oporto on the death or resignation of his father (*Chanc. de D. Afonso V*, bk. 38, p. 99). This position was confirmed to him by Dom Manuel in 1496 (*Corpo Chron.*, parte 1ª, maço 18, no. 108).

² In a letter of the 3rd of December 1501, in which the king appointed Caminha's nephew, Rodrigo de Osouro, to succeed him, he says, 'Pedro Vaz de Caminha former *mestre da balança* of our city of Oporto who died in India where we sent him'. On the death of Rodrigo de Osouro, his brother, Pedro Vaz, succeeded to the position on the 17th of December 1536.

³ The original is written on seven sheets of paper, each with four pages, twenty-seven pages in all. It is kept in the Torre do Tombo, and is classified as *Corpo Chronologico*, gaveta 8, maço 2, no. 8.

Bautista Muñoz, in the *Archivo da Torre do Tombo* at Lisbon prior to 1790, and was first published in 1817 by Father Manuel Aires de Casal in *Corografia Brasileira* from an inexact copy found to exist in the *Real Arquivo da Marinha* at Rio de Janeiro. It has been republished many times since, both in Portugal and Brazil, and has been translated into French and German. The best text is that given in *Alguns Documentos do Archivo Nacional* (Lisbon, 1892, pp. 108-21), and it is from this that the translation has been made.

SENHOR:

Although the chief captain of this your fleet, and also the other captains, are writing to Your Highness the news of the finding of this your new land which was now found in this navigation, I shall not refrain from also giving my account of this to Your Highness, as best I can, although I know less than all of the others how to relate and tell it well. Nevertheless, may Your Highness take my ignorance for good intention, and believe that I shall not set down here anything more than I saw and thought, either to beautify or to make it less attractive. I shall not give account here to Your Highness of the ship's company and its daily runs, because I shall not know how to do it, and the pilots must have this in their charge.

And therefore, Senhor, I begin what I have to relate and say that the departure from Belem, as Your Highness knows, was on Monday, the 9th of March,¹ and on Saturday, the 14th of the said month, between eight and nine o'clock, we found ourselves among the Canary Islands, nearest to Grand Canary; and there we remained all that day in a calm, in sight of them, at a distance of about three or four leagues. On Sunday, the 22nd² of the said month, at ten o'clock, a little more or less, we came in sight of the Cape Verde Islands, that is to say, of the

¹ The departure of the fleet from the Tagus was Monday the 9th of March 1500. All the writers of the period with the exception of Gaspar Corrêa give this date, although there is some confusion, due to the fact that the ceremony for the departure took place at Belem on the preceding day. Corrêa states that the fleet left on the 25th of March, the Day of *Nossa Senhora*. His account of the voyage, however, was largely from hearsay, and, with the belief that the fleet left on that feast-day, he assigned the corresponding date to it.

² Castanheda and de Goes agree with Caminha as to this date.

island of Sam Nicolao,¹ according to the assertion of Pero Escolar,² the pilot. On the following night, on Monday at day-break, Vasco d'Atayde with his ship was lost from the fleet³ without there being there heavy weather or contrary winds to account for it. The captain used all diligence to find him, seeking everywhere, but he did not appear again. And so we followed our route over this sea⁴ until Tuesday of the octave of Easter, which was the 21st of April, when we came upon some signs of land, being then distant from the said island, as the pilots said, some six hundred and sixty or six hundred and seventy leagues; these signs were a great quantity of long weeds, which mariners call *botelho*,⁵ and others as well which they also call *rabo de asno*.⁶ And on the following Wednesday, in the morning, we met with birds which they call *fura buchos*. On this day at the vesper hours we caught sight of land,⁷ that is, first of a large mountain, very high and round, and of other

¹ The fleet was now in Portuguese waters. It had had a satisfactory voyage thus far with the north-east wind behind it. The distance from Lisbon to the Cape Verde Islands is 1,510 nautical miles. The fleet had therefore made an average run during the thirteen days of 116 miles a day, or at the rate of about 5 knots. This rate was made under favourable conditions, and probably was not exceeded on the voyage to Brazil.

² Pero Escolar had gone to India with Vasco da Gama, sailing on the *Berio* with Nicoláu Coelho. Caminha does not identify Escolar as a pilot on Cabral's ship. Later on in the letter he states definitely that Afonso Lopez was the pilot of the chief captain.

³ This ship was therefore in sight after ten o'clock Sunday morning and could not be seen at day-break the following morning. The fleet did not stop at São Nicolau but evidently continued its course with the north-east wind. Vasco de Atáide's ship thus lost convoy during the night 50 to 75 miles south-west from that island.

⁴ *e asy seguimos nosso caminho per este mar de lomgo*. The expression *de lomgo* is also used by Caminha when he tells of sailing *de lomgo da costa*, along the coast, after arriving at Brazil. This, therefore, has no special significance, although some writers have tried to identify it with longitude, indicating a westward course. The expression generally used at this period for longitude was 'the height east-west'. The word longitude was employed by Ptolemy because the known world of his day was longer in this direction.

⁵ This is evidently an error for *botelha*, bottle, instead of *botelho*, a measure or family name.

⁶ Donkey's tail.

⁷ This date is correct, since Easter Sunday in the year 1500 occurred on the 19th of April. Therefore Cabral first saw Brazil on Wednesday the 22nd of April 1500. From early times the discovery has been celebrated in Brazil on the 3rd of May. An effort has been made to reconcile these two dates because of the Gregorian Calendar. According to this change the new date for the discovery of Brazil would be the 1st of May from 1583 to 1699, the 2nd of May from 1700 to 1799, the 3rd of May from 1800 to 1899, and the 4th of May from 1900 to 2099, and so on. It will thus be seen that this happy coincidence is not entirely satisfactory. Formal possession of the land was taken by Portugal on Friday the 1st of May. The following Sunday, or the 3rd of May, was the feast of the Invention of the Cross in commemoration of the discovery of the true Cross at Jerusalem by Saint Helena in 326. There is, therefore, an adequate sentimental reason why this date, the 3rd of May, should be retained. The old date, the 12th of October, is celebrated in Brazil for the discovery of America by Columbus.

lower lands to the south of it, and of flat land, with great groves of trees. To this high mountain the captain gave the name of *Monte Pascoal*,¹ and to the land, *Terra da Vera Cruz*.² He ordered the lead to be thrown. They found twenty-five fathoms; and at sunset, some six leagues from the land, we cast anchor in nineteen fathoms, a clean anchorage. There we remained all that night, and on Thursday morning we made sail and steered straight to the land, with the small ships going in front, in 17, 16, 15, 14, 13, 12, 10, and 9 fathoms, until half

¹ 'Mountain pertaining to Easter'. This may be considered the first land sighted in Brazil by the Portuguese. It is conical in shape, one of the highest mountains in the Province of Bahia, and is still called by its original name of Monte Pascoal, given to it by Cabral. Its summit is located 16° 53' 20" south latitude and 41° 44' west longitude (or 16° 56' 8" and 41° 45' by another determination). It has a height of 356 m.

² The name *Vera Cruz* seemed a most appropriate one both to Cabral and to the members of his fleet. For many nights they had been seeing the brilliant stars of the Southern Cross. Cabral, a knight of the Order of Christ, bore with him the banner of that Order, a red cross on a white ground, and this same emblem was displayed on the sails of the fleet. The discovery was made during the festivities of Easter, when, as one writer observes, the twelve ships were there like the twelve apostles; and in a few days, on the 3rd of May, occurred the feast of the Invention of the Cross. Easter had not yet been celebrated in a proper manner, and the members of the fleet were looking forward to the services at the cross on the following Sunday.

This land was first named by Cabral *Terra da Vera Cruz*; Caminha called it *Ilha da Vera Cruz*, and Master John simply *Vera Cruz*. In the letter sent by Dom Manuel to the Catholic Sovereigns after the return of the fleet, he refers to it as *terra de Santa Cruz*. The ecclesiastics named it *Sancta Cruz* or *Sanctae Crucis*. The official name of the newly found country may therefore be considered *Santa Cruz*. But this name lasted only a short time. During the following decade the interest of the Portuguese was focused on India, and the land of Santa Cruz was thought of only as a stopping-place for ships bound for the East, or as one where dye-wood could be obtained.

The most interesting objects which the members of Cabral's crew saw in Brazil were the brilliantly coloured macaws. It was, therefore, popularly called *terra de papagaios*, or the land of parrots. This name was first given in a letter written by the Venetian Il Cretico on the 26th of June 1501, after the return of Cabral's fleet.

The lucrative trade in brazil-wood which soon developed, particularly with Flanders, for dyeing, caused the name of Brazil to be applied to it. This brazil-wood was called by the natives *ibira-pitanga* or red wood. It is classed by botanists as genus *Caesalpinia*. Columbus had found brazil-wood in the West Indies, but it had been ignored in the search for gold. The wood had formerly come from the East, where it had been known as early as the ninth century. The name was derived from the Arabic word *bakkam*, which had become Latinized into *bresilium*. There was also another reason for this name. As early as 1351 there appeared in the Medici atlas the representation of an island designated as Brazil. This island elusively changed its location until long after South America was discovered. The coincidence of these names, the lack of interest shown by the Portuguese in the new land, and the belief in the popular mind that the country was useful only for its dye-wood, caused the name to be definitely changed from Santa Cruz, or Sancta Cruz, to Brazil, and afterwards to Brasil. The old name was still retained by the ecclesiastics for many years, and they bitterly resented the substitution of the vulgar name of Brazil for that of Sancta Cruz with all its religious significance. It was called Santa Cruz until the middle of the sixteenth century. As a fitting memory of this discovery the national flag of Brazil still shows the stars of the Southern Cross.

a league from the shore, where we all cast anchor in front of the mouth of a river. And we arrived at this anchorage at ten o'clock, more or less. And from there we caught sight of men who were going along the shore, some seven or eight, as those on the small ships said, because they arrived there first. We there launched the boats and skiffs, and immediately all the captains of the ships came to this ship of the chief captain, and there they talked.¹ And the captain sent Nicolao Coelho² on shore in a boat to see that river.³ And as soon as he began to go thither men assembled on the shore, by twos and threes, so that when the boat reached the mouth of the river eighteen or twenty men were already there.⁴ They were dark, and entirely naked, without anything to cover their shame. They carried in their hands bows with their arrows.⁵ All came boldly towards

¹ This indicates that Caminha went on Cabral's ship, and on this account the diary sent to the king may have been kept at the suggestion either of Cabral or of Ayres Correia.

² Nicoláu Coelho was captain of one of the ships. He had distinguished himself for bravery during the voyage with da Gama, when he went as commander of the *Berrio*, and had been received with great honour by the king upon his return. During Cabral's voyage he headed both landing parties in Brazil and was probably the first Portuguese to set foot on Brazilian soil. His ship was the first to reach Portugal on the return voyage of the fleets of both da Gama and Cabral.

³ The Rio Cahy. This location for the first landing-place in Brazil is ascertained by measuring back 10 leagues from Porto Seguro, which can be identified because of its harbour. It has also been assigned to the mouth of the Rio do Frade, but probably in error.

⁴ I am indebted to Dr. Alfred Métraux for the following regarding these Indians:

'The Tupinamba Indians occupied almost without interruption during the sixteenth century the whole coast of Brazil, from the mouth of the Amazon River as far as Rio Grande do Sul. They were divided into a certain number of nations who all bore the name of Tupi, but the Portuguese and the French often gave them different appellations to distinguish them. The indigenes whom Cabral met were the Tupiniquin. They possessed a narrow band of the coast which extended from Camamu on the North, to the Rio São Matheus (Cricaré) on the South. They even reached as far as Espiritu Santo.

'All these Tupi tribes of the Brazilian coast spoke the same language, and their customs, as well as their material civilization, were very similar and uniform. The descriptions given of the Tupinamba at the mouth of the Amazon correspond very exactly with what other authors tell us of the Tupinamba of the Rio de Janeiro, also known under the name of Tamoio. This uniformity of the civilization of the Tupi-Guarani of the coast proves that they had emigrated on the Atlantic littoral at a very recent date. They had preserved, until the arrival of the whites, the tradition of their migrations. They came, without doubt, from the centre of Brazil, where to-day live numerous tribes belonging to the same linguistic family of Tupi-Guarani.'

See A. Métraux, *La Civilisation matérielle des tribus Tupi-Guarani*, and *La Religion des Tupinamba* (Paris, 1928), in which ample bibliographies are given of the early writers on the Indians of Brazil.

⁵ The bows were long and well shaped with a notch at either end for attaching a cotton cord. With the Tupiniquin, the section was oval, although other tribes of the

the boat, and Nicolao Coelho made a sign to them that they should lay down their bows, and they laid them down. He could not have any speech with them there, nor understanding which might be profitable, because of the breaking of the sea on the shore. He gave them only a red cap [*barrete*]¹ and a cap [*carapuça*]² of linen, which he was wearing on his head, and a black hat. And one of them gave him a hat of long bird feathers with a little tuft of red and grey feathers like those of a parrot.³ And another gave him a large string of very small white beads which look like seed pearls;⁴ these articles I believe the captain is sending to Your Highness.⁵ And with this he returned to the ships because it was late and he could have no further speech with them on account of the sea. On the fol-

Tupinamba used different shapes. The arrows had long shafts properly feathered. Due to the scarcity of quartz and obsidian, the points were made of reed or bone. Points covered with burning cotton were sometimes used in warfare to destroy the houses of their enemies.

¹ A four-cornered hat made of soft material.

² A conical cap ordinarily made of blue- or rose-coloured cloth which was used by Portuguese sailors and farmers. Among Mediterranean sailors it was red, and worn by masters or pilots. These caps are still seen along the coast of Portugal.

³ The bonnet or *acangaop* here described was worn because of the brilliant colouring of the separate feathers, which were selected to suit the wearer's taste. An illustration of one of these taken from an old print is given by Métraux. In addition to this type there were two others. These were made of short feathers interlaced with cotton thread to form a net, which made a compact covering as on the throat of a bird. In some cases small pieces of wood were used for firmer attachment, thus making the bonnet thick and heavy. One of these covered closely the head and ears and extended to the neck or shoulders; the other had a longer extension to the middle of the back. They sometimes wore short tufts of radiating feathers on the head.

The feathers for these bonnets were carefully selected for uniformity of size and colour. They were sometimes dyed. The method of attaching the feathers showed a highly developed technique.

The Tupinamba also wore diadems. These consisted of long coloured feathers attached to a band worn around the head. They were sometimes used with the caps or bonnets. Other feathers were attached to bands and worn around the neck, waist, or arms as bracelets. The so-called bustles consisted of radiating feathers of the American ostrich, the *nanduguacu* of Brazil. These are shown in nearly all of the early pictures of the Tupinamba. The men wore diadems, bonnets, mantles, or bustles. The women contented themselves with simpler feather ornaments.

⁴ *aljaveira*. The members of the fleet were on the alert to discover pearls, because just before their departure word had been brought back to Spain, and had probably reached Portugal, that these had been discovered during the third voyage of Columbus. According to Métraux, both men and women wore long strings of shells which were wound around the neck and suspended on their chests or wound about the wrists. The beads were chiefly shell, but bone, wood, and other materials were also used. They also had strings of larger beads with pendants which were worn around the neck. Similar necklaces of shells resembling seed pearls are still used by the Indians of Brazil.

⁵ Dom Manuel had changed the expression *Vossa Senhoria*, which had been previously used, to *Vossa Alteza*. The title *Magestade* was not used by the Portuguese kings in the sixteenth century, since it was only applied to God.

lowing night it blew so hard from the south-east with showers that it made the ships drift, especially the flagship.

And on Friday morning, at eight o'clock, a little more or less, on the advice of the pilots, the captain ordered the anchors to be raised and to set sail. And we went northward along the coast with the boats and skiffs tied to the poop, to see whether we could find some shelter and good anchorage where we might lie, to take on water and wood, not because we were in need of them then, but to provide ourselves here. And when we set sail there were already some sixty or seventy men on the shore, sitting near the river, who had gathered there little by little. We continued along the coast and the captain ordered the small vessels to go in closer to the land, and to strike sail if they found a secure anchorage for the ships. And when we were some ten leagues along the coast from where we had raised anchor, the small vessels found a reef within which was a harbour, very good and secure [*seguro*] with a very wide entrance. And they went in and lowered their sails. And gradually the ships arrived after them, and a little before sunset they also struck sail about a league from the reef, and anchored in eleven fathoms. And by the captain's order our pilot, Affonso Lopez, who was in one of those small vessels and was an alert and dextrous man for this, straightway entered the skiff to take soundings in the harbour. And he captured two well-built natives who were in a canoe.¹ One of them was carrying a bow and six or seven arrows and many others went about on the shore with bows and arrows and they did not use them. Then, since it was already night, he took the two men to the flagship, where they were received with much pleasure and festivity.

In appearance they are dark, somewhat reddish, with good faces and good noses, well shaped.² They go naked, without any covering; neither do they pay more attention to concealing

¹ *almadia*. This is a Portuguese word, evidently derived from a Berber word which originally meant a ferry boat (*el maziyah*). In the narratives of Cabral's voyage it has the general meaning of any small native craft, such as the dugout, raft, bark canoe, or those of a similar nature. Because there is no exact equivalent in English, it will be retained in these translations in its original form.

² The earliest illustration showing the Tupinamba Indians was printed at Augsburg or Nuremberg prior to 1504. It is not, however, an accurate representation. See article by Rudolph Schuller in the *Journal de la Soc. des Américanistes*, 1924, vol. xvi, p. III.

or exposing their shame than they do to showing their faces, and in this respect they are very innocent. Both had their lower lips bored and in them were placed pieces of white bone, the length of a handbreadth, and the thickness of a cotton spindle and as sharp as an awl at the end. They put them through the inner part of the lip, and that part which remains between the lip and the teeth is shaped like a rook in chess. And they carry it there enclosed in such a manner that it does not hurt them, nor does it embarrass them in speaking, eating, or drinking.¹ Their hair is smooth, and they were shorn, with the hair cut higher than above a comb of good size, and shaved to above the ears.² And one of them was wearing below the opening, from temple to temple towards the back, a sort of wig of yellow birds' feathers, which must have been the length of a *couto*,³ very thick and very tight, and it covered the back of the head and the ears. This was glued to his hair, feather by feather, with a material as soft as wax, but it was not wax. Thus the head-dress was very round and very close and very equal, so that it was not necessary to remove it when they washed.

¹ 'They have a large hole in the lower lip which they make when they are young. They take the children and prick the hole with sharpened deer's horn. In this they insert a small piece of stone or wood and anoint it with salve, and the hole remains open. Then when the children are fully grown and fit to bear arms, they enlarge the hole and insert in it a large green stone. This stone is shaped so that the smaller end is inside the lip and the larger end outside. The result is that their lips hang down with the weight of the stones. They have also at both sides of the mouth, and in either cheek, other small stones. Some of these are of crystal and are narrow and long.' Hans Staden (transl. by Letts, p. 143). These labrets are not only mentioned by Hans Staden, who was in Brazil forty-seven years later, but by Cardim, and nearly all the early writers who visited Brazil. Perhaps the most exaggerated description is given by Vespucci in his letter addressed to Lorenzo de' Medici in 1502 (C. E. Lester, *The Life and Voyages of Americus Vesputius*, pp. 182-3).

² *os cabelos seus sam credios, e andavam trosquijados de trosquya alta mais que de sobre pemptem, de bem gramdura, e rapados ataa per cima das orelhas; tosquiar means literally to shear. The hair was cut by a blow of one stone upon another. Sobre pemptem means the length cut over a barber's comb. Hair was usually removed by plucking but they also shaved with a sharp piece of quartz or with a bamboo knife.*

³ *e humm d eles trazia per baixo da solapa de fonte a fonte pera detras huma maneira de cabelreira de penas d ave amarela, que seria de compridam de humm couto. . . .* The Tupinamba shaved their hair above the forehead in a half-moon, extending from temple to temple. An illustration of this is given in Léry. The cut portion was not covered with feathers. The word *solapa* has many meanings. It here indicates the space within this crescent. Hair was allowed to grow only on the head. There were other arrangements of cutting the hair besides the half-moon in front. The meaning of the word *couto* is not clear but it may be the equivalent of the Spanish *coto*, meaning the width of the hand with the thumb extended. The method of cutting the hair as shown in illustrations of later writers indicates that the back portion of the head was also shaved to above the ears. There was thus left a portion covered with hair about the width of a handbreadth.

When they came on board, the captain, well dressed, with a very large collar of gold around his neck, was seated in a chair, with a carpet at his feet as a platform. And Sancho de Toar and Simam de Miranda and Nicolao Coelho and Aires Correa and the rest of us who were in the ship with him were seated on the floor on this carpet. Torches were lighted and they entered, and made no sign of courtesy or of speaking to the captain or to any one, but one of them caught sight of the captain's collar, and began to point with his hand towards the land and then to the collar, as though he were telling us that there was gold in the land.¹ And he also saw a silver candlestick, and in the same manner he made a sign towards the land and then towards the candlestick, as though there were silver also. They showed them a grey parrot which the captain brought here; they at once took it into their hands and pointed towards the land, as though they were found there. They showed them a sheep, but they paid no attention to it. They showed them a hen; they were almost afraid of it, and did not want to touch it; and afterwards they took it as though frightened. Then food was given them; bread and boiled fish, comfits, little cakes, honey, and dried figs. They would eat scarcely anything of that, and if they did taste some things they threw them out. Wine was brought them in a cup; they put a little to their mouths, and did not like it at all, nor did they want any more.² Water was brought them in a

¹ The Tupi-Guarani were, in fact, acquainted not only with gold but with silver and copper as well, which had been obtained by successive trade with the people of the Andine plateau. Silver trinkets were found among the Guarani Indians during the expedition of Sebastian Cabral, who went to the south of Brazil in 1526 to determine the Line of Demarcation, under the Treaty of Tordesillas, by astronomical observations. The belief that silver was to be found there gave the name to the Rio de la Plata; and later the name Argentine was applied to that country for the same reason. Silver, however, is only to be found on the Andine plateau. The migration of cultural elements from other parts of South America, particularly as related to the Tupi-Guarani, has been carefully studied by Nordenskiöld and Métraux. These exchanges carried to other parts the cultural elements of the Tupi-Guarani as well. The comparative rapidity of these movements is shown by the distribution of those introduced by the Europeans. Between the first relations of these peoples with those of Europe soon after Cabral's voyage and the conquest of Peru by Pizarro, the two elements which spread most rapidly were chickens and iron fish-hooks.

² This does not mean that they did not drink intoxicants, for Hans Staden tells us: 'The women prepare the drinks. They take the mandioca root and boil it in great pots. Afterwards they pour it into other vessels and allow it to cool a little. Then young girls sit around and chew the boiled root in their mouths, and what is chewed they set apart in a special vessel. When the boiled root is all chewed, they place it

jar;¹ they took a mouthful of it, and did not drink it; they only washed their mouths and spat it out. One of them saw some white rosary beads; he made a motion that they should give them to him, and he played much with them, and put them around his neck; and then he took them off and wrapped them around his arm. He made a sign towards the land and then to the beads and to the collar of the captain, as if to say that they would give gold for that. We interpreted this so, because we wished to, but if he meant that he would take the beads and also the collar, we did not wish to understand because we did not intend to give it to him. And afterwards he returned the beads to the one who gave them to him. And then they stretched themselves out on their backs on the carpet to sleep without taking any care to cover their privy parts, which were not circumcised, and the hair on them was well shaved and arranged. The captain ordered pillows to be put under the head of each one, and he with the head-dress took sufficient pains not to disarrange it. A mantle was thrown over them, and they permitted it and lay at rest and slept.

On Saturday morning the captain ordered sails to be set and we went to seek the entrance, which was very wide and deep, six or seven fathoms, and all the ships entered within and anchored in five or six fathoms; this anchorage inside is so large and so beautiful and so secure that more than two hundred large and small ships could lie within it.² And as soon as the ships were in place and anchored all the captains came to this ship of the chief captain, and from here the captain ordered Nicolao Coelho and Bartolameu Dias³ to go on shore, and they

back again in the pot which they fill with water, mixing the water with the chewed root, after which they heat it again.

¹ They have special pots, half buried in the ground, which they make use of much as we use casks for wine or beer. They pour the liquid into these and close them, and the liquor ferments of itself and becomes strong. After two days they drink it until they are drunken. It is thick, but pleasant to the taste. This method is similar to that used by the Quichua Indians of Peru in making *chicha* from maize. The Tupinamba Indians also used other intoxicants made from vegetables, maize, and fruits.

² This was probably an *albarrada*, the Arabic name for a jar for cooling water.

³ This was called Porto Seguro, the present Bahia Cabralia, located in latitude 16° 21' S. The early village built at Porto Seguro was later abandoned by the inhabitants because the site was unhealthy and it was moved farther south to the present location bearing this name.

⁴ This is the same Bartolomeu Dias who, in an endeavour to reach India, had rounded the Cape of Good Hope in 1488.

took those two men, and let them go with their bows and arrows. To each of them he ordered new shirts and red hats and two rosaries of white bone beads to be given and they carried them on their arms, with rattles and bells. And he sent with them to remain there a young convict,¹ named Affonso Ribeiro, the servant of Dom Joham Tello, to stay with them, and learn their manner of living and customs; and he ordered me² to go with Nicolao Coelho. We went at once straight for the shore. At that place there assembled at once some two hundred men, all naked, and with bows and arrows in their hands. Those whom we were bringing made signs to them that they should draw back and put down their bows, and they put them down, and did not draw back much. It is enough to say that they put down their bows. And then those whom we brought, and the young convict with them, got out. As soon as they were out they did not stop again, nor did one wait for the other; rather they ran, each as fast as he could. And they and many others with them passed a river which flows here with sweet and abundant water which came up as far as their waists. And thus they went running on the other side of the river between some clumps of palms, where were others, and there they stopped. And there, too, the young convict went with a man who, immediately upon his leaving the boat, befriended him, and took him thither. And then they brought him back to us, and with him came the others whom we had brought. These were now naked and without caps. And then many began to arrive, and entered into the boats from the seashore, until no more could get in. And they carried water gourds and took some kegs which we brought and filled them with water and carried them to the boats. They did not actually enter the boat, but from near by, threw them in by hand and we took them, and they asked us to give them something.

¹ The fleet carried twenty convicts, or banished men, condemned to death. These were to be landed at desirable places to proselyte the natives and to learn their language. Their success was to be rewarded with pardon. Some of these convicts were of great value in this and succeeding voyages. Vasco da Gama had also carried ten or twelve convicts for the same purpose.

² The fact that Cabral sent Caminha, a writer, on shore with the two captains may indicate that he had been selected by the chief captain to write the account of the sojourn in Brazil although as yet it had not been decided to send word of this discovery to the king. If Caminha continued to narrate the events of the voyage his account was probably lost during the massacre at Calicut.

Nicolao Coelho had brought bells and bracelets and to some he gave a bell and to others a bracelet, so that with that inducement they almost wished to help us. They gave us some of those bows and arrows for hats and linen caps, and for whatever we were willing to give them. From thence the other two youths departed and we never saw them again.

Many of them, or perhaps the greater number of those who were there, wore those beaks of bone in their lips, and some, who were without them, had their lips pierced, and in the holes they carried wooden plugs which looked like stoppers of bottles.¹ And some of them carried three of those beaks, namely, one in the middle and two at the ends. And others were there whose bodies were quartered in colour,² that is, half of them in their own colour, and half in a bluish-black dye, and others quartered in checkered pattern.³ There were among them three or four girls, very young and very pretty, with very dark hair, long over the shoulders, and their privy parts so high, so closed, and so free from hair that we felt no shame in looking at them very well. Then for the time there was no more speech or understanding with them, because their barbarity was so great that no one could either be understood or heard. We made signs for them to leave, and they did so, and went to the other side of the river. And three or four of our men left the boats and filled I do not know how many kegs of

¹ *Espelhos de boracha*. That is, the stoppers used with skin containers for wine. These wooden decorations were used by the young men. They might also have been worn to fill the openings in the face as a relaxation from the heavy stone labrets.

² The black paint used for the fanciful decoration of the body was derived from the fruit of the *genipapeiro*. The red colour used particularly for the face and feet was derived from the fruit of the *uruch*.

³ The account given by the Portuguese friar Fernão Cardim, which Purchas inserts in his *Pilgrims*, vol. xvi, ed. 1906, p. 422, corroborates the description of Vaz de Caminha.

'But to make themselves gallant they use divers inventions, painting their bodies with the juice of a certaine fruite wherewith they remaine black, making in their bodies many white stroakes, after the fashion of round hose, and other kinde of garments. They emplume themselves also, making Diadems and Bracelets, and other very fine inventions, they esteeme very much all manner of fine Feathers: they let no haire grow in the parts of their body, but they pull them out, onely the head excepted, which they cut in many fashions, for some weare them long with a halfe Moone shaven before, and they say they tooke this use from Saint Thomas, and it seemeth that they had some notice of him though confusedly: others make certaine kinde of crownes and circles that they seeme Friars: the women all doe weare long haire, and ordinarily blacke, and the haire of the one and of the other is smooth: when they are angrie they let their haire grow long and the women, when they mourne, doe cut their haire, and also when their husbands goe a farre journey.'

water which we carried, and we returned to the ships. And upon seeing us thus, they made signs for us to return. We returned and they sent the convict and did not wish him to stay there with them. He carried a small basin and two or three red caps to give to their chief, if there was one. They did not care to take anything from him and thus they sent him back with everything, and then Bertolameu Dias made him return again to give those things to them, and he returned and gave them in our presence, to the one who had first befriended him. And then he came away and we took him with us. The man who befriended him was now well on in years, and was well decked with ornaments and covered with feathers stuck to his body, so that he looked pierced with arrows like Saint Sebastian.¹ Others wore caps of yellow feathers, others of red, others of green; and one of the girls was all painted from head to foot with that paint, and she was so well built and so rounded and her lack of shame was so charming, that many women of our land seeing such attractions, would be ashamed that theirs were not like hers. None of them were circumcised, but all were as we were. And, thereupon, we returned, and they went away.

In the afternoon the chief captain set out in his boat with all of us and with the other captains of the ships in their boats to amuse ourselves in the bay near the shore. But no one went on land, because the captain did not wish it, although there was no one there; only he and all landed on a large island in the bay, which is very empty at low tide, but on all sides it is surrounded by water so that no one can go to it without a boat or by swimming. There he and the rest of us had a good time for an hour and a half, and the mariners fished there, going out with a net, and they caught a few small fish. And then, since it was already night, we returned to the ships.

¹ The whole body was sometimes covered with feathers taken from the throats of birds, or small feathers, which were attached with wax or gum as described by Caminha. This custom is rather widely distributed over tropical South America. The Tupinamba formerly so prepared their dead before burial. In some cases the head only was covered with throat feathers, which were similarly attached to the hair, giving the appearance of a wig. As the feathers had great value, and they wished to use them again, they were washed with the juice of a certain root to expand them and in order to remove them from the hair. The feathers were preserved by being placed in bamboo tubes sealed with wax.

On Low Sunday in the morning the captain determined to go to that island to hear mass and a sermon, and he ordered all the captains to assemble in the boats and to go with him; and so it was done. He ordered a large tent to be set up on the island and within it a very well-provided altar to be placed, and there with all the rest of us he had mass said, which the father, Frei Amrique, intoned and all the other fathers and priests who were there accompanied him with the same voice. That mass, in my opinion, was heard by all with much pleasure and devotion. The captain had there with him the banner of Christ,¹ with which he left Belem, and it was kept raised on the Gospel side. After the mass was finished, the father removed his vestments, and sat down in a high chair, and we all threw ourselves down on that sand, and he preached a solemn and profitable sermon on the history of the Gospel, and at the end of it he dealt with our coming and with the discovery of this land, and referred to the sign of the Cross in obedience to which we came; which was very fitting, and which inspired much devotion.

While we were at mass and at the sermon, about the same number of people were on the shore as yesterday with their bows and arrows, who were amusing themselves and watching us; and they sat down, and when the mass was finished and we were seated for the sermon, many of them arose and blew a horn or trumpet² and began to leap and to dance for a while, and some of them placed themselves in two or three *almadias* which they had there. These are not made like those I have

¹ In addition to the royal standard Cabral also took with him the banner of the Order of Christ, of which he was a member. The ceremony during which this banner was presented probably also took place at Restello, which belonged to that Order. There is some confusion among historians regarding these two banners and it is sometimes stated that it was the banner of the Order of Christ which was given to Cabral by Dom Manuel. The fleet was on its way to India, where Cabral went as the representative of the king. It was but fitting, therefore, that he should take a banner with the royal arms. In fact, he had occasion to use it in this capacity when he took possession for Portugal of a house given by the King of Calicut. The fleet also went on a religious mission and the banner of the Order of Christ added significance, because it was the emblem of Prince Henry in his conflicts with the Moors. It was thus appropriately used at this time. When da Gama left on his first voyage he too was given a banner of the Order of Christ. Barros (*Asia*, Dec. 1, bk. iv, ch. 1).

² Their trumpets were made of cylinders of hollow wood or of the leg-bones of animals, often encased in wood. In warfare they used large shells which were blown through a perforated hole. Drums, flutes, whistles, and rattles were also used. In the illustrations accompanying the narratives of Hans Staden and Jean de Léry given in de Bry, the trumpets are shown with an egg-shaped enlargement at the extremity.

already seen; they are simply three logs fastened together,¹ and four or five, or all who wanted to, entered them, scarcely moving away at all from the land, but only far enough to keep their footing. After the sermon was finished the captain and all the rest proceeded to the boats with our banner displayed and we embarked, and thus we all went towards the land, to pass along it where they were, Bertolameu Dias going ahead in his skiff, at the captain's order, with a piece of timber from an *almadia* which the sea had carried to them, to give it to them. And all of us were about a stone's throw behind him. When they saw the skiff of Bertolameu Dias, all of them came at once to the water, going into it as far as they could. A sign was made to them to put down their bows, and many of them went at once to put them down on shore and others did not put them down. There was one there who spoke much to the others, telling them to go away, but they did not, in my opinion, have respect or fear of him. This one who was telling them to move carried his bow and arrows, and was painted with red paint on his breasts and shoulder blades and hips, thighs, and legs, all the way down, and the unpainted places such as the stomach and belly were of their own colour, and the paint was so red that the water did not wash away or remove it, but rather when he came out of the water he was redder. One of our men left the skiff of Bertolameu Dias and went among them, without their thinking for a moment of doing him harm; on the contrary, they gave him gourds of water and beckoned to those on the skiff to come on land. Thereupon Bertolameu Dias returned to the captain, and we came to the ships to eat, playing trumpets and pipes without troubling them further. And they again sat down on the shore and thus they remained for a while. On this island where we went to hear mass and the sermon the water ebbs a great deal and uncovers much sand and much gravel. While we were there some went to look for shell fish, but did not find them; they found some thick and short shrimps. Among them was a very large and very fat shrimp such as I had never seen before. They also found shells of

¹ These rafts are often described by later writers. They were about 6 feet long and 2 feet wide, made of four or five logs of medium size, tied together with twigs or creepers. The Indians sat on them with their legs extended, and propelled them with a small paddle.

cockles and mussels, but did not discover any whole piece. And as soon as we had eaten, all the captains came to this ship at the command of the chief captain and he went to one side with them and I was there too, and he asked all of us whether it seemed well to us to send news of the finding of this land to Your Highness by the supply ship, so that you might order it to be better reconnoitred, and learn more about it than we could now learn because we were going on our way.¹ And among the many speeches which were made regarding the matter, it was said by all or by the greater number, that it would be very well to do so; and to this they agreed. And as soon as the decision was made, he asked further whether it would be well to take here by force two of these men to send to Your Highness and to leave here in their place two convicts. In this matter they agreed that it was not necessary to take men by force, since it was the general custom that those taken away by force to another place said that everything about which they are asked was there; and that these two convicts whom we should leave would give better and far better information about the land than would be given by those carried away by us, because they are people whom no one understands nor would they learn [Portuguese] quickly enough to be able to tell it as well as those others when Your Highness sends here, and that consequently we should not attempt to take any one away from here by force nor cause any scandal, but in order to tame and pacify them all the more, we should simply leave here the two convicts when we departed. And thus it was determined, since it appeared better to all.

When this was finished the captain ordered us to go to land in our boats in order to ascertain as well as possible what the river was like, and also to divert ourselves. We all went ashore

¹ e, tanto que comemos, vieram logo todolos capitaães a esta naao per mandado do capitam moor, com os quaaes se ele apartou, e eu na companhia, e preguntou asy a todos se nos parecia seer bem mandar a nova do achamento d esta terra a Vosa Alteza pelo navjo dos mantijmentos, pera a mjllhor mandar descobrir, e saber d ela mais do que agora nos podiamos saber, por hirmos de nosa viagem . . . (Alguns Documentos, p. 113). This sentence is important. It shows that Pedro Vaz de Caminha occupied a prominent place among those in the fleet as he was a member of this council. Gaspar de Lemos was evidently to return directly to Portugal with news of the discovery and it was suggested that further acquaintance with the land should be obtained on a succeeding voyage. Cabral's fleet was also to proceed at once to the East without making other discoveries along the coast. It is probable that Caminha began to write his letter on this day, Monday the 26th of April.

leave 2
Port (and)

in our boats, armed, and the banner with us. The natives went there along the shore to the mouth of the river¹ where we were going, and before we arrived, in accordance with the instructions they had received before, they all laid down their bows and made signs for us to land. And as soon as the boats had put their bows on shore, they all went immediately to the other side of the river, which is not wider than the throw of a short staff;² and as soon as we disembarked some of our men crossed the river at once and went among them, and some waited and others withdrew, but the result was that we were all intermingled. They gave us some of their bows with their arrows in exchange for hats and linen caps and for anything else which we gave them. So many of our men went to the other side and mingled with them that they withdrew and went away and some went above to where others were. And then the captain had himself carried on the shoulders of two men and crossed the river and made every one return. The people who were there could not have been more than the usual number, and when the captain made all return, some of them came to him, not to recognize him for their lord, for it does not seem to me that they understand or have knowledge of this,³ but because our people were already passing to this side of the river. There they talked and brought many bows and beads of the kind already mentioned, and trafficked in anything in such manner that many bows, arrows, and beads were brought from there to the ships. And then the captain returned to this side of the river, and many men came to its bank. There you might have seen gallants painted with black and red, and with quarterings both on their bodies and on their legs, which certainly was pleasing in appearance. There were also among them four or five young women just as naked, who were not displeasing to the eye, among whom was one with her thigh from the knee to

¹ This was the Mutary (Itacumirim) River.

² *jogo de manqual*.

³ The Tupinamba did not appear to have chiefs with authority. The head of a communal house or one more proficient in warfare led in his respective sphere. There was some authority exercised by the elders but rather as advisers than as chiefs. This feeling of freedom of action was one of the reasons why Europeans had so much difficulty in making the natives work under their supervision, and it gradually led to the practical extermination of many tribes and the substitution of negroes for common labour. The apparent lack of authority among the Tupinamba was of great interest to the followers of Rousseau in the eighteenth century, who saw in their mode of government the simple life which they themselves sought.

the hip and buttock all painted with that black paint and all the rest in her own colour; another had both knees and calves and ankles so painted, and her privy parts so nude and exposed with such innocence that there was not there any shame. There was also another young woman carrying an infant boy or girl tied at her breasts by a cloth of some sort so that only its little legs showed. But the legs of the mother and the rest of her were not concealed by any cloth.

And afterwards the captain moved up along the river, which flows continuously even with the shore, and there an old man was waiting who carried in his hand the oar of an *almadia*. When the captain reached him he spoke in our presence, without any one understanding him, nor did he understand us with reference to the things he was asked about, particularly gold, for we wished to know whether they had any in this land. This old man had his lip so bored that a large thumb could be thrust through the hole, and in the opening he carried a worthless green stone¹ which closed it on the outside. And the captain made him take it out; and I do not know what devil spoke to him, but he went with it to put it in the captain's mouth. We laughed a little at this and then the captain got tired and left him; and one of our men gave him an old hat for the stone, not because it was worth anything but to show. And afterwards the captain got it, I believe to send it with the other things to Your Highness. We went along there looking at the river, which has much and very good water. Along it are many palms, not very high, in which there are many good sprouts.² We gathered and ate many of them. Then the captain turned towards the mouth of the river where we had disembarked, and on the other side of the river were many of them, dancing and diverting themselves before one another, without taking each other by the hand, and they did it well.³ Then Diogo

¹ Green stones were particularly prized by the Indians of South America.

² *palmitos*.

³ Like that of other Indian tribes, the dancing of the Tupinamba consisted in stamping the feet and turning to the rhythm of rattles, drums, and wind instruments. A leader used a stick as a baton to mark the time. Women participated in these dances as well as the men, particularly in the ceremonies attending cannibalism. The following description translated from Fernão Cardim is given in Purchas's *Pilgrims* (vol. xvi, pp. 427-8):

"The Fathers doe teach them from their cradles to dance and sing, and their dancings are not sundrie changes, but a continuall stamping with the feet standing still, or going round about, or stirring their bodie or their head, and they doe it all by such compasse

Dias,¹ who was revenue officer of Sacavem, crossed the river. He is an agreeable and pleasure-loving man, and he took with him one of our bagpipe players and his bagpipe,² and began to dance among them, taking them by the hands, and they were delighted and laughed and accompanied him very well to the sound of the pipe. After they had danced he went along the level ground, making many light turns and a remarkable leap which astonished them, and they laughed and enjoyed themselves greatly. And although he reassured and flattered them a great deal with this, they soon became sullen like wild men and went away upstream. And then the captain crossed over the river with all of us, and we went along the shore, the boats going along close to land, and we came to a large lake of sweet water which is near the seashore, because all that shore is marshy above and the water flows out in many places. And after we had crossed the river some seven or eight of the natives joined our sailors who were retiring to the boats. And they took from there a shark which Bertolameu Dias killed and brought to them and threw on the shore.³ It suffices to say that up to this time, although they were somewhat tamed, a moment afterwards they became frightened like sparrows at a feeding-place. And no one dared to speak strongly to them for fear they might be more frightened; and everything was done to their liking in order to tame them thoroughly. To the old man with whom the captain spoke he gave a red cap; and in spite of all the talking that he did with him, and the cap which

and pleasantness as can be desired, at the sound of a Timbrell made after the fashion of those which the children use in Spaine with manie sinall stones within or certaine seeds whereof they make also verie good beads: and so they sing dancing altogether, for they doe not one thing without the other, in such compasse and order that sometime an 100 men dancing and singing together in a row one behind the other doe end all at one stroke, as if they were altogether in one place. The singers as well men as women are much esteemed among them, in so much that if they take an enemy a good singer, and an Inventor of Verses, they therefore spare his life, and doe not eate him nor his children.'

¹ Diogo Dias was a brother of Bartolomeu Dias and commanded one of the caravels. He is called Diogo by Castanheda and Corrêa; Barros and Danião de Goes give his name as Pedro.

² The bagpipe formed the natural accompaniment to folk dances in Galicia and Portugal. Its use on ship-board was of value to keep up the spirits of the sailors.

³ In other accounts a manatee is described and not a shark. Caminha apparently did not see this animal and did not believe the stories told of its unusual appearance. The method of fishing employed by the Tupinamba by shooting with arrows or catching in nets is described by Hans Staden and in other early narratives. Fish was preserved by smoking and not with salt. This preserved fish ground to flour was called *pirachi*.

he gave him, as soon as he left and began to cross the river, he immediately became more cautious and would not return again to this side of it. The other two whom the captain had on the ships, and to whom he gave what has already been mentioned, did not appear again, from which I infer that they are bestial people and of very little knowledge; and for this reason they are so timid. Yet withal they are well cared for and very clean, and in this it seems to me that they are rather like birds or wild animals, to which the air gives better feathers and better hair than to tame ones. And their bodies are so clean and so fat and so beautiful that they could not be more so; and this causes me to presume that they have no houses or dwellings in which to gather, and the air in which they are brought up makes them so. Nor indeed have we up to this time seen any houses or anything which looks like them. The captain ordered the convict, Affonso Ribeiro, to go with them again, which he did. And he went there a good distance, and in the afternoon he returned, for they had made him come and were not willing to keep him there; and they had given him bows and arrows and had not taken from him anything which was his. On the contrary, he said, one of them had taken from him some yellow beads which he was wearing and fled with them; and he complained and the others at once went after him and returned to give them back to him. And then they ordered him to go back. He said that he had not seen there among them anything but some thatched huts of green branches, and made very large, like those of Entre Doiro e Minho.¹ And thus we returned to the ships to sleep when it was already almost night.

On Monday after eating we all disembarked to take in water.² Then many came there, but not so many as at the other times, and now they were carrying very few bows and they kept a little apart from us, and afterwards little by little mingled with us. And they embraced us and had a good time; and some of

¹ Entre Doiro e Minho is the extreme northern province of Portugal, of which Oporto is the capital. Since Caminha resided there it was but natural that he should have made this comparison. At the mouth of the Minho is the town of Caminha, which probably gave the name to the writer's family.

² It was at this landing that Master John with the pilot of Cabral's ship and that of Sancho de Tovar went on shore to determine the latitude.

them soon slunk away. They gave there some bows for sheets of paper and for some worthless old cap, or for anything else. And in such a manner it came about that a good twenty or thirty of our people went with them to where many others of them were, with girls and women, and brought back many bows and caps of bird feathers, some green and some yellow, samples of which I believe the captain will send to Your Highness. And according to what those said who went there they made merry with them. On that day we saw them closer and more as we wished, for all of us were almost intermingled. And there some of them had those colours in quarters, others in halves, and others in such colours as in the tapestry of Arras,¹ and all with their lips pierced, and many with the bones in them, and some of them without bones. Some of them were carrying prickly green nut shells from trees, which in colour resembled chestnuts, excepting that they were very much smaller. And these were full of small red grains which, when crushed between the fingers, made a very red paint with which they were painted.² And the more they wetted themselves the redder they became. They are all shaved to above the ears, likewise their eyebrows and eyelashes. All of them have their foreheads from temple to temple painted with a black paint, which looks like a black ribbon the breadth of two fingers.

And the captain ordered that convict, Affonso Ribeiro, and two other convicts to go there among them, and likewise Diogo Dias, because he was a cheerful man, with whom they played. And he ordered the convicts to remain there that night. They all went there and mingled with them,³ and as they said later, they went a good league and a half to a village of houses in which there must have been nine or ten dwellings,

¹ *panos dammar*. These were the *panos de ras* (Arras) or tapestries of many colours with which the walls of the palaces were adorned in winter. The tapestries of Arras, France, were the most celebrated in Europe during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

² These seeds were obtained from the *uruch* tree, probably the *annatto* (*Bixa orellana* of the family Bixaceae), extensively found in tropical America. The pulp surrounding the seeds furnishes a dye now used for fabrics, dairy products, chocolate, and varnishes. The annatto tree has spinose capsules filled with seeds which furnish a salmon-coloured dye.

³ The members of Cabral's fleet during their short stay in Brazil evidently did not have occasion to note customs which later writers considered of interest, among others the practice of cannibalism, the use of tobacco, and tattooing.

each of which they said was as long as the captain's ship. And they were of wood with sides of boards and covered with straw, of reasonable height, and all had one single room without any divisions. They had within many posts, and from post to post a net is tied by the ends to each post, high up, where they sleep.¹ And underneath they made their fires to warm themselves.² And each house had two small doors, one at one end, and another at the other. And they said that thirty or forty persons dwelt in each house, and that thus they found them.³ And that they gave them to eat of the food which they had, namely, much manioc⁴ and other roots which are in the land, that they eat.

And, as it was late, they presently made all of us return and

¹ Hammocks were used by the natives throughout tropical America. Those of the Tupinamba were made of cotton cord woven in a net and sometimes dyed. They were supported between posts or between trees and were used for sleeping in the communal houses or as places in which the elders reclined during the conferences within the stockade.

² The fires were for warmth and dryness and also to keep off insects and evil spirits. They served as a method of lighting as well. Several methods were employed for producing fire, all of which were by friction on wood.

³ The villages of the Tupinamba Indians were usually built on a slight elevation conveniently located for fresh water, hunting, fishing, and the cultivation of manioc. The village was taken down and partly removed if the food-supply became difficult to obtain. They are described in other early narratives as consisting of a single or double stockade of posts tied together with twigs having narrow openings for attacking the enemy. Within this enclosure were the long rectangular communal houses arranged around a central plaza. The pictures in de Bry and Staden show that four was the usual number, but Métraux states that, while this was the rule, in the larger villages there might be more. It was in this plaza that the life of the village was centred. It was here that the cannibalistic ceremonies were performed which are so vividly described in later narratives. The houses were long and narrow, with semicircular roofs. The question of light and ventilation does not seem to have been important. These 'malocas' or houses probably had an average length of 300 feet and a width of 30 feet, but the size naturally varied with the size of the village. The framework was made of logs held together with twigs and creepers. On this framework removable mats of leaves were placed which formed the enclosure. There was a low door at either end and one or sometimes two on the side. There were no divisions within the house; each family occupied the space between two posts. The houses were occupied by from thirty to two hundred individuals. Their chief enemies, the wild tribes of the interior, whom they had driven away from the coast, lived without shelter. See the description in Purchas's *Pilgrims* (vol. xvi, pp. 423-4).

⁴ *Inhame*, given here, is the Portuguese word for yam. Many species of yam are found in tropical regions, including Brazil. The chief food of the Tupinamba, however, was manioc, a root which resembles the yam but is somewhat larger, sometimes being as long as three feet and from six to nine inches in diameter. Two kinds of manioc or cassava are known, both of which are probably indigenous to South America. It was the bitter species, *Manihot utilissima*, which was used by these Indians. Because the sap of the cassava root contains hydrocyanic acid and is therefore highly poisonous it cannot be eaten raw but must be washed and heated to be safe. From the dried roots thus prepared a meal was made which was used in making a bread. When properly treated the starchy pellets of cassava form the tapioca of commerce.

did not wish any one to remain there; and also, as they said, they wished to come with us. They traded there, for bells and for other trifles of little value which we were carrying, very large and beautiful red parrots¹ and two little green ones and caps of green feathers and a cloth of feathers of many colours, woven in a very beautiful fashion.² All of these things Your Highness will see, because the captain will send them to you, as he says. And thereupon they came back and we returned to the ships.

On Tuesday, after eating, we landed to set a watch over the wood and to wash clothes. Some sixty or seventy men without bows or anything else were there on the shore when we reached it. As soon as we arrived they at once came to us without being frightened, and afterward many more came. There must have been a good two hundred, all without bows, and they all mingled so much with us that some of them helped us to load wood and put it in the boats, and they vied with us and derived much pleasure therefrom. And while we were taking on the wood two carpenters made a large cross from one piece of wood which was cut yesterday for this. Many of them came there to be with the carpenters, and I believe that they did this more to see the iron tools with which they were making it than to see the cross, because they have nothing of iron. And they cut their wood and boards with stones shaped like wedges put into a piece of wood, very well tied between two sticks, and in

¹ These were macaws, a name derived from the Tupi *macaúba*. They are among the argest and most magnificent of parrots, with very long tails and brilliant contrasting colouring. It was from them that the Tupinamba secured most of the feathers used for decorations. These were new to the Portuguese, although the smaller species were to be found in the Old World, and had been obtained by them in Guinea. To those on the voyage these birds seem to have been the greatest novelty found in Brazil. They are shown on many of the early maps of that country. On the Cantino map they are particularly prominent. Here other parrots are also shown on the opposite coast of Africa.

² This was a feather mantle. These have long been celebrated and specimens have been preserved in the principal ethnological museums. The feathers used were largely from the *guara abucu* (*Ibis rubra*), of whose feathers these Indians were particularly fond and in fact undertook long expeditions to obtain them. They were fastened around the shoulders and extended like a cape down the back, sometimes almost to the feet. The feathers were tied to the cotton string, which formed a network to hold them. According to the account of Soares de Souza (*Tratado descritivo do Brazil em 1587*, Rio de Janeiro, 1851, p. 320), the mantles were made exclusively by the men. They were worn by the sorcerers and perhaps by others. Feather ornaments must have been the chief distinction of wealth. It was a peculiar characteristic of these Indians that they carried their decorations at their backs rather than in front. The Tupinamba did not know how to weave.

such a manner that they are strong, according to what the men said who were at their houses yesterday, for they saw them there.¹ By now they kept us so much company as almost to disturb us in what we had to do. And the captain ordered the two convicts and Diogo Dias to go to the village, and to other villages if they should hear of them, and on no account to come to sleep on the ships, even if they should order them to; and so they went. While we were in this grove cutting wood some parrots flew across these trees, some of them green, and others grey, large and small, so that it seems to me that there must be many in this land, but I did not see more than about nine or ten. We did not then see other birds except some *pombas seixas*, and they seemed to me considerably larger than those of Portugal. Some said that they saw turtle-doves, but I did not see any; but since the groves are so numerous and so large and of such infinite variety, I do not doubt that in the interior there are many birds. And towards night we returned to the ships with our wood. I believe, Senhor, that heretofore I have not given account to Your Highness of the form of their bows and arrows. The bows are black and long and the arrows long, and their tips of pointed reeds, as Your Highness will see from some which I believe the captain will send to you.²

On Wednesday we did not go on shore, because the captain spent the whole day in the supply ship emptying it, and had transported to the ship what each one could carry. Many of the natives came to the shore, as we saw from the ships. There must have been some three hundred, according to what Sancho de Toar said, who was there. Diogo Dias and Affonso Ribeiro, the convict, whom the captain sent yesterday to sleep there at any cost, returned when it was already night because they did not want them to sleep there, and they found green parrots and other birds which were black, almost like magpies, except that they had white beaks and short tails. And when Sancho de

¹ Hatchets were made from a very hard blue-black stone and were of different shapes. Samples of these are often found in deserted villages along the coast of Brazil. The Tupinamba were adept in shaping stone, since it was much used for adornment.

² The points were of the nature of bamboo. Points of bone and the teeth of animals were also used. The shafts without the point were sometimes employed in making fire. The Tupi-Guarani Indians probably did not use poisoned arrows, neither did they use a throwing-stick, although both were used by other Indians of South America (E. Nordenskiöld, *Comparative Ethnological Studies*, vol. iii, p. 53).

Toar returned to the ship, some of them wished to go with him; but he did not want any except two proper youths. He ordered them to be well fed and cared for that night, and they ate all the food which was given them, and he ordered a bed with sheets to be made for them, as he said, and they slept and were comfortable that night. And so nothing more happened that day to write about.

On Thursday, the last of April, we ate early in the morning and went on shore for more wood and water, and when the captain was about to leave his ship Sancho de Toar arrived with his two guests, and because he had not yet eaten, cloths were laid for him and food was brought, and he ate. We seated the guests in their chairs, and they ate very well of all which was given them, especially of cold boiled ham and rice. They did not give them wine, because Sancho de Toar said that they did not drink it well. After the meal was over we all entered the boat and they with us. A sailor gave one of them a large tusk of a wild boar, well turned up. And as soon as he took it he at once put it in his lip; and because it did not fit there, they gave him a small piece of red wax. And this he applied to the back of his ornament to hold it and put it into his lip with the point turned upward, and he was as pleased with it as though he had a great jewel. And as soon as we disembarked he at once went off with it, and did not appear there again. When we landed there were probably eight or ten of the natives about, and little by little others began to come. And it seems to me that that day there came to the shore four hundred or four hundred and fifty men. Some of them carried bows and arrows and gave all for caps and for anything which we gave them. They ate with us of what we gave them. Some of them drank wine and others could not drink it, but it seems to me that if they accustomed themselves to it, they would drink it with great willingness. All were so well disposed and so well built and smart with their paints that they made a good show. They loaded as much of that wood as they could, very willingly, and carried it to the boats, and were quieter and more at ease among us than we were among them. The captain went with some of us for a short distance through this grove to a large stream of much water, which in our

opinion was the same as the one which runs down to the shore, from which we took water. There we stayed for a while, drinking and amusing ourselves beside the river in this grove, which is so large and so thick and of such abundant foliage that one cannot describe it. In it there are many palms, from which we gathered many good sprouts. When we disembarked, the captain said that it would be well to go directly to the cross, which was leaning against a tree near the river, to be set up the next day, which was Friday, and that we should all kneel down and kiss it so that they might see the respect which we had for it. And thus we did. And we motioned to those ten or twelve who were there that they should do the same, and at once they all went to kiss it. They seem to me people of such innocence that, if one could understand them and they us, they would soon be Christians, because they do not have or understand any belief, as it appears. And therefore, if the convicts who are to remain here will learn their language well and understand them, I do not doubt that they will become Christians, in accordance with the pious intent of Your Highness, and that they will believe in our Holy Faith, to which may it please Our Lord to bring them. For it is certain this people is good and of pure simplicity, and there can easily be stamped upon them whatever belief we wish to give them; and furthermore, Our Lord gave them fine bodies and good faces as to good men; and He who brought us here, I believe, did not do so without purpose. And consequently, Your Highness, since you so much desire to increase the Holy Catholic Faith, ought to look after their salvation, and it will please God that, with little effort, this will be accomplished.

They do not till the soil or breed stock, nor is there ox or cow, or goat, or sheep, or hen, or any other domestic animal which is accustomed to live with men; nor do they eat anything except these manioc, of which there is much, and of the seeds and the fruits which the earth and the trees produce. Nevertheless, with this they are stronger and better fed than we are with all the wheat and vegetables which we eat.¹

¹ The banana, sugar cane, rice, coffee, the water-melon, and onion were introduced by the whites. Banana cultivation and the domestic fowl spread with extreme rapidity over the greater part of the South American continent during the sixteenth century (Nordenskiöld, op. cit.).

While they were there that day, they continually skipped and danced with us to the sound of one of our tambours, in such a manner that they are much more our friends than we theirs. If one signed to them whether they wished to come to the ships, they at once made ready to do so, in such wise that had we wished to invite them all, they would all have come. However, we only took four or five this night to the ships, namely: the chief captain took two, and Simão de Miranda, one, whom he already had for his page, and Aires Gomes, another, also as a page. One of those whom the captain took was one of his guests whom we had brought him the first night when we arrived; to-day he came dressed in his shirt and with him his brother. These were this night very well entertained, both with food and with a bed with mattresses and sheets to tame them better.

And to-day, which is Friday, the first day of May, we went on land with our banner in the morning and disembarked up the river towards the south, where it seemed to us that it would be better to plant the cross, so that it might be better seen. And there the captain indicated where the hole should be made to plant it, and while they were making it, he with all the rest of us went to where the cross was down the river. We brought it from there with the friars and priests going ahead singing in the manner of a procession. There were already some of the natives there, about seventy or eighty, and when they saw us coming, some of them went to place themselves under it in order to help us. We crossed the river along the shore and went to place it where it was to be, which is probably a distance of two cross-bow shots from the river. While we were busy with this there came a good one hundred and fifty or more. After the cross was planted with the arms and device of Your Highness which we first nailed to it, we set up an altar at the foot of it. There the father, Frei Amrique, said mass, at which those already mentioned chanted and officiated. There were there with us some fifty or sixty natives, all kneeling as we were, and when it came to the Gospel and we all rose to our feet with hands lifted, they rose with us and lifted their hands, remaining thus until it was over. And then they again sat down as we did. And at the elevation of the Host when we knelt, they placed themselves as we were, with hands uplifted, and so quietly that

I assure Your Highness that they gave us much edification. They stayed there with us until communion was over, and after the communion the friars and priests and the captain and some of the rest of us partook of communion. Some of them, because the sun was hot, arose while we were receiving communion and others remained as they were and stayed. One of them, a man of fifty or fifty-five years, stayed there with those who remained. While we were all thus he collected those who had remained and even called others. He went about among them and talked to them, pointing with his finger to the altar, and afterwards he lifted his finger towards Heaven as though he were telling them something good, and thus we understood it. After the mass was over the father took off his outer vestment and remained in his alb, and then he mounted a chair near the altar, and there he preached to us of the Gospel and of the apostles whose day this is,¹ treating at the end of the sermon of this your holy and virtuous undertaking, which caused us more edification. Those who still remained for the sermon were looking at him, as we were doing. And the one of whom I speak called some to come there; some came and others departed. And when the sermon was over, Nicolao Coelho brought many tin crosses with crucifixes, which he still had from another voyage, and we thought it well to put one around the neck of each; for which purpose the father, Frei Amrique, seated himself at the foot of the cross, and there, one by one, he put around the neck of each his own [cross] tied to a string, first making him kiss it and raise his hands. Many came for this, and we did likewise to all. They must have been about forty or fifty. And after this was finished it was already a good hour after midday; we went to the ships to eat, and the captain took with him that same one who had pointed out to the others the altar and the sky, and his brother with him, to whom he did much honour. And he gave him a Moorish shirt, and to the other one a shirt such as the rest of us wore. And as it appears to me and to every one, these people in order to be wholly Christian lack nothing except to understand us, for whatever they saw us do, they did likewise; wherefore it appeared to all that they have no idolatry and no worship. And I well believe that,

¹ That of Saint Philip and Saint James.

if Your Highness should send here some one who would go about more at leisure among them, that all will be turned to the desire of Your Highness. And if some one should come for this purpose, a priest should not fail to come also at once to baptize them, for by that time they will already have a greater knowledge of our faith through the two convicts who are remaining here among them. Both of these also partook of communion to-day. Among all those who came to-day there was only one young woman who stayed continuously at the mass, and she was given a cloth with which to cover herself, and we put it about her; but as she sat down she did not think to spread it much to cover herself. Thus, Senhor, the innocence of this people is such, that that of Adam could not have been greater in respect to shame. Now Your Highness may see whether people who live in such innocence will be converted or not if they are taught what pertains to their salvation. When this was over we went thus in their presence to kiss the cross, took leave of them, and came to eat.

I believe, Senhor, that with these two convicts who remain here, there stay also two seamen who to-night left this ship, fleeing to shore in a skiff.¹ They have not come back and we believe that they remain here, because to-morrow, God willing, we take our departure from here.

It seems to me, Senhor, that this land from the promontory we see farthest south to another promontory which is to the north, of which we caught sight from this harbour, is so great that it will have some twenty or twenty-five leagues of coastline. Along the shore in some places it has great banks, some of them red, some white, and the land above is quite flat and covered with great forests. From point to point the entire shore is very flat and very beautiful. As for the interior, it appeared to us from the sea very large, for, as far as eye could reach, we could see only land and forests, a land which seemed very extensive to us. Up to now we are unable to learn that there is gold or silver in it, or anything of metal or iron; nor have we seen any, but the land itself has a very good climate, as cold and temperate as that of Entre Doiro e Minho, because in the present season we found it like that. Its waters are quite endless.

¹ These may have returned, however, before the ships sailed.

So pleasing is it that if one cares to profit by it, everything will grow in it because of its waters. But the best profit which can be derived from it, it seems to me, will be to save this people, and this should be the chief seed which Your Highness should sow there. And if there were nothing more than to have here a stopping-place for this voyage to Calicut, that would suffice,¹ to say nothing of an opportunity to fulfil and do that which Your Highness so much desires, namely, the increase of our Holy Faith.

And in this manner, Senhor, I give here to Your Highness an account of what I saw in this land of yours, and if I have been somewhat lengthy you will pardon me, for the desire I had to tell you everything made me set it down thus in detail.² And, Senhor, since it is certain that in this charge laid upon me as in any other thing which may be for your service, Your Highness will be very faithfully served by me, I ask of you that in order to do me a special favour you order my son-in-law, Jorge Do Soiro,³ to return from the island of Sam Thomé. This I shall take as a very great favour to me.

I kiss Your Highness's hands.

From this Porto Seguro of your island of Vera Cruz to-day,⁴ Friday, the first day of May of 1500.

PERO VAAZ DE CAMINHA.

[Superscribed] To the King our Lord.

[This is on the back in a contemporary hand] Letter of Pero Vaaaz de Caminha concerning the discovery of the new land which Pedro Alvarez made.

¹ This statement, repeated in the letter of Dom Manuel to the Spanish sovereigns, shows that Caminha had no knowledge of any prior discovery of this shore.

² Caminha could not have written this whole letter of fourteen folio pages on the 1st of May. From the wording of the letter and the exactness with which the details are recorded it must have been written as a diary and dated just before the sailing of the ship which carried it to the king.

³ Sousa Viterbo believes that this was the Jorge de Osouro who had been exiled to the island of São Thomé, having been taken with others by force from a church where they had sought safety. They were accused of having stolen bread, wine, and chickens, and of having wounded a priest. De Osouro was pardoned by the king on the 16th of January 1496, and seems to have been sent back to São Thomé for some other reason.

⁴ When Cabral first sighted land he gave it the name *terra da Vera Cruz*, but Caminha here calls it *ilha da Vera Cruz*, indicating that at the time of the departure of the ship of Gaspar de Lemos they still believed the land to be an island and so reported it. This accounts for the fact that on the map of Juan de la Cosa it is shown as an island and designated *isla descubierta por portugal*. In the instructions given for a voyage made after 1502 it is still called *Ilha da Cruz*. Cf. *Annaes Maritimas e Coloniaes* (Lisbon, 1845), pp. 279 et seq.