THE

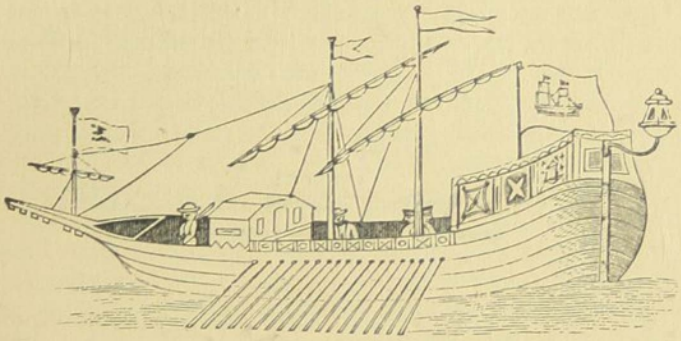
VOYAGES AND DISCOVERIES

OF THE

COMPANIONS OF COLUMBUS.

BY

WASHINGTON IRVING.



Galley, from the tomb of Fernando Columbus, at Seville.

Venient annis
Sæcula seris, quibus, Oceanus
Vincula, rerum laxet, et ingens
Pateat tellus, Typhisque novos
Detegat Orbes, nec sit terris
Ultima Thule.

SENECA: *Medea.*

AUTHOR'S REVISED EDITION.

WITH

AN APPENDIX OF HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE first discovery of the Western Hemisphere has already been related by the Author in his History of Columbus. It is proposed by him, in the present work, to narrate the enterprises of certain of the companions and disciples of the admiral, who, enkindled by his zeal, and instructed by his example, sallied forth separately in the vast region of adventure to which he had led the way. Many of them sought merely to skirt the continent which he had partially visited; to secure the first-fruits of the pearl fisheries of Paria and Cubaga; or to explore the coast of Veragua, which he had represented as the Aurea Chersonesus of the ancients. Others aspired to accomplish a grand discovery which he had meditated toward the close of his career. In the course of his expeditions along the coast of Terra Firma, Columbus had repeatedly received information of the existence of a vast sea to the south. He supposed it to be the great Indian Ocean, the region of the oriental spice islands, and that it must communicate by a strait with the Caribbean sea. His last and most disastrous voyage was made for the express purpose of discovering that imaginary strait, and making his way into this Southern Ocean. The illustrious navigator, however, was doomed to die, as it were, upon the threshold of his discoveries. It was reserved for one of his followers, Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, to obtain the first view of the promised ocean, from the lofty mountains of Darien, some years after the eyes of the venerable Admiral had been closed in death, The expeditions here narrated, therefore, may be considered as springing immediately out of the voyages of Columbus, and fulfilling some of his grand designs. They may be compared to the attempts of adventurous knights-errant to achieve the enterprise left unfinished by some illustrious predecessor. Neither is this comparison entirely fanciful; on the contrary, it is a curious fact, well worthy of notice, that the spirit of chivalry entered largely into the early expeditions of the

Spanish discoverers, giving them a character wholly distinct from similar enterprises undertaken by other nations. It will not, perhaps, be considered far-sought, if we trace the cause of this peculiarity to the domestic history of the Spaniards during the middle ages.

Eight centuries of incessant warfare with the Moorish usurpers of the Peninsula, produced a deep and lasting effect upon Spanish character and manners. The war being ever close at home, mingled itself with the domestic habits and concerns of the Spaniard. He was born a soldier. The wild and predatory nature of the war also made him a kind of chivalrous marauder. His horse and weapon were always ready for the field. His delight was in roving incursions and extravagant exploits; and no gain was so glorious in his eyes as the cavalgada of spoils and captives driven home in triumph from a plundered province. Religion, which has ever held great empire over the Spanish mind, lent its aid to sanctify these roving and ravaging propensities, and the Castilian cavalier, as he sacked the towns, and laid waste the fields of his Moslem neighbour, piously believed he was doing God service.

The conquest of Granada put an end to the peninsular wars between Christian and Infidel: the spirit of Spanish chivalry was thus suddenly deprived of its wonted sphere of action; but it had been too long fostered and excited, to be as suddenly appeased. The youth of the nation, bred up to daring adventure and heroic achievement, could not brook the tranquil and regular pursuits of common life, but panted for some new field of romantic enterprise.

It was at this juncture that the grand project of Columbus was carried into effect. His treaty with the sovereigns was, in a manner, signed with the same pen that had subscribed the capitulation of the Moorish capital; and his first expedition may almost be said to have departed from beneath the walls of Granada. Many of the youthful cavaliers, who had fleshed their swords in that memorable war, crowded the ships of the discoverers, thinking a new career of arms was to be opened to them—a kind of crusade into splendid and unknown regions of infidels. The very weapons and armour that had been used against the Moors, were drawn from the arsenal to equip the heroes of these remoter adventures; and some of the most noted commanders in the New World, will be found to have made their first essay in arms, under the

banner of Ferdinand and Isabella, in their romantic campaigns among the mountains of Andalusia.

To these circumstances may, in a great measure, be ascribed that swelling, chivalrous spirit which will be found continually mingling, or rather warring, with the technical habits of the seaman, and the sordid schemes of the mercenary adventurer, in these early Spanish discoveries. Chivalry had left the land and launched upon the deep. The Spanish cavalier had embarked in the caravel of the discoverer. He carried along the trackless wildernesses of the New World the same contempt of danger and fortitude under suffering; the same restless, roaming spirit; the same passion for inroad, and ravage, and vainglorious exploit; and the same fervent, and often bigoted, zeal for the propagation of his faith, that had distinguished him during his warfare with the Moors. Instances in point will be found in the extravagant career of the daring Ojeda, particularly in his adventures along the coast of Terra Firma and the wild shores of Cuba;—in the sad story of the "unfortunate Nicuesa," graced as it is with occasional touches of high-bred courtesy;—in the singular cruise of that brave but credulous old cavalier, Juan Ponce de Leon, who fell upon the flowery coast of Florida in his search after an imaginary fountain of youth;—and above all, in the checquered fortunes of Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, whose discovery of the Pacific Ocean forms one of the most beautiful and striking incidents in the history of the New World, and whose fate might furnish a theme of wonderful interest for a poem or a drama.

The extraordinary actions and adventures of these men, while they rival the exploits recorded in chivalric romance, have the additional interest of verity. They leave us in admiration of the bold and heroic qualities inherent in the Spanish character, which led that nation to so high a pitch of power and glory; and which are still discernible in the great mass of that gallant people, by those who have an opportunity of judging of them rightly.

Before concluding these prefatory remarks, the Author would acknowledge how much he has been indebted to the third volume of the invaluable Historical Collection of Don Martin Fernandez de Navarrete, wherein that author has exhibited his usual industry, accuracy, and critical acumen. He has likewise profited greatly by the second volume of Oviedo's General History, which only exists in manuscript,

and a copy of which he found in the Columbian Library of the Cathedral of Seville.

He has had some assistance also from the documents of the law case between Don Diego Columbus and the crown, which exist in the Archives of the Indies, and for an inspection of which he is much indebted to the permission of the government, and the kind attentions of Don Josef de la Higuera y Lara, the intelligent keeper of the Archives. These, with the historical works of Herrera, Las Casas, Gomara, and Peter Martyr, have been his authorities for the facts contained in the following work, though he has not thought proper to refer to them continually at the bottom of his page.

While his work was going through the press, he received a volume of Spanish Biography, written with great elegance and accuracy, by Don Manuel Josef Quintana, and containing a life of Vasco Nuñez de Balboa. He was gratified to find that his own arrangement of facts was generally corroborated by this work; though he was enabled to correct his dates in several instances, and to make a few other emendations from the volume of Señor Quintana, whose position in Spain gave him the means of attaining superior exactness on these points.

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VOYAGES AND DISCOVERIES

OF THE

COMPANIONS OF COLUMBUS.

ALONZO DE OJEDA,*

HIS FIRST VOYAGE, IN WHICH HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY AMERIGO VESPUCCI.†

CHAPTER I.—[1499.]

THOSE who have read the History of Columbus will, doubtless, remember the character and exploits of Alonzo de Ojeda; as some of the readers of the following pages, however, may not have perused that work, and as it is proposed at present to trace the subsequent fortunes of this youthful adventurer, a brief sketch of him may not be deemed superfluous.

Alonzo de Ojeda was a native of Cuenca, in New Castile, and of a respectable family. He was brought up as a page or esquire, in the service of Don Luis de Cerda, Duke of Medina Celi, one of the most powerful nobles of Spain; the same who for some time patronized Columbus during his application to the Spanish court.‡

In those warlike days, when the peninsula was distracted by contests between the Christian kingdoms, by feuds between the nobles and the crown, and by incessant and marauding warfare with the Moors, the household of a Spanish nobleman was a complete school of arms, where the youth of the country were sent to be trained up in all kinds of hardy exercises, and to be led to battle under an illustrious banner. Such was especially the case with the service of the Duke of Medina Celi, who possessed princely domains, whose household was a petty court, who led legions of armed retainers to the field, and who appeared in splendid state and with an immense retinue, more as an ally of Ferdinand and Isabella, than as a subject. He engaged in many of the roughest expeditions of the memorable war of Granada, always insisting on leading

* Ojeda is pronounced in Spanish Oheda, with a strong aspiration of the *h*.

† Vespucci, pronounced Vespuchy.

‡ Varones Ilustres, por F. Pizarro, p. 41. Las Casas, lib. i. cap. 82

his own troops in person, when the service was of peculiar difficulty and danger. Alonzo de Ojeda was formed to signalize himself in such a school. Though small of stature, he was well made, and of wonderful force and activity, with a towering spirit that seemed to make up for deficiency of height. He was a bold and graceful horseman, an excellent foot soldier, dexterous with every weapon, and noted for his extraordinary skill and adroitness in all feats of strength and agility.

He must have been quite young when he followed the Duke of Medina Celi, as page, to the Moorish wars; for he was but about twenty-one years of age when he accompanied Columbus in his second voyage; he had already, however, distinguished himself by his enterprising spirit and headlong valour; and his exploits during that voyage contributed to enhance his reputation. He returned to Spain with Columbus, but did not accompany him in his third voyage, in the spring of 1498. He was probably impatient of subordination, and ambitious of a separate employment or command, which the influence of his connections gave him a great chance of obtaining. He had a cousin german of his own name, the reverend Padre Alonzo de Ojeda, a Dominican friar, one of the first inquisitors of Spain, and a great favourite with the Catholic sovereigns.* This father inquisitor was, moreover, an intimate friend of the bishop Don Juan Rodriguez Fonseca, who had the chief management of the affairs of the Indies, under which general name were comprehended all the countries discovered in the New World. Through the good offices of his cousin inquisitor, therefore, Ojeda had been introduced to the notice of the bishop, who took him into his especial favour and patronage. Mention has already been made, in the History of Columbus, of a present made by the bishop to Ojeda of a small Flemish painting of the Holy Virgin. This the young adventurer carried about with him as a protecting relic, invoking it at all times of peril, whether by sea or land; and to the especial care of the Virgin he attributed the remarkable circumstance that he had never been wounded in any of the innumerable brawls and battles into which he was continually betrayed by his rash and fiery temperament.

While Ojeda was lingering about the court, letters were

* Pizarro. Varones Ilustres.

received from Columbus, giving an account of the events of his third voyage, especially of his discovery of the coast of Paria, which he described as abounding in drugs and spices, in gold and silver, and precious stones, and, above all, in oriental pearls, and which he supposed to be the borders of that vast and unknown region of the East, wherein, according to certain learned theorists, was situated the terrestrial paradise. Specimens of the pearls, procured in considerable quantities from the natives, accompanied his epistle, together with charts descriptive of his route. These tidings caused a great sensation among the maritime adventurers of Spain; but no one was more excited by them than Alonzo de Ojeda, who, from his intimacy with the bishop, had full access to the charts and correspondence of Columbus. He immediately conceived the project of making a voyage in the route thus marked out by the admiral, and of seizing upon the first fruits of discovery which he had left ungathered. His scheme met with ready encouragement from Fonseca, who, as has heretofore been shown, was an implacable enemy to Columbus, and willing to promote any measure that might injure or molest him. The bishop accordingly granted a commission to Ojeda, authorizing him to fit out an armament and proceed on a voyage of discovery with the proviso merely that he should not visit any territories appertaining to Portugal, nor any of the lands discovered in the name of Spain previous to the year 1495. The latter part of this provision appears to have been craftily worded by the bishop, so as to leave the coast of Paria and its pearl fisheries open to Ojeda, they having been recently discovered by Columbus in 1498.

The commission was signed by Fonseca alone, in virtue of general powers vested in him for such purposes, but the signature of the sovereigns did not appear on the instrument, and it is doubtful whether their sanction was sought on the occasion. He knew that Columbus had recently remonstrated against a royal mandate issued in 1495, permitting voyages of discovery by private adventurers, and that the sovereigns had in consequence revoked their mandate wherever it might be deemed prejudicial to the stipulated privileges of the admiral.* It is probable, therefore, that the bishop avoided raising any question that might impede the enterprise; being confident of the ultimate approbation of Ferdinand, who would be well

* Navarrete, ii. Document cxiii.

pleased to have his dominions in the New World extended by the discoveries of private adventurers, undertaken at their own expense. It was stipulated in this, as well as in subsequent licenses for private expeditions, that a certain proportion of the profits, generally a fourth or fifth, should be reserved for the crown.

Having thus obtained permission to make the voyage, the next consideration with Ojeda was to find the means. He was a young adventurer, a mere soldier of fortune, and destitute of wealth; but he had a high reputation for courage and enterprise, and with these, it was thought, would soon make his way to the richest parts of the newly discovered lands, and have the wealth of the Indies at his disposal. He had no difficulty, therefore, in finding moneyed associates among the rich merchants of Seville, who, in that age of discovery, were ever ready to stake their property upon the schemes of roving navigators. With such assistance he soon equipped a squadron of four vessels at Port St. Mary, opposite Cadiz. Among the seamen who engaged with him were several just returned from accompanying Columbus in his voyage to this very coast of Paria. The principal associate of Ojeda, and one on whom he placed great reliance, was Juan de la Cosa; who accompanied him as first mate, or, as it was termed, chief pilot. This was a bold Biscayan, who may be regarded as a disciple of Columbus, with whom he had sailed in his second voyage, when he coasted Cuba and Jamaica, and he had since accompanied Rodrigo de Bastides, in an expedition along the coast of Terra Firma. The hardy veteran was looked up to by his contemporaries as an oracle of the seas, and was pronounced one of the most able mariners of the day; he may be excused, therefore, if, in his harmless vanity, he considered himself on a par even with Columbus.*

Another conspicuous associate of Ojeda, in this voyage, was Amerigo Vespucci, a Florentine merchant, induced by broken fortunes and a rambling disposition to seek adventures in the New World. Whether he had any pecuniary interest in the expedition, and in what capacity he sailed, does not appear. His importance has entirely arisen from subsequent circumstances; from his having written and published a narrative of his voyages, and from his name having eventually been given to the New World.

* Navarette, Colec. Viag., iii. p. 4.

CHAPTER II.

Ojeda sailed from Port St. Mary on the 20th of May, 1499, and, having touched for supplies at the Canaries, took a departure from Gomara, pursuing the route of Columbus in his third voyage, being guided by the chart he had sent home, as well as by the mariners who had accompanied him on that occasion. At the end of twenty-four days he reached the continent of the New World, about two hundred leagues farther south than the part discovered by Columbus, being, as it is supposed, the coast of Surinam.*

Hence he ran along the coast of the Gulf of Paria, passing the mouths of many rivers, but especially those of the Esquivo and the Oronoko. These, to the astonishment of the Spaniards, unaccustomed as yet to the mighty rivers of the New World, poured forth such a prodigious volume of water, as to freshen the sea for a great extent. They beheld none of the natives until they arrived at Trinidad, on which island they met with traces of the recent visit of Columbus.

Vespucci, in his letters, gives a long description of the people of this island and of the coast of Paria, who were of the Carib race, tall, well made, and vigorous, and expert with the bow, the lance, and the buckler. His description, in general, resembles those which have frequently been given of the aboriginals of the New World; there are two or three particulars, however, worthy of citation.

They appeared, he said, to believe in no religious creed, to have no place of worship, and to make no prayers nor sacrifices; but, he adds, from the voluptuousness of their lives, they might be considered epicureans.† Their habitations were built in the shape of bells; of the trunks of trees, thatched with palm leaves, and were proof against wind and weather. They appeared to be in common, and some of them were of such magnitude as to contain six hundred persons: in one place there were eight principal houses capable of sheltering nearly ten thousand inhabitants. Every seven or eight years the natives were obliged to change their residence, from the maladies engendered by the heat of the climate in their crowded habitations.

Their riches consisted in beads and ornaments made from the bones of fishes; in small white and green stones strung

* Navarete, iii. p. 5. † Viages de Vespucci. Navarrete, iii, p. 211.

like rosaries, with which they adorned their persons, and in the beautiful plumes of various colours for which the tropical birds are noted.

The Spaniards smiled at their simplicity in attaching an extraordinary value to such worthless trifles; while the savages, in all probability, were equally surprised at beholding the strangers so eager after gold, and pearls, and precious stones, which to themselves were objects of indifference.

Their manner of treating the dead was similar to that observed among the natives of some of the islads. Having deposited the corpse in a cavern or sepulchre, they placed a jar of water and a few eatables at its head, and then abandoned it without moan or lamentation. In some parts of the coast, when a person was considered near his end, his nearest relatives bore him to the woods, and laid him in a hammock suspended to the trees. They then danced round him until evening, when, having left within his reach sufficient meat and drink to sustain him for four days, they repaired to their habitations. If he recovered and returned home, he was received with much ceremony and rejoicing; if he died of his malady or famine, nothing more was thought of him.

Their mode of treating a fever is also worthy of mention. In the height of the malady they plunged the patient in a bath of the coldest water, after which they obliged him to make many evolutions round a great fire, until he was in a violent heat, when they put him to bed, that he might sleep; a treatment by which Amerigo Vespucci declares he saw many cured.

CHAPTER III

After touching at various parts of Trinidad and the Gulf of Paria, Ojeda passed through the strait of the Boca del Drago, or Dragon's Mouth, which Columbus had found so formidable, and then steered his course along the coast of Terra Firma, landing occasionally, until he arrived at Curiana, or the Gulf of Pearls. Hence he stood to the opposite island of Margarita, previously discovered by Columbus, and since renowned for its pearl fishery. This, as well as several adjacent islands, he visited and explored; after which he returned to the main-land, and touched at Cumana and Maracadana, where he found the rivers infested with alligators, resembling the crocodiles of the Nile.

Finding a convenient harbour at Maracapana, he unloaded

and careened his vessels there, and built a small brigantine. The natives came to him in great numbers, bringing abundance of venison, fish, and cassava bread, and aiding the seamen in their labours. Their hospitality was not certainly disinterested, for they sought to gain the protection of the Spaniards, whom they reverenced as superhuman beings. When they thought they had sufficiently secured their favour, they represented to Ojeda that their coast was subject to invasion from a distant island, the inhabitants of which were cannibals, and carried their people into captivity, to be devoured at their unnatural banquets. They besought Ojeda, therefore, to avenge them upon these ferocious enemies.

The request was gratifying to the fighting propensities of Ojeda and to his love of adventure, and was readily granted. Taking seven of the natives on board of his vessels, as guides, he set sail in quest of the cannibals. After sailing for seven days he came to a chain of islands, some peopled, others uninhabited, supposed to have been the Caribbee islands. One of these was pointed out by his guides as the habitation of their foes. On running near the shore, he beheld it thronged with savages, decorated with coronets of gaudy plumes, their bodies painted with a variety of colours. They were armed with bows and arrows, with darts, lances, and bucklers, and seemed prepared to defend their island from invasion.

The show of war was calculated to rouse the martial spirit of Ojeda. He brought his ships to anchor, ordered out his boats, and provided each with a paterero, or small cannon. Besides the oarsmen, each boat contained a number of soldiers, who were told to crouch out of sight in the bottom. The boats then pulled in steadily for the shore. As they approached, the Indians let fly a cloud of arrows, but without much effect. Seeing the boats continue to advance, the savages threw themselves into the sea, and brandished their lances to prevent their landing. Upon this, the soldiers sprang up and discharged the patereroes. At the sound and smoke the savages abandoned the water in affright, while Ojeda and his men leaped on shore and pursued them. The Carib warriors rallied on the banks, and fought for a long time with a courage peculiar to their race, but were at length driven to the woods, at the edge of the sword, leaving many killed and wounded on the field of battle.

On the following day the savages were seen on the shore in still greater numbers, armed and painted, and decorated with war plumes, and sounding defiance with their conchs and drums. Ojeda again landed with fifty-seven men, whom he separated into four companies, and ordered to charge the enemy from different directions. The Caribs fought for a time hand to hand, displaying great dexterity in covering themselves with their bucklers, but were at length entirely routed, and driven with great slaughter to the forests. The Spaniards had but one man killed and twenty-one wounded in these combats,—such superior advantage did their armour give them over the naked savages. Having plundered and set fire to the houses, they returned triumphantly to their ships, with a number of Carib captives; and made sail for the main-land. Ojeda bestowed a part of the spoil upon the seven Indians who had accompanied him as guides, and sent them exulting to their homes, to relate to their countrymen the signal vengeance wreaked upon their foes. He then anchored in a bay where he remained for twenty days until his men had recovered from their wounds.*

CHAPTER IV.

His crew being refreshed, and the wounded sufficiently recovered, Ojeda made sail, and touched at the island of Curazao, which, according to the accounts of Vespucci, was inhabited by a race of giants, "every woman appearing a Penthesilea, and every man an Antæus."† As Vespucci was a scholar, and as he supposed himself exploring the regions of the extreme East, the ancient realm of fable, it is probable his imagination deceived him, and construed the formidable accounts given by the Indians of their cannibal neighbours of the islands, into something according with his recollections of classic fable. Certain it is that the reports of subsequent voyagers proved the inhabitants of the island to be of the ordinary size.

Proceeding along the coast he arrived at a vast, deep gulf, resembling a tranquil lake; entering which, be beheld on the

* There is some discrepance in the early accounts of this battle, as to the time and place of its occurrence. The author has collated the narratives of Vespucci, Las Casas, Herrera, and Peter Martyr, and the evidence given in the lawsuit of Diego Columbus, and has endeavoured as much as possible to reconcile them.

† Vespucci.—Letter to Lorenzo de Pier Francisco de Medicis.

eastern side a village, the construction of which struck him with surprise. It consisted of twenty large houses, shaped like bells, and built on piles driven into the bottom of the lake, which, in this part, was limpid and of but little depth Each house was provided with a draw-bridge, and with canoes by which the communication was carried on. From these resemblances to the Italian city, Ojeda gave to the bay the name of the Gulf of Venice: and it is called at the present day Venezuela, or little Venice: the Indian name was Coquibacoa.

When the inhabitants beheld the ships standing into the bay, looking like wonderful and unknown apparitions from the deep, they fled with terror to their houses, and raised the drawbridges. The Spaniards remained for a time gazing with admiration at this amphibious village, when a squadron of canoes entered the harbour from the sea. On beholding the ships they paused in mute amazement, and on the Spaniards attempting to approach them, paddled swiftly to shore, and plunged into the forest. They soon returned with sixteen young girls, whom they conveyed in their canoes to the ships, distributing four on board of each, either as peace-offerings or as tokens of amity and confidence. The best of understanding now seemed to be established; and the inhabitants of the village came swarming about the ships in their canoes, and others swimming in great numbers from the shores.

The friendship of the savages, however, was all delusive. On a sudden several old women at the doors of the houses uttered loud shrieks, tearing their hair in fury. It appeared to be a signal for hostility. The sixteen nymphs plunged into the sea and made for shore; the Indians in the canoes caught up their bows and discharged a flight of arrows, and even those who were swimming brandished darts and lances, which they had hitherto concealed beneath the water.

Ojeda was for a moment surprised at seeing war thus starting up on every side, and the very sea bristling with weapons. Manning his boats, he charged amongst the thickest of the enemy, shattered and sunk several of their canoes, killed twenty Indians and wounded many more, and spread such a panic among them, that most of the survivors flung themselves into the sea and swam to shore. Three of them were taken prisoners, and two of the fugitive girls, and were conveyed on board of the ships, where the men were put in

irons. One of them, however, and the two girls succeeded in dexterously escaping the same night.

Ojeda had but five men wounded in the affray; all of whom recovered. He visited the houses, but found them abandoned and destitute of booty; notwithstanding the unprovoked hostility of the inhabitants, he spared the buildings, that he might not cause useless irritation along the coast.

Continuing to explore this gulf, Ojeda penetrated to a port or harbour, to which he gave the name of St. Bartholomew, but which is supposed to be the same at present known by the original Indian name of Maracaibo. Here, in compliance with the entreaties of the natives, he sent a detachment of twenty-seven Spaniards on a visit to the interior. For nine days they were conducted from town to town, and feasted and almost idolized by the Indians, who regarded them as angelic beings, performing their national dances and games, and chanting their traditional ballads for their entertainment.

The natives of this part were distinguished for the symmetry of their forms; the females in particular appeared to the Spaniards to surpass all they had yet beheld in the New World for grace and beauty. Neither did the men display in the least degree that jealousy which prevailed in the other part of the coast; but, on the contrary, permitted the most frank and intimate intercourse with their wives and daughters.

By the time the Spaniards set out on their return to the ship, the whole country was aroused, pouring forth its population, male and female, to do them honour. Some bore them in litters or hammocks, that they might not be fatigued with the journey, and happy was the Indian who had the honour of bearing a Spaniard on his shoulders across a river. Others loaded themselves with the presents that had been bestowed on their guests, consisting of rich plumes, weapons of various kinds, and tropical birds and animals. In this way they returned in triumphant procession to the ships, the woods and shores resounding with their songs and shouts.

Many of the Indians crowded into the boats which took the detachment to the ships; others put off in canoes, or swam from shore, so that in a little while the vessels were thronged with upwards of a thousand wondering natives. While gazing and marvelling at the strange objects around them, Ojeda ordered the cannon to be discharged, at the sound of

which, says Vespucci, the Indians "plunged into the water like so many frogs from a bank." Perceiving, however, that it was done in harmless mirth, they returned on board, and passed the rest of the day in great festivity. The Spaniards brought away with them several of the beautiful and hospitable females from this place, one of whom, named by them Isabel, was much prized by Ojeda, and accompanied him in a subsequent voyage.*

CHAPTER V.

LEAVING the friendly port of Coquibacoa, Ojeda continued along the western shores of the Gulf of Venezuela, and standing out to sea, and doubling Cape Maracaibo, he pursued his coasting voyage from port to port, and promontory to promontory, of this unknown continent, until he reached that long-stretching headland called Cape de la Vela. There the state of his vessels, and perhaps the disappointment of his hopes at not meeting with abundant sources of immediate wealth, induced him to abandon all further voyaging along the coast, and changing his course, he stood across the Caribbean Sea for Hispaniola. The tenor of his commission forbade his visiting that island; but Ojeda was not a man to stand upon trifles when his interest or inclination prompted the contrary. He trusted to excuse the infraction of his orders by the alleged necessity of touching at the island to calk and refit his vessels, and to procure provisions. His true object, however,

* Navarrete, tom. iii. p. 8. Idem. pp. 107, 108.

It is worthy of particular mention that Ojeda, in his report of his voyage to the Sovereigns, informed them of his having met with English voyagers in the vicinity of Coquibacoa, and that the Spanish government attached such importance to his information as to take measures to prevent any intrusion into those parts by the English. It is singular that no record should exist of this early and extensive expedition of English navigators. If it was undertaken in the service of the Crown, some document might be found concerning it among the archives of the reign of Henry VII. The English had already discovered the continent of North America. This had been done in 1497, by John Cabot, a Venetian, accompanied by his son Sebastian, who was born in Bristol. They sailed under a license of Henry VII, who was to have a fifth of the profits of the voyage. On the 24th of June they discovered Newfoundland, and afterwards coasted the continent quite to Florida, bringing back to England a valuable cargo and several of the natives. This was the first discovery of the main-land of America. The success of this expedition may have prompted the one which Ojeda encountered in the neighbourhood of Coquibacoa.

is supposed to have been to cut dye-wood, which abounds in the western part of Hispaniola.

He accordingly anchored at Yaquino in September, and landed with a large party of his men. Columbus at that time held command of the island, and, hearing of this unlicensed intrusion, dispatched Francisco Roldan, the quondam rebel, to call Ojeda to account. The contest of stratagem and management which took place between these two adroit and daring adventurers, has been already detailed in the History of Columbus. Roldan was eventually successful, and Ojeda, being obliged to leave Hispaniola, resumed his rambling voyage, visiting various islands, from whence he carried off numbers of the natives. He at length arrived at Cadiz in June, 1500, with his ships crowded with captives, whom he sold as slaves. So meagre, however, was the result of this expedition, that we are told, when all the expenses were deducted, but five hundred ducats remained to be divided between fifty-five adventurers. What made this result the more mortifying was, that a petty armament, which had sailed some time after that of Ojeda, had returned two months before him, rich with the spoils of the New World. A brief account of this latter expedition is necessary to connect this series of minor discoveries, which will be found to lead to enterprises and transactions of more stirring interest and importance.

PEDRO ALONZO NIÑO* AND CHRISTOVAL GUERRA.

[1499.]

The permission granted by Bishop Fonseca to Alonzo de Ojeda to undertake a private expedition to the New World, roused the emulation of others of the followers of Columbus. Among these was Pedro Alonzo Niño, a hardy seaman, native of Moguer, in the vicinity of Palos, who had sailed with Columbus as a pilot, in his first voyage, and also in his cruisings along the coasts of Cuba and Paria.† He soon obtained from the bishop a similar license to that given to Ojeda, and like the latter, sought for some moneyed confederate among the rich merchants of Seville. One of these,

* Pronounced Ninyo. The Ñ in Spanish is always pronounced as if followed by the letter *y*.

† Testimony of Bastides in the lawsuit of Diego Columbus.

named Luis Guerra, offered to fit out a caravel for the expedition; but on condition that his brother, Christoval Guerra, should have the command. The poverty of Niño compelled him to assent to the stipulations of the man of wealth, and he sailed as subaltern in his own enterprise; but his nautical skill and knowledge soon gained him the ascendency: he became virtually the captain, and ultimately enjoyed the whole credit of the voyage.

The bark of these two adventurers was but of fifty tons burthen, and the crew thirty-three souls, all told. With this slender armament, they undertook to traverse unknown and dangerous seas, and to explore the barbarous shores of that vast continent recently discovered by Columbus;—such was the daring spirit of the Spanish voyagers of those days.

It was about the beginning of June, 1499, and but a few days after the departure of Ojeda, that they put to sea. They sailed from the little port of Palos, the cradle of American discovery, whose brave and skilful mariners long continued foremost in all enterprises to the New World. Being guided by the chart of Columbus, they followed his route, and reached the southern continent, a little beyond Paria, about fifteen days after the same coast had been visited by Ojeda.

They then proceeded to the Gulf of Paria, where they landed to cut dye-wood, and were amicably entertained by the natives. Shortly afterwards, sallying from the gulf by the Boca del Drago, they encountered eighteen canoes of Caribs, the pirate rovers of these seas, and the terror of the bordering lands. This savage armada, instead of being daunted, as usual, by the sight of a European ship, with swelling sails, resembling some winged monster of the deep, considered it only as an object of plunder or hostility, and assailed it with showers of arrows. The sudden burst of artillery, however, from the sides of the caravel, and the havoc made by this seeming thunder, struck them with dismay, and they fled in all directions. The Spaniards succeeded in capturing one of the canoes, with one of the warriors who had manned it. In the bottom of the canoe lay an Indian prisoner, bound hand and foot. On being liberated, he informed the Spaniards, by signs, that these Caribs had been on a marauding expedition along the neighbouring coasts, shutting themselves up at night in a stockade which they

carried with them, and issuing forth by day to plunder the villages and make captives. He had been one of seven prisoners; his companions had been devoured before his eyes at the cannibal banquets of these savages, and he had been awaiting the same miserable fate. Honest Niño and his confederates were so indignant at this recital, that, receiving it as established fact, they performed what they considered an act of equitable justice, by abandoning the Carib to the discretion of his late captive. The latter fell upon the defenceless warrior with fist, and foot, and cudgel; nor did his rage subside even after the breath had been mauled out of his victim, but, tearing the grim head from the body, he placed it on a pole, as a trophy of his vengeance.

Niño and his fellow-adventurers now steered for the island of Margarita, where they obtained a considerable quantity of pearls by barter. They afterwards skirted the opposite coast of Cumana, trading cautiously and shrewdly from port to port; sometimes remaining on board of their little bark, and obliging the savages to come off to them, when the latter appeared too numerous; at other times venturing on shore, and even into the interior. They were invariably treated with amity by the natives, who were perfectly naked, excepting that they were adorned with necklaces and bracelets of pearls. These they sometimes gave freely to the Spaniards, at other times they exchanged them for glass beads and other trinkets, and smiled at the folly of the strangers in making such silly bargains.*

The Spaniards were struck with the grandeur and density of the forests along this coast; for in these regions of heat and moisture vegetation appears in its utmost magnificence. They heard also the cries and roarings of wild and unknown animals in the woodlands, which, however, appeared not to be very dangerous, as the Indians went about the forest armed solely with bows and arrows. From meeting with deer and rabbits, they were convinced that that was a part of Terra Firma, not having found any animals of the kind on the islands.†

Niño and Guerra were so well pleased with the hospitality of the natives of Cumana, and with the profitable traffic for pearls, by which they obtained many of great size and beauty, that they remained upwards of three months on the coast.

* Las Casas, Hist. Ind., lib. i. cap. 171. † Navarrete, tom. iii. p. 14.

They then proceeded westward to a country called Cauchieto, trading, as usual, for pearls, and for the inferior kind of gold called guanin. At length they arrived at a number of houses and gardens situated on a river and protected by a kind of fortress, the whole forming, to the eyes of the Spaniards, one of the most delicious abodes imaginable. They were about to land and enjoy the pleasures of this fancied paradise, when they beheld upwards of a thousand Indians, armed with bows, and arrows, and war clubs, preparing to give them a warm reception; having been probably incensed by the recent visit of Ojeda. As Niño and Guerra had not the fighting propensities of Ojeda, and were in quest of profit rather than renown, having moreover, in all probability, the fear of the rich merchant of Seville before their eyes, they prudently abstained from landing, and, abandoning this hostile coast, returned forthwith to Cumana, to resume their trade for pearls. They soon amassed a great number, many of which were equal in size and beauty to the most celebrated of the east, though they had been injured in boring from a want of proper implements.

Satisfied with their success, they now set sail for Spain, and piloted their little bark safely to Bayonne, in Gallicia, where they anchored about the middle of April, 1500, nearly two months before the arrival of Ojeda and his associates, La Cosa and Vespucci.*

The most successful voyagers to the New World were doomed to trouble from their very success. The ample amount of pearls paid to the treasury, as the royal portion of the profits of this expedition, drew suspicion instead of favour upon the two adventurers. They were accused of having concealed a great part of the pearls collected by them, thus defrauding their companions and the crown. Pedro Alonzo Niño was actually thrown into prison on this accusation, but, nothing being proved against him, he was eventually set free, and enjoyed the enviable reputation of having performed the richest voyage that had yet been made to the New World.†

* Peter Martyr. Other historians give a different date for their arrival. Herrera says, Feb. 6.

† Navarrete, Colec., tom. iii. p. 11. Herrera, decad. i. lib. iv. cap. 5.

VICENTE YAÑEZ PINZON.

[1499.]

Among the maritime adventurers of renown who were roused to action by the licenses granted for private expeditions of discovery, we find conspicuous the name of Vicente Yañez Pinzon, of Palos, one of the three brave brothers who aided Columbus in his first voyage, and risked life and fortune with him in his doubtful and perilous enterprise.

Of Martin Alonzo Pinzon, the eldest and most important of these three brothers, particular mention has been made in the History of Columbus, and of the unfortunate error in conduct which severed him from the admiral, brought on him the displeasure of the sovereigns, and probably contributed to his premature and melancholy death.

Whatever cloud this may have thrown over his family, it was but temporary. The death of Martin Alonzo, as usual, atoned for his faults, and his good deeds lived after him. The merits and services of himself and his brothers were acknowledged, and the survivors of the family were restored to royal confidence. A feeling of jealous hostility prevented them from taking a part in the subsequent voyages of Columbus; but the moment the door was thrown open for individual enterprise, they pressed forward for permission to engage in it at their own risk and expense—and it was readily granted. In fact, their supposed hostility to Columbus was one of the surest recommendations to the favour of the Bishop Fonseca, by whom the license was issued for their expedition.

Vicente Yañez Pinzon was the leader of this new enterprise, and he was accompanied by two nephews, Arias Perez and Diego Fernandez, sons of his late brother, Martin Alonzo Pinzon. Several of his sailors had sailed with Columbus in his recent voyage to Paria, as had also his three principal pilots, Juan Quintero, Juan de Umbria, and Juan de Jerez. Thus these minor voyages seemed all to emanate from the great expeditions of Columbus, and to aim at realizing the ideas and speculations contained in the papers transmitted by him to Spain.

The armament consisted of four caravels, and was fitted out at the port of Palos. The funds of Vicente Yañez were completely exhausted before he had fitted out his little squadron;

he was obliged therefore to purchase on credit the sea-stores and articles of traffic necessary for the enterprise. The merchants of Palos seem to have known how to profit by the careless nature of sailors and the sanguine spirit of discoverers. In their bargains they charged honest Pinzon eighty and a hundred per cent. above the market value of their merchandise, and in the hurry and urgency of the moment he was obliged to submit to the imposition.*

The squadron put to sea in the beginning of December, 1499, and after passing the Canary and Cape de Verde Islands, stood to the south-west. Having sailed about seven hundred leagues, they crossed the equator and lost sight of the north star. They had scarcely passed the equinoctial line when they encountered a terrible tempest, which had well nigh swallowed up their slender barks. The storm passed away, and the firmament was again serene; but the mariners remained tossing about in confusion, dismayed by the turbulence of the waves and the strange aspect of the heavens. They looked in vain to the south for some polar star by which to shape their course, and fancied that some swelling prominence of the globe concealed it from their view. They knew nothing as yet of the firmament of that hemisphere, nor of that beautiful constellation the southern cross, but expected to find a guiding star at the opposite pole, similar to the cynosure of the north.

Pinzon, however, who was of an intrepid spirit, pursued his course resolutely to the west, and after sailing about two hundred and forty leagues, and being in the eighth degree of southern latitude, he beheld land afar off on the 28th of January, to which he gave the name of *Santa Maria de la Consolacion*, from the sight of it having consoled him in the midst of doubts and perplexities. It is now called Cape St. Augustine, and forms the most prominent part of the immense empire of Brazil.

The sea was turbid and discoloured as in rivers, and on sounding they had sixteen fathoms water. Pinzon landed, accompanied by a notary and witnesses, and took formal possession of the territory for the Castilian crown; no one appeared to dispute his pretensions, but he observed on the beach the print of footsteps of gigantic size.

* Navarrete, vol. iii. See Doc. No. 7, where Vicente Yañez Pinzon petitions for redress.

At night there were fires lighted upon a neighbouring part of the coast, which induced Pinzon on the following morning to send forty men well armed to the spot. A band of Indians, of about equal number, sallied forth to encounter them, armed with bows and arrows, and seemingly of extraordinary stature. A still greater number were seen in the distance, hastening to the support of their companions. The Indians arrayed themselves for combat, and the two parties remained for a short time eyeing each other with mutual curiosity and distrust. The Spaniards now displayed looking-glasses, beads, and other trinkets, and jingled strings of hawks'-bells, in general so captivating to an Indian ear; but the haughty savages treated all their overtures with contempt, regarding these offerings carelessly for a short time, and then stalking off with stoic gravity. They were ferocious of feature, and apparently warlike in disposition, and are supposed to have been a wandering race of unusual size, who roamed about in the night, and were of the most fierce, untractable nature. By nightfall there was not an Indian to be seen in the neighbourhood.

Discouraged by the inhospitable character of the coast, Pinzon made sail and stood to the north-west, until he came to the mouth of a river too shallow to receive his ships. Here he sent his boats on shore with a number of men well armed. They landed on the river banks, and beheld a multitude of naked Indians on a neighbouring hill. A single Spaniard, armed simply with sword and buckler, was sent to invite them to friendly intercourse. He approached them with signs of amity, and threw to them a hawk's-bell. They replied to him with similar signs, and threw to him a small gilded wand. The soldier stooped to pick it up, when suddenly a troop of savages rushed down to seize him; he threw himself immediately upon the defensive, with sword and target, and though but a small man, and far from robust, handled his weapons with such dexterity and fierceness, that he kept the savages at bay, making a clear circle round him, and wounding several who attempted to break it. His unlooked-for prowess surprised and confounded his assailants, and gave time for his comrades to come to his assistance. The Indians then made a general assault, with such a galling discharge of darts and arrows that almost immediately eight or ten Spaniards were slain, and many more wounded. The

latter were compelled to retreat to their boats disputing every inch of ground. The Indians pursued them even into the water, surrounding the boats and seizing hold of the oars. The Spaniards made a desperate defence, thrusting many through with their lances, and cutting down and ripping up others with their swords, but such was the ferocity of the survivors, that they persisted in their attack until they overpowered the crew of one of the boats, and bore it off in triumph With this they retired from the combat, and the Spaniards returned defeated and disheartened to their ships, having met with the roughest reception that the Europeans had yet experienced in the New World.

Pinzon now stood forty leagues to the north-west, until he arrived in the neighbourhood of the equinoctial line. Here he found the water of the sea so fresh that he was enabled to replenish his casks with it. Astonished at so singular a phenomenon, he stood in for the land, and arrived among a number of fresh and verdant islands, inhabited by a gentle and hospitable race of people, gaily painted, who came off to the ships with the most frank and fearless confidence. Pinzon soon found that these islands lay in the mouth of an immense river, more than thirty leagues in breadth, the water of which entered upwards of forty leagues into the sea before losing its sweetness. It was, in fact, the renowned Maranon, since known as the Orellana and the Amazon. While lying in the mouth of this river there was a sudden swelling of the stream, which, being opposed by the current of the sea, and straitened by the narrow channels of the islands, rose more than five fathoms, with mountain waves, and a tremendous noise, threatening the destruction of the ships. Pinzon extricated his little squadron with great difficulty, and finding there was but little gold, nor any thing else of value to be found among the simple natives, he requited their hospitality, in the mode too common among the early discoverers, by carrying of thirty-six of them captive.

Having regained the sight of the polar star, Pinzon pursued his course along the coast, passing the mouths of the Oronoko, and entering the Gulf of Paria, where he landed and cut brazil-wood. Sallying forth by the Boca del Drago, he reached the island of Hispaniola about the 23rd of June, whence he sailed for the Bahamas. Here, in the month of July, while at anchor, there came such a tremendous hur-

ricane that two of the caravels were swallowed up with all their crews in the sight of their terrified companions; a third parted her cables and was driven out to sea, while the fourth was so furiously beaten by the tempest that the crew threw themselves into the boats and made for shore. Here they found a few naked Indians, who offered them no molestation; but, fearing that they might spread the tidings of a handful of shipwrecked Spaniards being upon the coast, and thus bring the savages of the neighbouring islands upon them, a council of war was held whether it would not be a wise precaution to put these Indians to death. Fortunately for the latter, the vessel which had been driven from her anchors returned and put an end to the alarm, and to the council of war. The other caravel also rode out the storm uninjured, and the sea subsiding, the Spaniards returned on board, and made the best of their way to Hispaniola. Having repaired the damages sustained in the gale, they again made sail for Spain, and came to anchor in the river before Palos, about the end of September.

Thus ended one of the most checquered and disastrous voyages yet made to the New World. Yañez Pinzon had lost two of his ships, and many of his men; what made the loss of the latter more grievous was, that they had been enlisted from among his neighbours, his friends, and relatives. In fact, the expeditions to the New World must have realized the terrors and apprehensions of the people of Palos by filling that little community with widows and orphans. When the rich merchants, who had sold goods to Pinzon at a hundred per cent. advance, beheld him return in this sorry condition, with two shattered barks and a handful of poor, tattered, weather-beaten seamen, they began to tremble for their money. No sooner, therefore, had he and his nephews departed to Granada, to give an account of their discoveries to the sovereigns, than the merchants seized upon their caravels and cargoes, and began to sell them, to repay themselves. Honest Pinzon immediately addressed a petition to the government, stating the imposition practised upon him, and the danger he was in of imprisonment and utter ruin, should his creditors be allowed to sacrifice his goods at a public sale. He petitioned that they might be compelled to return the property thus seized, and that he might be enabled to sell three hundred and fifty quintals of brazil-wood, which he had

brought back with him, and which would be sufficient to satisfy the demands of his creditors. The sovereigns granted his prayer. They issued an order to the civil authorities of Palos to interfere in the matter, with all possible promptness and brevity, allowing no vexatious delay, and administering justice so impartially that neither of the parties should have cause to complain.

Pinzon escaped from the fangs of his creditors, but, of course, must have suffered in purse from the expenses of the law, which in Spain is apt to bury even a successful client under an overwhelming mountain of documents and writings. We infer this in respect to Pinzon from a royal order issued in the following year, allowing him to export a quantity of grain, in consideration of the heavy losses he had sustained in his voyage of discovery. He did but share the usual lot of the Spanish discoverers, whose golden anticipations too frequently ended in penury; but he is distinguished from among the crowd of them by being the first European who crossed the equinoctial line, on the western ocean, and by discovering the great kingdom of Brazil.*

* On the 5th of September, 1501, a royal permission was given to Vicente Vañez Pinzon to colonize and govern the lands he had discovered, beginning a little north of the river Amazon, and extending to Cape St. Augustine. The object of the government in this permission was to establish an outpost and a resolute commander on this southern frontier, to check any intrusions the Portuguese might make in consequence of the accidental discovery of a part of the coast of Brazil by Pedro Alvarez Cabral, in 1500. The subsequent arrangement of a partition line between the two countries prevented the necessity of this precaution, and it does not appear that Vicente Yañez Pinzon made any second voyage to those parts.

In 1506 he undertook an expedition in company with Juan Diaz de Solis, a native of Lebrija, the object of which was to endeavour to find the strait or passage supposed by Columbus to lead from the Atlantic to a Southern Ocean. It was necessarily without success, as was also another voyage made by them, for the same purpose, in 1508. As no such passage exists, no blame could attach to those able navigators for being foiled in the object of their search.

In consequence of the distinguished merits and services of the Pinzon family, they were raised, by the Emperor Charles V, to the dignity of a Hidalguia, or nobility, without any express title, and a coat-of-arms was granted them, on which were emblazoned three caravels, with a hand at the stern pointing to an island covered with savages. This coat-of-arms is still maintained by the family, who have added to it the motto granted to Columbus, merely substituting the name of Pinzon for that of the admiral,

A Castile y a Leon,
Nuevo Mundo dio Pinzon.

DIEGO DE LEPE AND RODRIGO DE BASTIDES
[1500.]

NOTWITHSTANDING the hardships and disasters that had beset the voyagers to the New World, and the penury in which their golden anticipations had too frequently terminated, adventurers continued to press forward, excited by fresh reports of newly discovered regions, each in its turn represented as the real land of promise. Scarcely had Vicente Yañez Pinzon departed on the voyage recently narrated, when his townsman Diego de Lepe likewise set sail with two vessels from the busy little port of Palos, on a like expedition. No particulars of importance are known of this voyage, excepting that Lepe doubled Cape St. Augustine, and beheld the southern continent stretching far to the south-west. On returning to Spain, he drew a chart of the coast for the Bishop Fonseca, and enjoyed the reputation, for upwards of ten years afterwards, of having extended his discoveries further south than any other voyager.

Another contemporary adventurer to the New World was Rodrigo de Bastides, a wealthy notary of Triana, the suburb of Seville inhabited by the maritime part of its population. Being sanctioned by the sovereigns, to whom he engaged to yield a fourth of his profits, he fitted out two caravels in October, 1500, to go in quest of gold and pearls.

Prudently distrusting his own judgment in nautical matters, this adventurous notary associated with him the veteran pilot Juan de la Cosa, the same hardy Biscayan who had sailed with Columbus and Ojeda. A general outline of their voyage has already been given in the life of Columbus; it extended the discoveries of the coast of Terra Firma from Cape de la Vela, where Ojeda had left off, quite to the port of Nombre de Dios.

Bastides distinguished himself from the mass of discoverers by his kind treatment of the natives, and Juan de la Cosa by his sound discretion and his able seamanship. Their voyage had been extremely successful, and they had collected, by barter, a great amount of gold and pearls, when their prosperous career was checked by an unlooked-for evil. Their vessels to their surprise became leaky in every part, and they discovered, to their dismay, that the bottoms were pierced in innumerable places by the broma, or worm, which abounds in

the waters of the torrid zone, but of which they, as yet, had scarcely any knowledge. It was with great difficulty they could keep afloat until they reached a small islet on the coast of Hispaniola. Here they repaired their ships as well as they were able, and again put to sea to return to Cadiz. A succession of gales drove them back to port; the ravages of the worms continued, the leaks broke out afresh; they landed the most portable and precious part of their wealthy cargoes, and the vessels foundered with the remainder. Bastides lost, moreover, the arms and ammunition saved from the wreck, being obliged to destroy them lest they should fall into the hands of the Indians.

Distributing his men into three bands, two of them headed by La Cosa and himself, they set off for San Domingo by three several routes, as the country was not able to furnish provisions for so large a body. Each band was provided with a coffer stored with trinkets and other articles of Indian traffic, with which to buy provisions on the road.

Francisco de Bobadilla, the wrong-headed oppressor and superseder of Columbus, was at that time governor of San Domingo. The report reached him that a crew of adventurers had landed on the island, and were marching through the country in three bands, each provided with a coffer of gold, and carrying on illicit trade with the natives. The moment Bastides made his appearance, therefore, he was seized and thrown into prison, and an investigation commenced. In his defence, he maintained that his only traffic with the natives was for the purpose of procuring provisions for his followers, or guides for his journey. It was determined, however, to send him to Spain for trial, with the written testimony and the other documents of his examination.

He was accordingly conveyed in the same fleet in which Bobadilla embarked for Spain, and which experienced such an awful shipwreck in the sight of Columbus. The ship of Rodrigo Bastides was one of the few which outlived the tempest: it arrived safe at Cadiz in September, 1502. Bastides was ultimately acquitted of the charges advanced against him. So lucrative had been his voyage, that notwithstanding the losses sustained by the foundering of his vessels, he was enabled to pay a large sum to the crown as a fourth of his profits, and to retain a great amount for himself. In reward of his services and discoveries, the sovereigns granted him an

annual revenue for life, to arise from the proceeds of the province of Uraba, which he had discovered. An equal pension was likewise assigned to the hardy Juan de la Cosa, to result from the same territory, of which he was appointed alguazil mayor.* Such was the economical generosity of King Ferdinand, who rewarded the past toils of his adventurous discoverers out of the expected produce of their future labours.

SECOND VOYAGE OF ALONZO DE OJEDA.

[1502.]

THE first voyage of Alonzo de Ojeda to the coast of Paria, and its meagre termination in June, 1500, has been related. He gained nothing in wealth by that expedition, but he added to his celebrity as a bold and skilful adventurer. His youthful fire, his sanguine and swelling spirit, and the wonderful stories told of his activity and prowess, made him extremely popular, so that his patron the Bishop Fonseca found it an easy matter to secure for him the royal favour. In consideration of his past services and of others expected from him, a grant was made to him of six leagues of land on the southern part of Hispaniola, and the government of the province of Coquibacoa which he had discovered. He was, furthermore, authorized to fit out any number of ships, not exceeding ten, at his own expense, and to prosecute the discovery of the coast of Terra Firma. He was not to touch or traffic on the pearl coast of Paria; extending as far as a bay on the vicinity of the island of Margarita. Beyond this he had a right to trade in all kinds of merchandize, whether of pearls, jewels, metals, or precious stones; paying one-fifth of the profits to the crown, and abstaining from making slaves of the Indians without a special license from the sovereigns. He was to colonize Coquibacoa, and, as a recompence, was to enjoy one-half of the proceeds of his territory, provided the half did not exceed 300,000 maravedies: all beyond that amount was to go to the crown.

A principal reason, however, for granting this government and those privileges to Ojeda, was that, in his previous voyage, he had met with English adventurers on a voyage of discovery in the neighbourhood of Coquibacoa, at which the

* Navarrete, Colec., tom. iii.

jealousy of the sovereigns had taken the alarm. They were anxious, therefore, to establish a resolute and fighting commander like Ojeda upon this outpost, and they instructed him to set up the arms of Castile and Leon in every place he visited, as a signal of discovery and possession, and to put a stop to the intrusions of the English.*

With this commission in his pocket, and the government of an Indian territory in the perspective, Ojeda soon found associates to aid him in fitting out an armament. These were Juan de Vergara, a servant of a rich canon of the cathedral of Seville, and Garcia de Campos, commonly called Ocampo. They made a contract of partnership to last for two years, according to which the expenses and profits of the expedition, and of the government of Coquibacoa, were to be shared equally between them. The purses of the confederates were not ample enough to afford ten ships, but they fitted out four. 1st, The Santa Maria de la Antigua, commanded by Garcia del Campo ; 2nd, The Santa Maria de la Granada, commanded by Juan de Vergara; 3rd, The caravel Magdalena, commanded by Pedro de Ojeda, nephew to Alonzo ; and 4th, the caravel Santa Ana, commanded by Hernando de Guevara. The whole was under the command of Alonzo de Ojeda. The expedition set sail in 1502, touched at the Canaries, according to custom, to take in provisions, and then proceeded westward for the shores of the New World.

After traversing the Gulf of Paria, and before reaching the island of Margarita, the caravel Santa Ana, commanded by Hernando de Guevara, was separated from them, and for several days the ships were mutually seeking each other in these silent and trackless seas. After they were all reunited, they found their provisions growing scanty, they landed therefore at a part of the coast called Cumana by the natives, but to which, from its beauty and fertility, Ojeda gave the name of Valfermoso. While foraging here for their immediate supplies, the idea occurred to Ojeda that he should want furniture and utensils of all kinds for his proposed colony, and that it would be better to pillage them from a country where he was a mere transient visitor, than to wrest them from his neighbours in the territory where he was to set up his government. His companions were struck with the policy, if not the justice, of this idea, and they all set to work to carry it into execu-

* Navarrete, tom. iii. Document x.

tion. Dispersing themselves, therefore, in ambush in various directions, they at a concerted signal rushed forth from their concealment, and set upon the natives. Ojeda had issued orders to do as little injury and damage as possible, and on no account to destroy the habitations of the Indians. His followers, however, in their great zeal, transcended his orders. Seven or eight Indians were killed and many wounded in the skirmish which took place, and a number of their cabins were wrapped in flames. A great quantity of hammocks of cotton, and of utensils of various kinds, fell into the hands of the conquerors; they also captured several female Indians, some of whom were ransomed with the kind of gold called guanin; some were retained by Vergara for himself and his friend Ocampo, others were distributed among the crews, the rest, probably the old and ugly, were set at liberty. As to Ojeda, he reserved nothing for himself of the spoil excepting a single hammock.

The ransom paid by the poor Indians for some of their effects and some of their women yielded the Spaniards a trifling quantity of gold, but they found the place destitute of provisions, and Ojeda was obliged to dispatch Vergara in a caravel to the island of Jamaica to forage for supplies, with instructions to rejoin him at Maracaibo or Cape de la Vela.

Ojeda at length arrived at Coquibacoa, the port destined for his seat of government. He found the country, however, so poor and sterile, that he proceeded along the coast to a bay which he named Santa Cruz, but which is supposed to be the same at present called Bahia Honda, where he found a Spaniard who had been left in the province of Citarma by Bastides in his late voyage about thirteen months before, and had remained ever since among the Indians, so that he had acquired their language.

Ojeda determined to form his settlement at this place; but the natives seemed disposed to defend their territory, for, the moment a party landed to procure water, they were assailed by a galling shower of arrows, and driven back to the ships. Upon this Ojeda landed with all his force, and struck such terror into the Indians, that they came forward with signs of amity, and brought a considerable quantity of gold as a peace-offering, which was graciously accepted.

Ojeda, with the concurrence of his associates, now set to work to establish a settlement, cutting down trees, and com-

mencing a fortress. They had scarce begun, when they were attacked by a neighbouring cacique, but Ojeda sallied forth upon him with such intrepidity and effect as not merely to defeat, but to drive him from the neighbourhood. He then proceeded quietly to finish his fortress, which was defended by lombards, and contained the magazine of provisions, and the treasure amassed in the expedition. The provisions were dealt out twice a day, under the inspection of proper officers; the treasure, gained by barter, by ransom, or by plunder, was deposited in a strong box secured by two locks, one key being kept by the royal supervisor, the other by Ocampo.

In the meantime provisions became scarce. The Indians never appeared in the neighbourhood of the fortress, except to harass it with repeated though ineffectual assaults. Vergara did not appear with the expected supplies from Jamaica, and a caravel was dispatched in search of him. The people, worn out with labour and privations of various kinds, and disgusted with the situation of the settlement, which was in a poor and unhealthy country, grew discontented and factious. They began to fear that they should lose the means of departing, as their vessels were in danger of being destroyed by the broma or worms. Ojeda led them forth repeatedly upon foraging parties about the adjacent country, and collected some provisions and booty in the Indian villages. The provisions he deposited in the magazine, part of the spoils he divided among his followers, and the gold he locked up in the strong box, the keys of which he took possession of, to the great displeasure of the supervisor and his associate Ocampo. The murmurs of the people grew loud as their sufferings increased. They insinuated that Ojeda had no authority over this part of the coast, having passed the boundaries of his government, and formed his settlement in the country discovered by Bastides. By the time Vergara arrived from Jamaica, the factions of this petty colony had risen to an alarming height. Ocampo had a personal enmity to the governor, arising probably from some feud about the strong box; being a particular friend of Vergara he held a private conference with him, and laid a plan to entrap the doughty Ojeda. In pursuance of this the latter was invited on board of the caravel of Vergara, to see the provisions he had brought from Jamaica; but no sooner was he on board than they charged him with having transgressed the limits of his government with having provoked the

hostility of the Indians and heedlessly sacrificed the lives of his followers, and above all with having taken possession of the strong box, in contempt of the authority of the royal supervisor, and with the intention of appropriating to himself all the gains of the enterprise; they informed him, therefore, of their intention to convey him a prisoner to Hispaniola, to answer to the governor for his offences. Ojeda finding himself thus entrapped, proposed to Vergara and Ocampo that they should return to Spain with such of the crews as chose to accompany them, leaving him with the remainder to proseeute his enterprise. The two recreant partners at first consented, for they were disgusted with the enterprise, which offered little profit and severe hardships. They agreed to leave Ojeda the smallest of the caravels with a third of the provisions and of their gains, and to build a row-boat for him. They actually began to labour upon the boat. Before ten days had elapsed, however, they repented of their arrangement; the ship-carpenters were ill, there were no calkers, and moreover they recollected that as Ojeda, according to their representations, was a defaulter to the crown, they would be liable as his sureties, should they return to Spain without him. They concluded, therefore, that the wisest plan was to give him nothing, but to carry him off prisoner.

When Ojeda learned the determination of his wary partners, he attempted to make his escape and get off to San Domingo, but he was seized, thrown in irons, and conveyed on board of the caravel. The two partners then set sail from Santa Cruz, bearing off the whole community, its captive governor, and the litigated strong box.

They put to sea about the beginning of September, and arrived at the western part of the island of Hispaniola. While at anchor, within a stone's throw of the land, Ojeda, confident in his strength and skill as a swimmer, let himself quietly slide down the side of the ship into the water during the night, and attempted to swim for the shore. His arms were free, but his feet were shackled, and the weight of his irons threatened to sink him. He was obliged to shout for help; a boat was sent from the vessel to his relief, and the unfortunate governor was brought back half drowned to his unrelenting partners.*

The latter now landed and delivered their prisoner into the

* Hist. Gen. de Viages. Herrera, Hist. Ind.

hands of Gallego, the commander of the place, to be put at the disposal of the governor of the island. In the meantime, the strong box, which appears to have been at the bottom of all these feuds, remained in the possession of Vergara and Ocampo, who, Ojeda says, took from it whatever they thought proper, without regard to the royal dues, or the consent of the royal supervisor. They were all together, prisoners and accusers, in the city of San Domingo, about the end of September, 1502, when the chief judge of the island, after hearing both parties, gave a verdict against Ojeda, that stripped him of all his effects, and brought him into debt to the crown for the royal proportion of the profits of the voyage. Ojeda appealed to the sovereign, and, after some time, was honourably acquitted, by the royal council, from all the charges; and a mandate was issued in 1503, ordering a restitution of his property. It appears, however, that the costs of justice, or rather of the law, consumed his share of the treasure of the strong box, and that a royal order was necessary to liberate him from the hands of the governor; so that like too many other litigants, he finally emerged from the labyrinths of the law a triumphant client, but a ruined man.

THIRD VOYAGE OF ALONZO DE OJEDA.

CHAPTER I.

For several years after his ruinous, though successful lawsuit, we lose all traces of Alonzo de Ojeda, excepting that we are told he made another voyage to the vicinity of Coquibacoa, in 1505. No record remains of this expedition, which seems to have been equally unprofitable with the preceding, for we find him in 1508, in the island of Hispaniola, as poor in purse, though as proud in spirit, as ever. In fact, however fortune might have favoured him, he had a heedless, squandering disposition that would always have kept him poor.

About this time the cupidity of King Ferdinand was greatly excited by the accounts given by Columbus of the gold mines of Veragua, in which the admiral fancied he had discovered the Aurea Chersonesus of the ancients, whence King Solomon procured the gold, used in building the temple of Jerusalem. Subsequent voyagers had corroborated the opinion of Colum-

bus as to the general riches of the coast of Terra Firma; King Ferdinand resolved, therefore, to found regular colonies along that coast, and to place the whole under some capable commander. A project of the kind had been conceived by Columbus, when he discovered that region in the course of his last voyage, and the reader may remember the disasters experienced by his brother Don Bartholomew and himself, in endeavouring to establish a colony on the hostile shores of Veragua. The admiral being dead, the person who should naturally have presented himself to the mind of the sovereign for this particular service was Don Bartholomew; but, the wary and selfish monarch knew the Adelantado to be as lofty in his terms as his late brother, and preferred to accomplish his purposes by cheaper agents. He was unwilling, also, to increase the consequence of a family, whose vast but just claims were already a cause of repining to his sordid and jealous spirit. He looked round, therefore, among the crowd of adventurers, who had sprung up in the school of Columbus, for some individual ready to serve him on more accommodating terms. Among those, considered by their friends as most fitted for this purpose was Alonzo de Ojeda, for his roving voyages and daring exploits had made him famous among the voyagers; and it was thought that an application on his part would be attended with success, as he possessed a staunch friend at court in the Bishop Fonseca. Unfortunately he was too far distant to urge his suit to the bishop, and what was worse, he was destitute of money. At this juncture there happened to be at Hispaniola the veteran navigator and pilot, Juan de la Cosa, who was a kind of Nestor in all nautical affairs.* The hardy Biscayan had sailed with Ojeda, and had conceived a great opinion of the courage and talents of the youthful adventurer. He had contrived,

* Peter Martyr gives the following weighty testimony to the knowledge and skill of this excellent seaman:—"Of the Spaniards, as many as thought themselves to have any knowledge of what pertained to measure the land and the sea, drew cardes (charts) on parchmen.. as concerning these navigations. Of all others they most esteem them which Juan de la Cosa, the companion of Ojeda, and another pilot called Andres Morales, had set forth, and this, as well for the great experience which both had, *(to whom these tracts were as well known as the chambers of their own house,)* as also that they were thought to be cunninger in that part of cosmography which teacheth the description and measuring of the sea."—Peter Martyr, decad. ii. cap. 10.

also, to fill his purse in the course of his cruising, and now, in the generous spirit of a sailor, offered to aid Ojeda with it in the prosecution of his wishes.

His offer was gladly accepted; it was agreed that Juan de la Cosa should depart for Spain, to promote the appointment of Ojeda to the command of Terra Firma, and, in case of success, should fit out, with his own funds, the necessary armament.

La Cosa departed on his embassy; he called on the Bishop Fonseca, who, as had been expected, entered warmly into the views of his favourite Ojeda, and recommended him to the ambitious and bigot king, as a man well fitted to promote his empire in the wilderness, and to dispense the blessings of Christianity among the savages.

The recommendation of the bishop was usually effectual in the affairs of the New World, and the opinion of the veteran de la Cosa had great weight even with the sovereign: but a rival candidate to Ojeda had presented himself, and one who had the advantage of higher connections and greater pecuniary means. This was Diego de Nicuesa, an accomplished courtier of noble birth, who had filled the post of grand carver to Don Enrique Enriquez, uncle of the king. Nature, education, and habit combined to form Nicuesa a complete rival of Ojeda. Like him he was small of stature, but remarkable for symmetry and compactness of form, and for bodily strength and activity; like him he was master at all kinds of weapons, and skilled, not merely in feats of agility, but in those graceful and chivalrous exercises, which the Spanish cavaliers of those days inherited from the Moors; being noted for his vigour and address in the jousts or tilting matches after the Moresco fashion. Ojeda himself could not surpass him in feats of horsemanship, and particular mention is made of a favourite mare, which he could make caper and caracole in strict cadence to the sound of a viol; besides all this, he was versed in the legendary ballads or romances of his country, and was renowned as a capital performer on the guitar! Such were the qualifications of this candidate for a command in the wilderness, as enumerated by the reverend bishop Las Casas. It is probable, however, that he had given evidence of qualities more adapted to the desired post: having already been out to Hispaniola in the military train of the late Governor Ovando.

Where merits were so singularly balanced as those of Ojeda and Nicuesa, it might have been difficult to decide: King Ferdinand avoided the dilemma by favouring both; not indeed by furnishing them with ships and money, but by granting patents and dignities which cost nothing, and might bring rich returns. He divided that part of the continent which lies along the Isthmus of Darien into two provinces, the boundary line running through the Gulf of Uraba. The eastern part, extending to Cape de la Vela, was called New Andalusia, and the government of it given to Ojeda. The other to the west, including Veragua, and reaching to Cape Gracias à Dios, was assigned to Nicuesa. The island of Jamaica was given to the two governors in common, as a place whence to draw supplies of provisions. Each of the governors was to erect two fortresses in his district, and to enjoy for ten years the profits of all the mines he should discover, paying to the crown one-tenth part the first year, one-ninth the second, one-eighth the third, one-seventh the fourth, and one-fifth in each of the remaining years.

Juan de la Cosa, who had been indefatigable in promoting the suit of Ojeda, was appointed his lieutenant in the government, with the post of alguazil mayor of the province. He immediately freighted a ship and two brigantines, in which he embarked with about two hundred men. It was a slender armament, but the purse of the honest voyager was not very deep, and that of Ojeda was empty. Nicuesa, having ampler means, armed four large vessels, and two brigantines, furnished them with abundant munitions and supplies, both for the voyage and the projected colony, enlisted a much greater force, and set sail in gay and vaunting style, for the golden shores of Veragua, the Aurea Chersonesus of his imagination.

CHAPTER II.—[1509.]

The two rival armaments arrived at San Domingo about the same time. Nicuesa had experienced what was doubtless considered a pleasant little turn of fortune by the way. Touching at Santa Cruz, one of the Caribbee islands, he had succeeded in capturing a hundred of the natives, whom he had borne off in his ships to be sold as slaves at Hispaniola. This was deemed justifiable in those days, even by the most scrupulous divines, from the belief that the Caribs were all anthropophagi, or man-eaters; fortunately the opinion of

mankind, in this more enlightened age, makes but little difference in atrocity between the cannibal and the kidnapper.

Alonzo de Ojeda welcomed with joy the arrival of his nautical friend and future lieutenant in the government, the worthy Juan de la Cosa; still he could not but feel some mortification at the inferiority of his armament to that of his rival Nicuesa, whose stately ships rode proudly at anchor in the harbour of San Domingo. He felt, too, that his means were inadequate to the establishment of his intended colony. Ojeda, however, was not long at a loss for pecuniary assistonce. Like many free-spirited men, who are careless and squandering of their own purses, he had a facility at commanding the purses of his neighbours. Among the motley population of San Domingo, there was a lawyer of some abilities, the Bachelor Martin Fernandez de Enciso, who had made two thousand castellanos by his pleading;* for it would appear that the spirit of litigation was one of the first fruits of civilized life transplanted to the New World, and flourished surprisingly among the Spanish colonists.

Alonzo de Ojeda became acquainted with the Bachelor, and finding him to be of a restless and speculative character, soon succeeded in inspiring him with a contempt for the dull, but secure and profitable routine of his office in San Domingo, and imbuing him with his own passion for adventure. Above all, he dazzled him with the offer to make him alcalde mayor, or chief judge of the provincial government he was about to establish in the wilderness.

In an evil hour, the aspiring Bachelor yielded to the temptation, and agreed to invest all his money in the enterprise. It was arranged that Ojeda should depart with the armament which had arrived from Spain, while the Bachelor should remain at Hispaniola to beat up for recruits and provide supplies; with these he was to embark in a ship purchased by himself, and proceed to join his high-mettled friend at the seat of his intended colony. Two rival governors, so well matched as Ojeda and Nicuesa, and both possessed of swelling spirits, pent up in small but active bodies, could not remain long in a little place like San Domingo without some collision. The island of Jamaica, which had been assigned to them in common, furnished the first ground of contention; the province of Darien furnished another, each pretending to include it within the limits of his jurisdiction. Their dis-

* Equivalent to 10,050 dollars of the present day.

putes on these points ran so high that the whole place resounded with them. In talking, however, Nicuesa had the advantage; having been brought up in the court, he was more polished and ceremonious, had greater self-command, and probably perplexed his rival governor in argument. Ojeda was no great casuist, but he was an excellent swordsman, and always ready to fight his way through any question of right or dignity which he could not clearly argue with the tongue; so he proposed to settle the dispute by single combat. Nicuesa, though equally brave, was more a man of the world, and saw the folly of such arbitrament. Secretly smiling at the heat of his antagonist, he proposed as a preliminary to the duel, and to furnish something worth fighting for, that each should deposit five thousand castellanos, to be the prize of the victor. This, as he foresaw, was a temporary check upon the fiery valour of his rival, who did not possess a pistole in his treasury; but probably was too proud to confess it.

It is not likely, however, that the impetuous spirit of Ojeda would long have remained in check, had not the discreet Juan de la Cosa interposed to calm it. It is interesting to notice the great ascendancy possessed by this veteran navigator over his fiery associate. Juan de la Cosa was a man whose strong natural good sense had been quickened by long and hard experience; whose courage was above all question, but tempered by time and trial. He seems to have been personally attached to Ojeda, as veterans who have outlived the rash impulse of youthful valour, are apt to love the fiery quality in their younger associates. So long as he accompanied Ojeda in his enterprises he stood by him as a Mentor in council, and a devoted partisan in danger.

In the present instance, the interference of this veteran of the seas had the most salutary effect; he prevented the impending duel of the rival governors, and persuaded them to agree that the river Darien should be the boundary line between their respective jurisdictions.

The dispute relative to Jamaica was settled by the admiral, Don Diego Columbus himself. He had already felt aggrieved by the distribution of these governments by the king without his consent or even knowledge, being contrary to the privileges inherited from his father, the discoverer. It was in vain to contend, however, when the matter was beyond his reach and involved in technical disputes. But as to the island

of Jamaica, it in a manner lay at his own door, and he could not brook its being made a matter of gift to these brawling governors. Without waiting the slow and uncertain course of making remonstrances to the king, he took the affair, as a matter of plain right, into his own hands, and ordered a brave officer, Juan de Esquibel, the same who had subjugated the province of Higuey, to take possession of that island, with seventy men, and to hold it subject to his command.

Ojeda did not hear of this arrangement until he was on the point of embarking to make sail. In the heat of the moment he loudly defied the power of the admiral, and swore that if he ever found Juan de Esquibel on the island of Jamaica he would strike off his head. The populace present heard this menace, and had too thorough an idea of the fiery and daring character of Ojeda to doubt that he would carry it into effect. Notwithstanding his bravado, however, Juan de Esquibel proceeded according to his orders to take possession of the island of Jamaica.

The squadron of Nicuesa lingered for some time after the sailing of his rival. His courteous and engaging manners, aided by the rumour of great riches in the province of Veragua, where he intended to found his colony, had drawn numerous volunteers to his standard, insomuch that he had to purchase another ship to convey them.

Nicuesa was more of the courtier and the cavalier, than the man of business, and had no skill in managing his pecuniary affairs. He had expended his funds with a lavish hand, and involved himself in debts which he had not the immediate means of paying. Many of his creditors knew that his expedition was regarded with an evil eye by the admiral, Don Diego Columbus; to gain favour with the latter, therefore, they threw all kinds of impediments in the way of Nicuesa. Never was an unfortunate gentleman more harassed and distracted by duns and demands, one plucking at his skirts as soon as another was satisfied. He succeeded, however, in getting all his forces embarked. He had seven hundred men, well chosen and armed, together with six horses. He chose Lope de Olano to be his captain-general, a seemingly impolitic appointment, as this Olano had been concerned with the notorious Roldan in his rebellion against Columbus.

The squadron sailed out of the harbour and put to sea, excepting one ship, which, with anchor atrip and sails unfurled, waited to receive Nicuesa, who was detained on shore until

the last moment by the perplexities artfully multiplied around him.

Just as he was on the point of stepping into his boat he was arrested by the harpies of the law, and carried before the alcalde mayor to answer a demand for five hundred ducats, which he was ordered to pay on the spot, or prepare to go to prison.

This was a thunder-stroke to the unfortunate cavalier. In vain he represented his utter incapacity to furnish such a sum at the moment; in vain he represented the ruin that would accrue to himself and the vast injury to the public service, should he be prevented from joining his expedition The alcalde mayor was inflexible, and Nicuesa was reduced to despair. At this critical moment relief came from a most unexpected quarter. The heart of a public notary was melted by his distress! He stepped forward in court and declared that rather than see so gallant a gentleman reduced to extremity, he himself would pay down the money. Nicuesa gazed at him with astonishment, and could scarce believe his senses, but when he saw him actually pay off the debt, and found himself suddenly released from this dreadful embarrassment, he embraced his deliverer with tears of gratitude, and hastened with all speed to embark, lest some other legal spell should be laid upon his person.

CHAPTER III.—[1509.]

It was on the 10th of November, 1509, that Alonzo de Ojeda set sail from San Domingo with two ships, two brigantines, and three hundred men. He took with him also twelve brood mares. Among the remarkable adventurers who embarked with him was Francisco Pizarro, afterwards renowned as the conqueror of Peru.* Hernando Cortez had likewise intended

Francisco Pizarro was a native of Truxillo in Estremadura. He was the illegitimate fruit of an amour between Gonsalvo Pizarro, a veteran captain of infantry, and a damsel in low life. His childhood was passed in grovelling occupations incident to the humble condition of his mother, and he is said to have been a swineherd. When he had sufficiently increased in years and stature, he enlisted as a soldier. His first campaigns may have been against the Moors in the war of Granada. He certainly served in Italy under the banner of the Great Captain, Gonsalvo of Cordova. His roving spirit then induced him to join the bands of adventurers to the New World. He was of ferocious courage, and, when engaged in any enterprise, possessed an obstinate perseverance neither to be deterred by danger, weakened by fatigue and

to sail in the expedition, but was prevented by an inflammation in one of his knees.

The voyage was speedy and prosperous, and they arrived late in the autumn in the harbour of Carthagena. The veteran Juan de la Cosa was well acquainted with this place, having sailed as pilot with Rodrigo de Bastides, at the time he discovered it in 1501. He warned Alonzo de Ojeda to be upon his guard, as the natives were a brave and warlike race of Carib origin, far different from the soft and gentle inhabitants of the islands. They wielded great swords of palm-wood, defended themselves with osier targets, and dipped their arrows in a subtle poison. The women as well as the men mingled in battle, being expert in drawing the bow and throwing a species of lance called the azagay. The warning was well timed, for the Indians of these parts had been irritated by the misconduct of previous adventurers, and flew to arms on the first appearance of the ships.

Juan de la Cosa now feared for the safety of the enterprise in which he had person, fortune, and official dignity at stake. He earnestly advised Ojeda to abandon this dangerous neighbourhood, and to commence a settlement in the Gulf of Uraba, where the people were less ferocious, and did not use poisoned weapons. Ojeda was too proud of spirit to alter his plans through fear of a naked foe. It is thought, too, that he had no objection to a skirmish, being desirous of a pretext to make slaves to be sent to Hispaniola in discharge of the debts he had left unpaid.* He landed, therefore, with a considerable part of his force, and a number of friars, who had been sent out to convert the Indians. His faithful lieutenant, being unable to keep him out of danger, stood by to second him.

Ojeda advanced towards the savages, and ordered the friars to read aloud a certain formula recently digested by profound jurists and divines in Spain, It began in stately form. "I, Alonzo de Ojeda, servant of the most high and mighty sovereigns of Castile and Leon, conquerors of barbarous nations their messenger and captain, do notify unto you and make you know, in the best way I can, that God our Lord, one and eternal, created the heaven and the earth, and one man and one woman, from whom you, and we, and all the people of the

hardship, nor checked by repeated disappointment. After having conquered the great kingdom of Peru, he was assassinated, at an advanced age, in 1541, defending himself bravely to the last.

* Las Casas, Hist. Ind., lib. ii. cap. 57, MS.

earth proceeded and are descendants, as well as all those who shall come hereafter." The formula then went on to declare the fundamental principles of the Catholic Faith; the supreme power given to St. Peter over the world and all the human race, and exercised by his representative the Pope; the donation made by a late Pope of all this part of the world and all its inhabitants to the Catholic sovereigns of Castile; and the ready obedience already paid by many of its lands, and islands, and people to the agents and representatives of those sovereigns. It called upon those savages present, therefore, to do the same, to acknowledge the truth of the Christian doctrines, the supremacy of the Pope, and the sovereignty of the Catholic King, but in case of refusal, denounced upon them all the horrors of war, the desolation of their dwellings, the seizure of their property, and the slavery of their wives and children. Such was the extraordinary document, which, from this time forward, was read by the Spanish discoverers to the wondering savages of any newly-found country, as a prelude to sanctify the violence about to be inflicted on them.*

When the friars had read this pious manifesto, Ojeda made signs of amity to the natives, and held up glittering presents. They had already suffered, however, from the cruelties of white men, and were not to be won by kindness. On the contrary they brandished their weapons, sounded their conchs, and prepared to make battle.

Juan de la Cosa saw the rising choler of Ojeda, and knew his fiery impatience. He again entreated him to abandon these hostile shores, and reminded him of the venomous weapons of the enemy. It was all in vain: Ojeda confided blindly in the protection of the Virgin. Putting up, as usual, a short prayer to his patroness, he drew his weapon, braced his buckler, and charged furiously upon the savages. Juan de la Cosa followed as heartily as if the battle had been of his own seeking. The Indians were soon routed, a number killed, and several taken prisoners; on their persons were found plates of gold, but of an inferior quality. Flushed by this triumph, Ojeda took several of the prisoners as guides, and pursued the flying enemy four leagues into the interior. He was followed, as usual, by his faithful lieutenant, the veteran La Cosa, continually remonstrating against his useless temerity, but hardily seconding him in the most hair-brained perils.

* The reader will find the complete form of this curious manifesto in the Appendix.

Having penetrated far into the forest, they came to a stronghold of the enemy, where a numerous force was ready to receive them, armed with clubs, lances, arrows and bucklers. Ojeda led his men to the charge with the old Castilian war-cry, "Santiago!" The savages soon took to flight. Eight of their bravest warriors threw themselves into a cabin, and plied their bows and arrows so vigorously, that the Spaniards were kept at bay. Ojeda cried shame upon his followers to be daunted by eight naked men. Stung by this reproach, an old Castilian soldier rushed through a shower of arrows and forced the door of the cabin, but received a shaft through the heart, and fell dead on the threshold. Ojeda, furious at the sight, ordered fire to be set to the combustible edifice; in a moment it was in a blaze, and the eight warriors perished in the flames.

Seventy Indians were made captive and sent to the ships, and Ojeda, regardless of the remonstrances of Juan de la Cosa, continued his rash pursuit of the fugitives through the forest. In the dusk of the evening they arrived at a village called Yurbaco; the inhabitants of which had fled to the mountains with their wives, and children, and principal effects. The Spaniards, imagining that the Indians were completely terrified and dispersed, now roved in quest of booty among the deserted houses, which stood distant from each other, buried among the trees. While they were thus scattered, troops of savages rushed forth, with furious yells, from all parts of the forest. The Spaniards endeavoured to gather together and support each other, but every little party were surrounded by a host of foes. They fought with desperate bravery, but for once their valour and their iron armour were of no avail; they were overwhelmed by numbers, and sank beneath war-clubs and poisoned arrows.

Ojeda on the first alarm collected a few soldiers and ensconced himself within a small enclosure, surrounded by palisades. Here he was closely besieged and galled by flights of arrows. He threw himself on his knees, covered himself with his buckler, and, being small and active, managed to protect himself from the deadly shower, but all his companions were slain by his side, some of them perishing in frightful agonies. At this fearful moment the veteran La Cosa, having heard of the peril of his commander, arrived with a few followers to his assistance. Stationing himself at the gate of the palisades, the brave Biscayan kept the savages at bay until most of his

men were slain, and he himself was severely wounded. Just then Ojeda sprang forth like a tiger into the midst of the enemy, dealing his blows on every side. La Cosa would have seconded him, but was crippled by his wounds. He took refuge with the remnant of his men in an Indian cabin; the straw roof of which he aided them to throw off, lest the enemy should set it on fire. Here he defended himself until all his comrades, but one, were destroyed. The subtle poison of his wounds at length overpowered him, and he sank to the ground. Feeling death at hand, he called to his only surviving companion. "Brother," said he, "since God hath protected thee from harm, sally forth and fly, and if ever thou shouldst see Alonzo de Ojeda, tell him of my fate!"

Thus fell the hardy Juan de la Cosa, faithful and devoted to the very last; nor can we refrain from pausing to pay a passing tribute to his memory. He was acknowledged by his contemporaries to be one of the ablest of those gallant Spanish navigators who first explored the way to the New World. But it is by the honest and kindly qualities of his heart that his memory is most endeared to us; it is, above all, by that loyalty in friendship displayed in this his last and fatal expedition. Warmed by his attachment for a more youthful and hot-headed adventurer, we see this wary veteran of the seas forgetting his usual prudence and the lessons of his experience, and embarking heart and hand, purse and person, in the wild enterprises of his favourite. We behold him watching over him as a parent, remonstrating with him as a counsellor, but fighting by him as a partisan; following him, without hesitation into known and needless danger, to certain death itself, and showing no other solicitude in his dying moments, but to be remembered by his friend.

The history of these Spanish discoverers abounds in noble and generous traits of character; but few have charmed us more than this instance of loyalty to the last gasp, in the death of the staunch Juan de la Cosa. The Spaniard who escaped to tell the story of his end, was the only survivor of seventy that had followed Ojeda in this rash and headstrong inroad.

CHAPTER IV.

While these disastrous occurrences happened on shore, great alarm began to be felt on board of the ships. Days had elapsed since the party had adventured so rashly into the wilderness; yet nothing had been seen or heard of them, and

the forest spread a mystery over their fate. Some of the Spaniards ventured a little distance into the woods, but were deterred by the distant shouts and yells of the savages, and the noise of their conchs and drums. Armed detachments then coasted the shore in boats, landing occasionally, climbing rocks and promontories, firing signal guns, and sounding trumpets. It was all in vain; they heard nothing but the echoes of their own noises, or perhaps the wild whoop of an Indian from the bosom of the forest. At length, when they were about to give up the search in despair, they came to a great thicket of mangrove trees on the margin of the sea. These trees grow within the water, but their roots rise, and are intertwined above the surface. In this entangled and almost impervious grove, they caught a glimpse of a man in Spanish attire. They entered, and, to their astonishment, found it to be Alonzo de Ojeda. He was lying on the matted roots of the mangroves, his buckler on his shoulder, and his sword in his hand; but so wasted with hunger and fatigue that he could not speak. They bore him to the firm land; made a fire on the shore to warm him, for he was chilled with the damp and cold of his hiding-place, and when he was a little revived, they gave him food and wine. In this way he gradually recovered strength to tell his doleful story.*

He had succeeded in cutting his way through the host of savages, and attaining the woody skirts of the mountains; but when he found himself alone, and that all his brave men had been cut off, he was ready to yield up in despair. Bitterly did he reproach himself for having disregarded the advice of the veteran La Cosa, and deeply did he deplore the loss of that loyal follower, who had fallen a victim to his devotion. He scarce knew which way to bend his course, but continued on, in the darkness of the night and of the forest, until out of hearing of the yells of triumph uttered by the savages over the bodies of his men. When the day broke, he sought the

* The picture here given is so much like romance, that the author quotes his authority at length:—"Llegaron adonde havia, junto al agua de la mar, unos Manglares, que son arboles, que siempre nacen, i crecen i permanecen dientro del agua de la mar, con grandes raices, asidas, i enmarañades unas con otras, i alli metido, i escondido hallaron à Alonzo de Ojeda, con su espada en la mano, i la rodela en las espaldas, i en alla sobre trecientas, señales de flechazos. Estabo descaido de hambre, que no podia hechar de si la habla; i si no fuera tan robusto, aunque chico de cuerpo, fuera muerto."

Las Casas, lib ii cap. 58. MS. Herrera, Hist. Ind.,d. .lib vii. cap. 15.

rudest parts of the mountains, and hid himself until the night: then struggling forward among rocks, and precipices, and matted forests, he made his way to the sea-side, but was too much exhausted to reach the ships. Indeed it was wonderful that one so small of frame should have been able to endure such great hardships; but he was of admirable strength and hardihood. His followers considered his escape from death as little less than miraculous, and he himself regarded it as another proof of the special protection of the Virgin; for, though he had, as usual, received no wound, yet it is said his buckler bore the dints of upwards of three hundred arrows.*

While the Spaniards were yet on the shore, administering to the recovery of their commander, they beheld a squadron of ships standing towards the harbour of Carthagena, and soon perceived them to be the ships of Nicuesa. Ojeda was troubled in mind at the sight, recollecting his late intemperate defiance of that cavalier; and reflecting that, should he seek him in enmity, he was in no situation to maintain his challenge or defend himself. He ordered his men, therefore, to return on board the ships, and leave him alone on the shore, and not to reveal the place of his retreat while Nicuesa should remain in the harbour.

As the squadron entered the harbour, the boats sallied forth to meet it. The first inquiry of Nicuesa was concerning Ojeda. The followers of the latter replied, mournfully, that their commander had gone on a warlike expedition into the country, but days had elapsed without his return, so that they feared some misfortune had befallen him. They entreated Nicuesa, therefore, to give his word as a cavalier, that should Ojeda really be in distress, he would not take advantage of his misfortunes to revenge himself for their late disputes.

Nicuesa, who was a gentleman of noble and generous spirit, blushed with indignation at such a request. "Seek your commander instantly," said he; "bring him to me if he be alive; and I pledge myself not merely to forget the past, but to aid him as if he were a brother."†

When they met, Nicuesa received his late foe with open arms. "It is not," said he, "for hidalgoes, like men of vulgar souls, to remember past differences when they behold one another in distress. Henceforth let all that has occurred between us be forgotten. Command me as a brother. Myself

* Las Casas, lib. i. cap. 58. MS. Herrera, decad. i. lib. vii. cap. 15.
† Las Casas, ubi sup.

and my men are at your orders, to follow you wherever you please, until the deaths of Juan de la Cosa and his comrades are revenged."

The spirits of Ojeda were once more lifted up by this gallant and generous offer. The two governors, no longer rivals, landed four hundred of their men and several horses, and set off with all speed for the fatal village. They approached it in the night, and, dividing their forces into two parties, gave orders that not an Indian should be taken alive.

The village was buried in deep sleep, but the woods were filled with large parrots, which, being awakened, made a prodigious clamour. The Indians, however, thinking the Spaniards all destroyed, paid no attention to these noises. It was not until their houses were assailed, and wrapped in flames, that they took the alarm. They rushed forth, some with arms, some weaponless, but were received at their doors by the exasperated Spaniards, and either slain on the spot, or driven back into the fire. Women fled wildly forth with children in their arms, but at sight of the Spaniards glittering in steel, and of the horses, which they supposed ravenous monsters, ran back, shrieking with horror, into their burning habitations. Great was the carnage, for no quarter was shown to age or sex. Many perished by the fire, and many by the sword.

When they had fully glutted their vengeance, the Spaniards ranged about for booty. While thus employed, they found the body of the unfortunate Juan de la Cosa. It was tied to a tree, but swollen and discoloured in a hideous manner by the poisor of the arrows with which he had been slain. This dism.. spectacle had such an effect upon the common men, that not one would remain in that place during the night. Having sacked the village, therefore, they left it a smoking ruin, and returned in triumph to their ships. The spoil in gold and other articles of value must have been great, for the share of Nicuesa and his men amounted to the value of seven thousand castellanos.* The two governors, now faithful confederates, parted with many expressions of friendship, and with mutual admiration of each other's prowess; and Nicuesa continued his voyage for the coast of Veragua.

CHAPTER V.

OJEDA now adopted, though tardily, the advice of his un-

* Equivalent to 37,281 dollars of the present day.

fortunate lieutenant, Juan de la Cosa, and, giving up all thoughts of colonizing this disastrous part of the coast, steered his course for the Gulf of Uraba. He sought for some time the river Darien, famed among the Indians as abounding in gold, but not finding it, landed in various places, seeking a favourable site for his intended colony. His people were disheartened by the disasters they had already undergone, and the appearance of surrounding objects was not calculated to reassure them. The country, though fertile, and covered with rich and beautiful vegetation, was in their eyes a land of cannibals and monsters. They began to dread the strength as well as fierceness of the savages, who could transfix a man with their arrows even when covered with armour, and whose shafts were tipped with deadly poison. They heard the howlings of tigers, panthers, and, as they thought, lions in the forests, and encountered large and venomous serpents among the rocks and thickets. As they were passing along the banks of a river, one of their horses was seized by the leg by an enormous alligator, and dragged beneath the waves.*

At length Ojeda fixed upon a place for his town, on a height at the east end of the gulf. Here, landing all that could be spared from the ships, he began, with all diligence to erect houses, giving this embryo capital of his province the name of San Sebastian, in honour of that sainted martyr, who was slain by arrows; hoping he might protect the inhabitants from the empoisoned shafts of the savages. As a further protection, he erected a large wooden fortress, and surrounded the place with a stockade. Feeling, however, the inadequacy of his handful of men to contend with the hostile tribes around him, he dispatched a ship to Hispaniola, with a letter to the Bachelor, Martin Fernandez de Enciso, his alcalde mayor, informing him of his having established his seat of government, and urging him to lose no time in joining him with all the recruits, arms, and provisions he could command. By the same ship he transmitted to San Domingo all the captives and gold he had collected.

His capital being placed in a posture of defence, Ojeda now thought of making a progress through his wild territory; and set out, accordingly, with an armed band, to pay a friendly visit to a neighbouring cacique, reputed as possessing great treasures of gold. The natives, however, had by this time learnt the nature of these friendly visits, and were

* Herrera Hist. Ind., decad. i. lib. vii. cap. 16

prepared to resist them. Scarcely had the Spaniards entered into the defiles of the surrounding forest, when they were assailed by flights of arrows from the close coverts of the thickets. Some were shot dead on the spot, others, less fortunate, expired raving with the torments of the poison; the survivors, filled with horror at the sight, and losing all presence of mind, retreated in confusion to the fortress.

It was some time before Ojeda could again persuade his men to take the field, so great was their dread of the poisoned weapons of the Indians. At length their provisions began to fail, and they were compelled to forage among the villages in search, not of gold, but of food.

In one of their expeditions they were surprised by an ambuscade of savages, in a gorge of the mountains, and attacked with such fury and effect, that they were completely routed, and pursued with yells and howlings to the very gates of San Sebastian. Many died, in excruciating agony, of their wounds, and others recovered with extreme difficulty. Those who were well no longer dared to venture forth in search of food; for the whole forest teemed with lurking foes. They devoured such herbs and roots as they could find, without regard to their quality. The humours of their bodies became corrupted, and various diseases, combined with the ravages of famine, daily thinned their numbers. The sentinel who feebly mounted guard at night, was often found dead at his post in the morning. Some stretched themselves on the ground and expired of mere famine and debility; nor was death any longer regarded as an evil, but rather as a welcome relief from a life of horror and despair.

CHAPTER VI.

In the meantime the Indians continued to harass the garrison, lying in wait to surprise the foraging parties, cutting off all stragglers, and sometimes approaching the walls in open defiance. On such occasions Ojeda sallied forth at the head of his men, and from his great agility was the first to overtake the retreating foe. He slew more of their warriors with his single arm than all his followers together. Though often exposed to showers of arrows, none had ever wounded him, and the Indians began to think he had a charmed life. Perhaps they had heard from fugitive prisoners, the idea entertained by himself and his followers of his being under supernatural protection. Determined to ascertain the fact,

they placed four of their most dexterous archers in ambush with orders to single him out. A number of them advanced towards the fort sounding their conchs and drums, and uttering yells of defiance. As they expected, the impetuous Ojeda sallied forth immediately at the head of his men. The Indians fled towards the ambuscade, drawing him in heedless pursuit. The archers waited until he was full in front, and then launched their deadly shafts. Three struck his buckler and glanced harmlessly off, but the fourth pierced his thigh. Satisfied that he was wounded beyond the possibility of cure, the savages retreated with shouts of triumph.

Ojeda was borne back to the fortress in great anguish of body and despondency of spirit. For the first time in his life he had lost blood in battle. The charm in which he had hitherto confided was broken; or rather, the Holy Virgin appeared to have withdrawn her protection. He had the horrible death of his followers before his eyes, who had perished of their wounds in raving frenzy.

One of the symptoms of the poison was to shoot a thrilling chill through the wounded part; from this circumstance, perhaps, a remedy suggested itself to the imagination of Ojeda, which few but himself could have had the courage to undergo. He caused two plates of iron to be made red-hot, and ordered a surgeon to apply them to each orifice of the wound. The surgeon shuddered and refused, saying he would not be the murderer of his general.* Upon this Ojeda made a solemn vow that he would hang him unless he obeyed. To avoid the gallows, the surgeon applied the glowing plates. Ojeda refused to be tied down, or that any one should hold him during this frightful operation. He endured it without shrinking or uttering a murmur, although it so inflamed his whole system, that they had to wrap him in sheets steeped in vinegar, to allay the burning heat which raged throughout his body; and we are assured that a barrel of vinegar was exhausted for the purpose. The desperate remedy succeeded: the cold poison, says Bishop Las Casas, was consumed by the vivid fire.† How far the venerable historian is correct in his postulate, surgeons may decide; but many incredulous persons will be apt to account for the cure by surmising that the arrow was not envenomed.

* Charlevoix, ut sup. p. 293. † Las Casas, lib. ii. cap. 59, MS.

CHAPTER VII.

Alonzo de Ojeda, though pronounced out of danger, was still disabled by his wound, and his helpless situation completed the despair of his companions; for while he was in health and vigour, his buoyant and mercurial spirit, his active, restless, and enterprising habits, imparted animation, if not confidence, to every one around him. The only hope of relief was from the sea, and that was nearly extinct, when one day, to the unspeakable joy of the Spaniards, a sail appeared on the horizon. It made for the port, and dropped anchor at the foot of the height of San Sebastian, and there was no longer a doubt that it was the promised succour from San Domingo.

The ship came indeed from the island of Hispaniola, but it had not been fitted out by the Bachelor Enciso. The commander's name was Bernaldino de Talavera. This man was one of the loose, heedless adventurers who abounded in San Domingo. His carelessness and extravagance had involved him in debt, and he was threatened with a prison. In the height of his difficulties the ship arrived which Ojeda had sent to San Domingo, freighted with slaves and gold, an earnest of the riches to be found at San Sebastian. Bernardo de Talavera immediately conceived the project of giving his creditors the slip, and escaping to this new settlement. He understood that Ojeda was in need of recruits, and felt assured that, from his own reckless conduct in money matters, he would sympathise with any one harassed by debt. He drew into his schemes a number of desperate debtors like himself, nor was he scrupulous about filling up his ranks with recruits whose legal embarrassments arose from more criminal causes. Never did a more vagabond crew engage in a project of colonization.

How to provide themselves with a vessel was now the question. They had neither money nor credit; but they had cunning and courage, and were troubled by no scruples of conscience; thus qualified, a knave will often succeed better for a time than an honest man; it is in the long run that he fails, as will be illustrated in the case of Talavera and his hopeful associates. While casting about for means to escape to San Sebastian, they heard of a vessel belonging to a certain Genoese, which was at Cape Tiburon, at the western extremity of the island, taking in a cargo of bacon and cassava bread for San Domingo. Nothing could have happened more oppor-

tunely: here was a ship, amply stored with provisions, ready to their hand; they had nothing to do but seize it and embark.

The gang, accordingly, seventy in number, made their way separately and secretly to Cape Tiburon, where, assembling at an appointed time and place, they boarded the vessel, overpowered the crew, weighed anchor and set sail. They were heedless, hap-hazard mariners, and knew little of the management of a vessel; the historian Charlevoix thinks, therefore, that it was a special providence which guided them to San Sebastian. Whether or not the good father is right in his opinion, it is certain that the arrival of the ship rescued the garrison from the very brink of destruction.*

Talavera and his gang, though they had come lightly by their prize, were not disposed to part with it as frankly, but demanded to be paid down in gold for the provisions furnished to the starving colonists. Ojeda agreed to their terms, and taking the supplies into his possession, dealt them out sparingly to his companions. Several of his hungry followers were dissatisfied with their portions, and even accused Ojeda of unfairness in reserving an undue share for himself. Perhaps there may have been some ground for this charge, arising, not from any selfishness in the character of Ojeda, but from one of those superstitious fancies with which his mind was tinged; for we are told that, for many years, he had been haunted by a presentiment that he should eventually die of hunger.†

This lurking horror of the mind may have made him depart from his usual free and lavish spirit in doling out these providential supplies, and may have induced him to set by an extra portion for himself, as a precaution against his anticipated fate; certain it is, that great clamours rose among his people, some of whom threatened to return in the pirate vessel to Hispaniola. He succeeded, however, in pacifying them for the present, by representing the necessity of husbanding their supplies, and by assuring them that the Bachelor Enciso could not fail soon to arrive, when there would be provisions in abundance.

CHAPTER VIII.

Days and days elapsed, but no relief arrived at San Sebastian. The Spaniards kept a ceaseless watch upon the sea, but the promised ship failed to appear. With all the husbandry

* Hist. St. Domingo, lib. iv. † Herrera, decad. i. lib. viii. cap. 3.

of Ojeda, the stock of provisions was nearly consumed; famine again prevailed, and several of the garrison perished through their various sufferings and their lack of sufficient nourishment. The survivors now became factious in their misery, and a plot was formed among them to seize upon one of the vessels in the harbour and make sail for Hispaniola.

Ojeda discovered their intentions, and was reduced to great perplexity. He saw that to remain here without relief from abroad was certain destruction, yet he clung to his desperate enterprise. It was his only chance for fortune or command; for should this settlement be broken up, he might try in vain, with his exhausted means and broken credit, to obtain another post or set on foot another expedition. Ruin, in fact, would overwhelm him, should he return without success.

He exerted himself, therefore, to the utmost to pacify his men; representing the folly of abandoning a place where they had established a foothold, and where they only needed a reinforcement to enable them to control the surrounding country, and to make themselves masters of its riches. Finding they still demurred, he offered, now that he was sufficiently recovered from his wound, to go himself to San Domingo, in quest of reinforcements and supplies.

This offer had the desired effect. Such confidence had the people in the energy, ability, and influence of Ojeda, that they felt assured of relief should he seek it in person. They made a kind of convention with him, therefore, in which it was agreed that they should remain quietly at Sebastian's for the space of fifty days. At the end of this time, in case no tidings had been received of Ojeda, they were to be at liberty to abandon the settlement and return in the brigantines to Hispaniola. In the meantime Francisco Pizarro was to command the colony as Lieutenant of Ojeda, until the arrival of his alcalde mayor, the Bachelor Enciso. This convention being made, Ojeda embarked in the ship of Bernaldino de Talavera. That cutpurse of the ocean and his loose-handed crew were effectually cured of their ambition to colonize. Disappointed in the hope of finding abundant wealth at San Sebastian, and dismayed at the perils and horrors of the surrounding wilderness, they preferred returning to Hispaniola, even at the risk of chains and dungeons. Doubtless they thought that the influence of Ojeda would be sufficient to obtain their pardon, especially as their timely succour had been the salvation of the colony.

CHAPTER IX.

Ojeda had scarce put to sea in the ship of these freebooters when a quarrel arose between him and Talavera. Accustomed to take the lead among his companions, still feeling himself governor, and naturally of a domineering spirit, Ojeda, on coming on board, had assumed the command as a matter of course. Talavera, who claimed dominion over the ship, by the right no doubt of trover and conversion, or, in other words, of downright piracy, resisted this usurpation.

Ojeda, as usual, would speedily have settled the question by the sword, but he had the whole vagabond crew against him, who overpowered him with numbers and threw him in irons. Still his swelling spirit was unsubdued. He reviled Talavera and his gang as recreants, traitors, pirates, and offered to fight the whole of them successively, provided they would give him a clear deck, and come on two at a time. Notwithstanding his diminutive size, they had too high an idea of his prowess, and had heard too much of his exploits, to accept his challenge; so they kept him raging in his chains while they pursued their voyage.

They had not proceeded far, however, when a violent storm arose. Talavera and his crew knew little of navigation, and were totally ignorant of those seas. The raging of the elements, the baffling winds and currents, and the danger of unknown rocks and shoals, filled them with confusion and alarm. They knew not whither they were driving before the storm, or where to seek for shelter. In this hour of peril they called to mind that Ojeda was a sailor as well as a soldier, and that he had repeatedly navigated these seas. Making a truce, therefore, for the common safety, they took off his irons, on condition that he would pilot the vessel during the remainder of the voyage.

Ojeda acquitted himself with his accustomed spirit and intrepidity; but the vessel had already been swept so far to the westward that all his skill was ineffectual in endeavouring to work up to Hispaniola against storms and adverse currents. Borne away by the Gulf Stream, and tempest-tost for many days, until the shattered vessel was almost in a foundering condition, he saw no alternative but to run it ashore on the southern coast of Cuba.

Here then the crew of freebooters landed from their prize in more desperate plight than when they first took possession of it. They were on a wild and unfrequented coast; their vessel lay a wreck upon the sands, and their only chance was to

travel on foot to the eastern extremity of the island, and seek some means of crossing to Hispaniola, where, after all their toils, they might perhaps only arrive to be thrown into a dungeon. Such, however, is the yearning of civilized men after the haunts of cultivated society, that they set out, at every risk, upon their long and painful journey.

CHAPTER X.

NOTWITHSTANDING the recent services of Ojeda, the crew of Talavera still regarded him with hostility ; but, if they had felt the value of his skill and courage at sea, they were no less sensible of their importance on shore, and he soon acquired that ascendancy over them which belongs to a master-spirit in time of trouble.

Cuba was as yet uncolonized. It was a place of refuge to the unhappy natives of Hayti, who fled hither from the whips and chains of their European taskmasters. The forests abounded with these wretched fugitives, who often opposed themselves to the shipwrecked party, supposing them to be sent by their late masters to drag them back to captivity.

Ojeda easily repulsed these attacks; but found that these fugitives had likewise inspired the villagers with hostility to all European strangers. Seeing that his companions were too feeble and disheartened to fight their way through the populous parts of the island, or to climb the rugged mountains of the interior, he avoided all towns and villages, and led them through the close forests and broad green savannas which extended between the mountains and the sea.

He had only made a choice of evils. The forests gradually retired from the coast. The savannas, where the Spaniards at first had to contend merely with long rank grass and creeping vines, soon ended in salt marshes, where the oozy bottom yielded no firm foothold, and the mud and water reached to their knees. Still they pressed forward, continually hoping in a little while to arrive at a firmer soil, and flattering themselves they beheld fresh meadow-land before them, but continually deceived. The farther they proceeded the deeper grew the mire, until, after they had been eight days on this dismal journey, they found themselves in the centre of a vast morass, where the water reached to their girdles. Though thus almost drowned, they were tormented with incessant thirst, for all the water around them was as briny as the ocean. They suffered too the cravings of extreme

hunger, having but a scanty supply of cassava bread and cheese, and a few potatoes and other roots, which they devoured raw. When they wished to sleep, they had to climb among the twisted roots of mangrove trees, which grew in clusters in the water. Still the dreary marsh widened and deepened. In many places they had to cross rivers and inlets; where some, who could not swim, were drowned, and others were smothered in the mire.

Their situation became wild and desperate. Their cassava bread was spoiled by the water, and their stock of roots nearly exhausted. The interminable morass still extended before them, while, to return, after the distance they had come, was hopeless. Ojeda alone kept up a resolute spirit, and cheered and urged them forward. He had the little Flemish painting of the Madona, which had been given him by the Bishop Fonseca, carefully stored among the provisions in his knapsack. Whenever he stopped to repose among the roots of the mangrove trees, he took out this picture, placed it among the branches, and kneeling, prayed devoutly to the Virgin for protection. This he did repeatedly in the course of the day, and prevailed upon his companions to follow his example. Nay, more, at a moment of great despondency, he made a solemn vow to his patroness that if she conducted him alive through this peril, he would erect a chapel in the first Indian village he should arrive at; and leave her picture there, to remain an object of adoration to the Gentiles.*

This frightful morass extended for the distance of thirty leagues, and was so deep and difficult, so entangled by roots and creeping vines, so cut up by creeks and rivers, and so beset by quagmires, that they were thirty days in traversing it. Out of the number of seventy men that set out from the ship but thirty-five remained. "Certain it is," observes the venerable Las Casas, "the sufferings of the Spaniards in the New World, in search of wealth, have been more cruel and severe than ever nation in the world endured; but those experienced by Ojeda and his men have surpassed all others."

They were at length so overcome by hunger and fatigue, that some lay down and yielded up the ghost, and others, seating themselves among the mangrove trees, waited in despair for death to put an end to their miseries. Ojeda, with a few of the lightest, and most vigorous, continued to struggle forward, and, to their unutterable joy, at length ar-

* Las Casas, Hist. Ind., lib. ii. cap. 60, MS.

rived to where the land was firm and dry. They soon descried a footpath, and, following it, arrived at an Indian village, commanded by a cacique called Cueybàs. No sooner did they reach the village than they sank to the earth exhausted.

The Indians gathered round and gazed at them with wonder; but when they learnt their story, they exhibited a humanity that would have done honour to the most professing Christians. They bore them to their dwellings, set meat and drink before them, and vied with each other in discharging the offices of the kindest humanity. Finding that a number of their companions were still in the morass, the cacique sent a large party of Indians with provisions for their relief; with orders to bring on their shoulders such as were too feeble to walk. "The Indians," says the Bishop Las Casas, "did more than they were ordered; for so they always do, when they are not exasperated by ill treatment. The Spaniards were brought to the village, succoured, cherished, consoled, and almost worshipped as if they had been angels."

CHAPTER XI.

BEING recovered from his sufferings, Alonzo de Ojeda prepared to perform his vow concerning the picture of the Virgin, though sorely must it have grieved him to part with a relic to which he attributed his deliverance from so many perils. He built a little hermitage or oratory in the village, and furnished it with an altar, above which he placed the picture. He then summoned the benevolent cacique, and explained to him, as well as his limited knowledge of the language, or the aid of interpreters would permit, the main points of the Catholic faith, and especially the history of the Virgin, whom he represented as the mother of the deity that reigned in the skies, and the great advocate for mortal man.

The worthy cacique listened to him with mute attention, and though he might not clearly comprehend the doctrine, yet he conceived a profound veneration for the picture. The sentiment was shared by his subjects. They kept the little oratory always swept clean, and decorated it with cotton hangings, laboured by their own hands, and with various votive offerings. They composed couplets or areytos in honour of the Virgin, which they sang to the accompaniment of rude musical instruments, dancing to the sound under the groves which surrounded the hermitage.

A further anecdote concerning this relic may not be unac-

ceptable. The venerable Las Casas, who records these facts, informs us that he arrived at the village of Cueybàs some time after the departure of Ojeda. He found the oratory preserved with the most religious care, as a sacred place, and the picture of the Virgin regarded with fond adoration. The poor Indians crowded to attend mass, which he performed at the altar; they listened attentively to his paternal instructions, and at his request brought their children to be baptized. The good Las Casas having heard much of this famous relic of Ojeda, was desirous of obtaining possession of it, and offered to give the cacique, in exchange, an image of the Virgin which he had brought with him. The chieftain made an evasive answer, and seemed much troubled in mind. The next morning he did not make his appearance.

Las Casas went to the oratory to perform mass, but found the altar stripped of its precious relic. On inquiring, he learnt that in the night the cacique had fled to the woods, bearing off with him his beloved picture of the Virgin. It was in vain that Las Casas sent messengers after him, assuring him that he should not be deprived of the relic, but, on the contrary, that the image should likewise be presented to him. The cacique refused to venture from the fastnesses of the forest, nor did he return to his village and replace the picture in the oratory until after the departure of the Spaniards.*

CHAPTER XII.

When the Spaniards were completely restored to health and strength, they resumed their journey. The cacique sent a large body of his subjects to carry their provisions and knapsacks, and to guide them across a desert tract of country to the province of Macaca, where Christopher Columbus had been hospitably entertained on his voyage along the coast. They experienced equal kindness from its cacique and his people, for such seems almost invariably the case with the natives of these islands, before they had held much intercourse with Europeans.

The province of Macaca was situated at Cape de la Cruz, the nearest point to the island of Jamaica. Here Ojeda learnt that there were Spaniards settled on that island, being in fact the party commanded by the very Juan de Esquibel, whose head he had threatened to strike off, when departing in swelling style from San Domingo. It seemed to be the

* Las Casas, cap. 61, MS. Herrera, decad. i. lib. ix. cap. 15.

fortune of Ojeda to have his bravadoes visited on his head in times of trouble and humiliation. He found himself compelled to apply for succour to the very man he had so vaingloriously menaced. This was no time, however, to stand on points of pride; he procured a canoe and Indians from the cacique of Macaca, and one Pedro de Ordas undertook the perilous voyage of twenty leagues in the frail bark, and arrived safe at Jamaica.

No sooner did Esquibel receive the message of Ojeda, than, forgetting past menaces, he instantly dispatched a caravel to bring to him the unfortunate discoverer and his companions. He received him with the utmost kindness, lodged him in his own house, and treated him in all things with the most delicate attention. He was a gentleman who had seen prosperous days, but had fallen into adversity and been buffeted about the world, and had learnt how to respect the feelings of a proud spirit in distress. Ojeda had the warm, touchy heart to feel such conduct; he remained several days with Esquibel in frank communion, and when he sailed for San Domingo they parted the best of friends.

And here we cannot but remark, the singular difference in character and conduct of these Spanish adventurers when dealing with each other, or with the unhappy natives. Nothing could be more chivalrous, urbane, and charitable; nothing more pregnant with noble sacrifices of passion and interest, with magnanimous instances of forgiveness of injuries and noble contests of generosity, than the transactions of the discoverers with each other; but the moment they turned to treat with the Indians, even with brave and high-minded caciques, they were vindictive, blood-thirsty, and implacable. The very Juan de Esquibel, who could requite the recent hostility of Ojeda with such humanity and friendship, was the same, who, under the government of Ovando, laid desolate the province of Higuey in Hispaniola, and inflicted atrocious cruelties upon its inhabitants.

When Alonzo de Ojeda set sail for San Domingo, Bernaldino de Talavera and his rabble adherents remained at Jamaica. They feared to be brought to account for their piratical exploit in stealing the Genoese vessel, and that, in consequence of their recent violence to Ojeda, they would find in him an accuser rather than an advocate. The latter, however, in the opinion of Las Casas, who knew him well, was not a man to make accusations. With all his faults he

did not harbour malice. He was quick and fiery, it is true, and his sword was too apt to leap from its scabbard on the least provocation; but after the first flash all was over, and, if he cooled upon an injury, he never sought for vengeance.

CHAPTER XIII.

On arriving at San Domingo, the first inquiry of Alonzo de Ojeda was after the Bachelor Enciso. He was told that he had departed long before, with abundant supplies for the colony, and that nothing had been heard of him since his departure. Ojeda waited for a time in hopes of hearing, by some return ship, of the safe arrival of the Bachelor at San Sebastian. No tidings, however, arrived, and he began to fear that he had been lost in those storms which had beset himself on his return voyage.

Anxious for the relief of his settlement, and fearing that, by delay, his whole scheme of colonization would be defeated, he now endeavoured to set on foot another armament, and to enlist a new set of adventurers. His efforts, however, were all ineffectual. The disasters of his colony were known, and his own circumstances were considered desperate. He was doomed to experience the fate that too often attends sanguine and brilliant projectors. The world is dazzled by them for a time, and hails them as heroes while successful; but misfortune dissipates the charm, and they become stigmatized with the appellation of adventurers. When Ojeda figured in San Domingo as the conqueror of Caonabo, as the commander of a squadron, as the governor of a province, his prowess and exploits were the theme of every tongue. When he set sail, in vaunting style, for his seat of government, setting the viceroy at defiance, and threatening the life of Esquibel, every one thought that fortune was at his beck, and he was about to accomplish wonders. A few months had elapsed, and he walked the streets of San Domingo a needy man, shipwrecked in hope and fortune. His former friends, dreading some new demand upon their purses, looked coldly on him; his schemes, once so extolled, were now pronounced wild and chimerical, and he was subjected to all kinds of slights and humiliations in the very place which had been the scene of his greatest vain-glory.

While Ojeda was thus lingering at San Domingo, the admiral, Don Diego Columbus, sent a party of soldiers to Jamaica to arrest Talavera and his pirate crew. They were

brought in chains to San Domingo, thrown into dungeons, and tried for the robbery of the Genoese vessel. Their crime was too notorious to admit of doubt, and being convicted, Talavera and several of his principal accomplices were hanged. Such was the end of their frightful journey by sea and land. Never had vagabonds travelled farther nor toiled harder to arrive at a gallows!

In the course of the trial, Ojeda had naturally been summoned as a witness, and his testimony must have tended greatly to the conviction of the culprits. This drew upon him the vengeance of the surviving comrades of Talavera, who still lurked about San Domingo. As he was returning home one night at a late hour, he was waylaid and set upon by a number of these miscreants. He displayed his usual spirit. Setting his back against a wall, and drawing his sword, he defended himself admirably against the whole gang; nor was he content with beating them off, but pursued them for some distance through the streets: and having thus put them to utter rout, returned tranquil and unharmed to his lodgings.

This is the last achievement recorded of the gallant but reckless Ojeda; for here his bustling career terminated, and he sank into the obscurity which gathers round a ruined man. His health was broken by various hardships and by the lurking effects of the wound received at San Sebastian, which had been but imperfectly cured. Poverty and neglect, and the corroding sickness of the heart, contributed, no less than the maladies of the body, to quench that sanguine and fiery temper, which had hitherto been the secret of his success, and to render him the mere wreck of his former self; for there is no ruin so hopeless and complete, as that of a towering spirit humiliated and broken down. He appears to have lingered some time at San Domingo. Gomara, in his History of the Indies, affirms that he turned monk, and entered in the convent at San Francisco, where he died. Such a change would not have been surprising in a man, who, in his wildest career, mingled the bigot with the soldier; nor was it unusual with military adventurers in those days, after passing their youth in the bustle and licentiousness of the camp, to end their days in the quiet and mortification of the cloister. Las Casas, however, who was at San Domingo at the time, makes no mention of the fact, as he certainly would have done, had it taken place. He confirms, however, all that has been said of the striking reverse in his character and circum-

stances; and he adds an affecting picture of his last moments, which may serve as a wholesome comment on his life. He died so poor that he did not leave money enough to provide for his interment; and so broken in spirit, that, with his last breath, he entreated his body might be buried in the monastery of San Francisco, just at the portal, in humble expiation of his past pride, "*that every one who entered might tread upon his grave.*"*

Such was the fate of Alonzo de Ojeda,—and who does not forget his errors and his faults at the threshold of his humble and untimely grave! He was one of the most fearless and aspiring of the band of "Ocean chivalry" that followed the footsteps of Columbus. His story presents a lively picture of the daring enterprises, the extravagant exploits, the thousand accidents, by flood and field, which checquered the life of a Spanish cavalier in that roving and romantic age.

"Never," says Charlevoix, "was a man more suited for a coup-de-main, or to achieve and suffer great things under the direction of another; none had a heart more lofty, nor ambition more aspiring; none ever took less heed of fortune, nor showed greater firmness of soul, nor found more resources in his own courage; but none was less calculated to be commander-in-chief of a great enterprise. Good management and good fortune for ever failed him."†

THE VOYAGE OF DIEGO DE NICUESA.

CHAPTER I.

We have now to recount the fortunes experienced by the gallant and generous Diego de Nicuesa, after his parting from Alonzo de Ojeda at Carthagena. On resuming his voyage, he embarked in a caravel, that he might be able to coast the land and reconnoitre; he ordered that the two brigantines, one of which was commanded by his lieutenant, Lope de Olano, should keep near to him, while the large vessels, which drew more water, should stand further out to sea. The squadron arrived upon the coast of Veragua in stormy weather; and, as Nicuesa could not find any safe harbour, and was apprehensive of rocks and shoals, he stood out to sea at the approach of night, supposing that Lope de Olano would follow him with the brigantines according to his orders. The night was boisterous, the caravel was much tossed and driven

* Las Casas, ubi sup. † Charlevoix, Hist. St. Domingo.

about, and when the morning dawned, not one of the squadron was in sight.

Nicuesa feared some accident had befallen the brigantines; he stood for the land, and coasted along it in search of them until he came to a large river, into which he entered and came to anchor. He had not been here long when the stream suddenly subsided, having merely been swollen by the rains. Before he had time to extricate himself, the caravel grounded, and at length fell over on one side. The current rushing like a torrent, strained the feeble bark to such a degree, that her seams yawned and she appeared ready to go to pieces. In this moment of peril a hardy seaman threw himself into the water to carry the end of a rope on shore as a means of saving the crew. He was swept away by the furious current and perished in the sight of his companions. Undismayed by his fate, another brave seaman plunged into the waves and succeeded in reaching he shore. He then fastened one end of a rope firmly to a tree, and the other being secured on board of the caravel, Nicuesa and his crew passed one by one along it, and reached the shore in safety.

Scarcely had they landed when the caravel went to pieces, and with it perished their provisions, clothing, and all other necessaries. Nothing remained to them but the boat of the caravel, which was accidentally cast on shore. Here then they were, in helpless plight, on a remote and savage coast, without food, without arms, and almost naked. What had become of the rest of the squadron they knew not. Some feared that the brigantines had been wrecked: others called to mind that Lope de Olano had been one of the loose, lawless men confederated with Francisco Roldan in his rebellion against Columbus, and, judging him from the school in which he had served, hinted their apprehensions that he had deserted with the brigantines. Nicuesa partook of their suspicions, and was anxious and sad at heart. He concealed his uneasiness, however, and endeavoured to cheer up his companions, proposing that they should proceed westward on foot in search of Veragua, the seat of his intended government; observing that, if the ships had survived the tempest, they would probably repair to that place. They accordingly set off along the sea-shore, for the thickness of the forest prevented their traversing the interior. Four of the hardiest sailors put to sea in the boat and kept abreast of them, to help them across the bays and rivers.

Their sufferings were extreme. Most of them were destitute of shoes, and many almost naked. They had to clamber over sharp and rugged rocks, and to struggle through dense forests beset with thorns and brambles. Often they had to wade across rank fens, and morasses, and drowned lands, or to traverse deep and rapid streams.

Their food consisted of herbs, and roots, and shell-fish gathered along the shore. Had they even met with Indians, they would have dreaded, in their unarmed state, to apply to them for provisions, lest they should take revenge for the outrages committed along this coast by other Europeans.

To render their sufferings more intolerable, they were in doubt whether, in the storms which preceded their shipwreck, they had not been driven past Veragua, in which case each step would take them so much the farther from their desired haven.

Still they laboured feebly forward, encouraged by the words and the example of Nicuesa, who cheerfully partook of the toils and hardships of the meanest of his men.

They had slept one night at the foot of impending rocks and were about to resume their weary march in the morning, when they were espied by some Indians from a neighbouring height. Among the followers of Nicuesa was a favourite page, whose tattered finery and white hat caught the quick eyes of the savages. One of them immediately singled him out, and taking deadly aim, let fly an arrow that laid him expiring at the feet of his master. While the generous cavalier mourned over his slaughtered page, consternation prevailed among his companions, each fearing for his own life. The Indians, however, did not follow up this casual act of hostility, but suffered the Spaniards to pursue their painful journey unmolested.

Arriving one day at the point of a great bay that ran far inland, they were conveyed, a few at a time, in the boat, to what appeared to be the opposite point. Being all landed, and resuming their march, they found to their surprise that they were on an island, separated from the main-land by a great arm of the sea. The sailors who managed the boat were too weary to take them to the opposite shore, they remained therefore all night upon the island.

In the morning they prepared to depart, but, to their consternation, the boat with the four mariners had disappeared. They ran anxiously from point to point, uttering shouts and

cries, in hopes the boat might be in some inlet; they clambered the rocks and strained their eyes over the sea. It was all in vain. No boat was to be seen; no voice responded to their call: it was too evident the four mariners had either perished or had deserted them.

CHAPTER II.

THE situation of Nicuesa and his men was dreary and desperate in the extreme They were on a desolate island, bordering upon a swampy coast, in a remote and lonely sea, where commerce never spread a sail. Their companions in the other ships, if still alive and true to them, had doubtless given them up for lost; and many years might elapse before the casual bark of a discoverer might venture along these shores. Long before that time their fate would be sealed, and their bones, bleaching on the sands, would alone tell their story.

In this hopeless state, many abandoned themselves to frantic grief, wandering about the island, wringing their hands and uttering groans and lamentations; others calling upon God for succour, and many sat down in silent and sullen despair.

The cravings of hunger and thirst at length roused them to exertion. They found no food but a few shell-fish scattered along the shore, and coarse herbs and roots, some of them of an unwholesome quality. The island had neither springs nor streams of fresh water, and they were fain to slake their thirst at the brackish pools of the marshes.

Nicuesa endeavoured to animate his men with new hopes. He employed them in constructing a raft of drift wood and branches of trees, for the purpose of crossing the arm of the sea that separated them from the main-land. It was a difficult task, for they were destitute of tools, and when the raft was finished they had no oars with which to manage it. Some of the most expert swimmers undertook to propel it, but they were too much enfeebled by their sufferings. On their first essay, the currents which sweep that coast bore the raft out to sea, and they swam back with difficulty to the island. Having no other chance of escape, and no other means of exercising and keeping up the spirits of his followers, Nicuesa repeatedly ordered new rafts to be constructed, but the result was always the same, and the men at length either grew too feeble to work, or renounced the attempt in despair.

Thus, day after day, and week after week elapsed, without

any mitigation of suffering or any prospect of relief. Every day some one or other sank under his miseries, a victim, not so much to hunger and thirst as to grief and despondency. His death was envied by his wretched survivors, many of whom were reduced to such debility that they had to crawl on hands and knees in search of the herbs and shell fish which formed their scanty food.

CHAPTER III.

When the unfortunate Spaniards, without hope of succour, began to consider death as a desirable end to their miseries, they were roused to new life one day by beholding a sail gleaming on the horizon. Their exultation was checked, however, by the reflection how many chances there were against its approaching this wild and desolate island; watching it with anxious eyes, they put up prayers to God to conduct it to their relief, and at length, to their great joy, they perceived that it was steering directly for the island. On a nearer approach it proved to be one of the brigantines which had been commanded by Lope de Olano. It came to anchor; a boat put off, and among the crew were the four sailors who had disappeared so mysteriously from the island.

These men accounted in a satisfactory manner for their desertion. They had been persuaded that the ships were in some harbour to the eastward, and that they were daily leaving them farther behind. Disheartened at the constant, and, in their opinion, fruitless toil which fell to their share in the struggle westward, they resolved to take their own counsel, without risking the opposition of Nicuesa. In the dead of the night, therefore, when their companions on the island were asleep, they silently cast off their boat, and retraced their course along the coast. After several days' toil they found the brigantines under the command of Lope de Olano in the river of Belen, the scene of the disasters of Columbus in his fourth voyage.

The conduct of Lope de Olano was regarded with suspicion by his contemporaries, and is still subject to doubt. He is supposed to have deserted Nicuesa designedly, intending to usurp the command of the expedition. Men, however, were prone to judge harshly of him from his having been concerned in the treason and rebellion of Francisco Roldan. On the stormy night when Nicuesa stood out to sea to avoid the dangers of the shore, Olano took shelter under the lee of an

island. Seeing nothing of the caravel of his commander in the morning, he made no effort to seek for it, but proceeded with the brigantines to the river of Chagres, where he found the ships at anchor. They had landed all their cargo, being almost in a sinking condition from the ravages of the worms. Olano persuaded the crews that Nicuesa had perished in the late storm, and, being his lieutenant, he assumed the command. Whether he had been perfidious or not in his motives, his command was but a succession of disasters. He sailed from Chagres for the river of Belen, where the ships were found so damaged that they had to be broken to pieces. Most of the people constructed wretched cabins on the shore, where, during a sudden storm, they were almost washed away by the swelling of the river, or swallowed up in the shifting sands. Several of his men were drowned in an expedition in quest of gold, and he himself merely escaped by superior swimming. Their provisions were exhausted, they suffered from hunger and from various maladies, and many perished in extreme misery. All were clamorous to abandon the coast, and Olano set about constructing a caravel out of the wreck of the ships, for the purpose, as he said, of returning to Hispaniola, though many suspected it was still his intention to persist in the enterprise. Such was the state in which the four seamen had found Olano and his party; most of them living in miserable cabins, and destitute of the necessaries of life.

The tidings that Nicuesa was still alive put an end to the sway of Olano. Whether he had acted with truth or perfidy, he now manifested a zeal to relieve his commander, and immediately dispatched a brigantine in quest of him, which, guided by the four seamen, arrived at the island in the way that has been mentioned.

CHAPTER IV.

When the crew of the brigantine and the companions of Nicuesa met, they embraced each other with tears, for the hearts even of the rough mariners were subdued by the sorrows they had undergone, and men are rendered kind to each other by a community of suffering. The brigantine had brought a quantity of palm-nuts, and of such other articles of food as they had been able to procure along the coast. These the famished Spaniards devoured with such voracity that Nicuesa was obliged to interfere, lest they should injure

themselves. Nor was the supply of fresh water less grateful to their parched and fevered palates.

When sufficiently revived, they all abandoned the desolate island, and set sail for the river Belen, exulting as joyfully as if their troubles were at an end, and they were bound to a haven of delight, instead of merely changing the scene of suffering, and encountering a new variety of horrors.

In the meantime Lope de Olano had been diligently preparing for the approaching interview with his commander, by persuading his fellow officers to intercede in his behalf, and to place his late conduct in the most favourable light. He had need of their intercessions. Nicuesa arrived, burning with indignation. He ordered him to be instantly seized and punished as a traitor, attributing to his desertion the ruin of the enterprise and the sufferings and death of so many of his brave followers. The fellow captains of Olano spoke in his favour, but Nicuesa turned indignantly upon them: "You do well," cried he, "to supplicate mercy for him; you, who yourselves have need of pardon! You have participated in his crime, why else have you suffered so long a time to elapse without compelling him to send one of the vessels in search of me?"

The captains vindicated themselves by assurances of their belief in his having foundered at sea. They reiterated their supplications for mercy to Olano; drawing the most affecting pictures of their past and present sufferings, and urging the impolicy of increasing the horrors of their situation by acts of severity. Nicuesa at length was prevailed upon to spare his victim, resolving to send him, by the first opportunity, a prisoner to Spain. It appeared, in truth, no time to add to the daily blows of fate that were thinning the number of his followers. Of the gallant armament of seven hundred resolute and effective men that had sailed with them from San Domingo, four hundred had already perished by various miseries, and, of the survivors, many could scarcely be said to live.

CHAPTER V.

The first care of Nicuesa, on resuming the general command, was to take measures for the relief of his people, who were perishing with famine and disease. All those who were in health, or who had strength sufficient to bear the least fatigue, were sent on foraging parties, among the fields and villages of the natives. It was a service of extreme peril;

for the Indians of this part of the coast were fierce and warlike, and were the same who had proved so formidable to Columbus and his brother, when they attempted to found a settlement in this neighbourhood.

Many of the Spaniards were slain in these expeditions. Even if they succeeded in collecting provisions, the toil of bringing them to the harbour was worse to men in their enfeebled condition, than the task of fighting for them; for they were obliged to transport them on their backs, and, thus heavily laden, to scramble over rugged rocks, through almost impervious forests, and across dismal swamps.

Harassed by these perils and fatigues, they broke forth into murmurs against their commander, accusing him, not merely of indifference to their sufferings, but of wantonly imposing severe and unnecessary tasks upon them out of revenge for their having neglected him.

The genial temper of Nicuesa had, in fact, been soured by disappointment; and a series of harassing cares and evils had rendered him irritable and impatient; but he was a cavalier of a generous and honourable nature, and does not appear to have enforced any services that were not indispensable to the common safety. In fact, the famine had increased to such a degree, that, we are told, thirty Spaniards having on one occasion found the dead body of an Indian in a state of decay, they were driven by hunger to make a meal of it, and were so infected by the horrible repast, that not one of them survived.*

Disheartened by these miseries, Nicuesa determined to abandon a place which seemed destined to be the grave of Spaniards. Embarking the greater part of his men in the two brigantines, and the caravel which had been built by Olano, he set sail eastward in search of some more favourable situation for his settlement. A number of men remained behind, to await the ripening of some maize and vegetables which they had sown. These he left under the command of Alonzo Nuñez, whom he nominated his alcalde mayor.

When Nicuesa had coasted about four leagues to the east, a Genoese sailor, who had been with Columbus in his last voyage, informed him that there was a fine harbour somewhere in that neighbourhood, which had pleased the old admiral so highly, that he had given it the name of Puerto Bello. He added, that they might know the harbour by an anchor, half buried in the sand, which Columbus had left

* Herrera, Hist. Ind. decad. i. and viii. cap. 2.

there; near to which was a fountain of remarkably cool and sweet water, springing up at the foot of a large tree. Nicuesa ordered search to be made along the coast, and at length they found the anchor, the fountain, and the tree. It was the same harbour which bears the name of Porto Bello at the present day. A number of the crew were sent on shore in search of provisions, but were assailed by the Indians; and, being too weak to wield their weapons with their usual prowess, were driven back to the vessels with the loss of several slain or wounded.

Dejected at these continual misfortunes, Nicuesa continued his voyage seven leagues farther, until he came to the harbour to which Columbus had given the name of Puerto de Bastimientos, or Port of Provisions. It presented an advantageous situation for a fortress, and was surrounded by a fruitful country. Nicuesa resolved to make it his abiding place. "Here," said he, "let us stop, *en el nombre de Dios!*" (in the name of God). His followers, with the superstitious feeling under which men in adversity are prone to interpret everything into omens, persuaded themselves that there was favourable augury in his words, and called the harbour "Nombre de Dios," which name it afterwards retained.

Nicuesa now landed, and drawing his sword, took solemn possession in the name of the Catholic sovereigns. He immediately began to erect a fortress, to protect his people against the attacks of the savages. As this was a case of exigency, he exacted the labour of every one capable of exertion. The Spaniards, thus equally distressed by famine and toil, forgot their favourable omen, cursed the place as fated to be their grave, and called down imprecations on the head of their commander, who compelled them to labour when ready to sink with hunger and debility. Those murmured no less who were sent in quest of food, which was only to be gained by fatigue and bloodshed; for whatever they collected they had to transport from great distances, and they were frequently waylaid and assaulted by the Indians.

When he could spare men for the purpose, Nicuesa dispatched the caravel for those whom he had left at the river Belen. Many of them had perished, and the survivors had been reduced to such famine at times, as to eat all kinds of reptiles, until a part of an alligator was a banquet to them. On mustering all his forces when thus united, Nicuesa found that but one hundred emaciated and dejected wretches remained.

He dispatched the caravel to Hispaniola, to bring a quantity of bacon which he had ordered to have prepared there, but it never returned. He ordered Gonzalo de Badajos, at the head of twenty men, to scour the country for provisions, but the Indians had ceased to cultivate; they could do with little food, and could subsist on the roots and wild fruits of the forest. The Spaniards, therefore, found deserted villages and barren fields, but lurking enemies at every defile. So deplorably were they reduced by their sufferings, that at length there were not left a sufficient number in health and strength to mount guard at night, and the fortress remained without sentinels. Such was the desperate situation of this once gay and gallant cavalier, and of his brilliant armament, which but a few months before had sailed from San Domingo, flushed with the consciousness of power, and the assurance that they had the means of compelling the favours of fortune.

It is necessary to leave them for awhile, and turn our attention to other events, which will ultimately be found to bear upon their destinies.

CHAPTER VI.—[1510.]

In calling to mind the narrative of the last expedition of Alonzo de Ojeda, the reader will doubtless remember the Bachelor Martin Fernandez de Enciso, who was inspired by that adventurous cavalier with an ill-starred passion for colonizing, and freighted a vessel at San Domingo with reinforcements and supplies for the settlement at San Sebastian.

When the Bachelor was on the eve of sailing, a number of the loose hangers-on of the colony, and men encumbered with debt, concerted to join his ship from the coast and the outports. Their creditors, however, getting notice of their intention, kept a close watch upon every one that went on board while in the harbour, and obtained an armed vessel from the admiral Don Diego Columbus, to escort the enterprising Bachelor clear of the island. One man, however, contrived to elude these precautions, and, as he afterwards rose to great importance, it is proper to notice him particularly. His name was Vasco Nuñez de Balboa. He was a native of Xeres de los Caballeros, and of a noble though impoverished family. He had been brought up in the service of Don Pedro Puerto Carrero, Lord of Moguer, and he afterwards enlisted among the adventurers who accompanied Rodrigo de Bastides in his voyage of discovery. Peter Martyr,

in his Latin decades, speaks of him by the appellation of "egregius digladiator," which has been interpreted by some as a skilful swordsman, by others as an adroit fencing-master. He intimates, also, that he was a mere soldier of fortune, of loose prodigal habits; and the circumstances under which he is first introduced to us justify this character. He had fixed himself for a time in Hispaniola, and undertaken to cultivate a farm at the town of Salvatierra, on the sea-coast, but in a little time had completely involved himself in debt. The expedition of Enciso presented him with an opportunity of escaping from his embarrassments, and of indulging his adventurous habits. To elude the vigilance of his creditors and of the armed escort, he concealed himself in a cask, which was conveyed from his farm on the sea-coast on board of the vessel, as if containing provisions for the voyage. When the vessel was fairly out at sea, and abandoned by the escort, Vasco Nuñez emerged like an apparition from his cask, to the great surprise of Enciso, who had been totally ignorant of the stratagem. The Bachelor was indignant at being thus outwitted, even though he gained a recruit by the deception; and, in the first ebullition of his wrath, gave the fugitive debtor a very rough reception, threatening to put him on shore on the first uninhabited island they should encounter. Vasco Nuñez, however, succeeded in pacifying him, "for God," says the venerable Las Casas, "reserved him for greater things." It is probable the Bachelor beheld in him a man well fitted for his expedition, for Vasco Nuñez was in the prime and vigour of his days, tall and muscular, seasoned to hardships, and of intrepid spirit.

Arriving at the main-land, they touched at the fatal harbour of Carthagena, the scene of the sanguinary conflicts of Ojeda and Nicuesa with the natives, and of the death of the brave Juan de la Cosa. Enciso was ignorant of those events, having had no tidings from those adventurers since their departure from San Domingo; without any hesitation, therefore, he landed a number of his men to repair his boat, which was damaged, and to procure water. While the men were working upon the boat, a multitude of Indians gathered at a distance, well armed and with menacing aspect, sounding their shells and brandishing their weapons. The experience they had had of the tremendous powers of the strangers, however, rendered them cautious of attacking, and for three days they hovered in this manner about the Spaniards, ne

latter being obliged to keep continually on the alert. At length two of the Spaniards ventured one day from the main body to fill a water-cask from the adjacent river. Scarcely had they reached the margin of the stream, when eleven savages sprang from the thickets and surrounded them, bending their bows and pointing their arrows. In this way they stood for a moment or two in fearful suspense, the Indians refraining from discharging their shafts, but keeping them constantly pointed at their breasts. One of the Spaniards attempted to escape to his comrades who were repairing the boat, but the other called him back, and, understanding something of the Indian tongue, addressed a few amicable words to the savages. The latter, astonished at being spoken to in their own language, now relaxed a little from their fierceness, and demanded of the strangers who they were, who were their leaders, and what they sought upon their shores. The Spaniard replied that they were harmless people, who came from other lands, and merely touched there through necessity, and he wondered that they should meet them with such hostility; he at the same time warned them to beware, as there would come many of his countrymen well armed, and would wreak terrible vengeance upon them for any mischief they might do. While they were thus parleying, the Bachelor Enciso, hearing that two of his men were surrounded by the savages, sallied instantly from his ship, and hastened with an armed force to their rescue. As he approached, however, the Spaniard who had held the parley made him a signal that the natives were pacific. In fact, the latter had supposed that this was a new invasion of Ojeda and Nicuesa, and had thus arrayed themselves, if not to take vengeance for past outrages, at least to defend their houses from a second desolation. When they were convinced, however, that these were a totally different band of strangers, and without hostile intentions, their animosity was at an end, they threw by their weapons, and came forward with the most confiding frankness. During the whole time that the Spaniards remained there, they treated them with the greatest friendship, supplying them with bread made from maize, with salted fish, and with the fermented and spirituous beverages common along that coast. Such was the magnanimous conduct of men who were considered among the most ferocious and warlike of these savage nations; and who, but recently, had beheld their shores invaded, their villages ravaged and burnt, and their friends

and relations butchered, without regard to age or sex, by the countrymen of these very strangers. When we recall the bloody and indiscriminate vengeance wreaked upon this people by Ojeda and his followers for their justifiable resistance of invasion, and compare it with their placable and considerate spirit when an opportunity for revenge presented itself, we confess we feel a momentary doubt whether the arbitrary application of savage is always applied to the right party.

CHAPTER VII.

Not long after the arrival of Enciso at this eventful harbour, he was surprised by the circumstance of a brigantine entering, and coming to anchor. To encounter a European sail in these almost unknown seas was always a singular and striking occurrence, but the astonishment of the Bachelor was mingled with alarm when, on boarding the brigantine, he found it manned by a number of the men who had embarked with Ojeda. His first idea was, that they had mutinied against their commander, and deserted with the vessel. The feelings of the magistrate were aroused within him by the suspicion, and he determined to take his first step as alcalde mayor, by seizing them and inflicting on them the severity of the law. He altered his tone, however, on conversing with their resolute commander. This was no other than Francisco Pizarro, whom Ojeda had left as his locum tenens at San Sebastian, and who showed the Bachelor his letter patent, signed by that unfortunate governor. In fact, the little brigantine contained the sad remnant of the once vaunted colony. After the departure of Ojeda in the pirate ship, his followers, whom he had left behind under the command of Pizarro, continued in the fortress until the stipulated term of fifty days had expired. Receiving no succour, and hearing no tidings of Ojeda, they then determined to embark and sail for Hispaniola; but here an unthought-of difficulty presented itself, they were seventy in number, and the two brigantines which had been left with them were incapable of taking so many. They came to the forlorn agreement, therefore, to remain until famine, sickness, and the poisoned arrows of the Indians should reduce their number to the capacity of the brigantines. A brief space of time was sufficient for the purpose. They then prepared for the voyage. Four mares which had been kept alive, as terrors to the Indians, were killed and salted for sea-stores. Then taking whatever other articles of provisions remained,

they embarked and made sail. One brigantine was commanded by Pizarro, the other by one Valenzuela.

They had not proceeded far when, in a storm, a sea struck the crazy vessel of Valenzuela with such violence as to cause it to founder with all its crew. The other brigantine was so near that the mariners witnessed the struggles of their drowning companions, and heard their cries. Some of the sailors, with the common disposition to the marvellous, declared that they beheld a great whale, or some other monster of the deep, strike the vessel with its tail, and either stave in its sides or shatter the rudder so as to cause the shipwreck.* The surviving brigantine then made the best of its way to the harbour of Carthagena, to seek provisions.

Such was the disastrous account rendered to the Bachelor by Pizarro, of his destined jurisdiction. Enciso, however, was of a confident mind and sanguine temperament, and trusted to restore all things to order and prosperity on his arrival.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE bachelor Enciso, as has been shown, was a man of the sword as well as of the robe; having doubtless imbibed a passion for military exploit from his intimacy with the discoverers. Accordingly, while at Carthagena, he was visited by an impulse of the kind, and undertook an enterprise that would have been worthy of his friend Ojeda. He had been told by the Indians that about twenty-five leagues to the west lay a province called Zenu, the mountains of which abounded with the finest gold. This was washed down by torrents during the rainy season, in such quantities, that the natives stretched nets across the rivers to catch the largest particles; some of which were said to be as large as eggs.

The idea of taking gold in nets captivated the imagination of the Bachelor, and his cupidity was still more excited by farther accounts of this wealthy province. He was told that Zenu was the general place of sepulture of the Indian tribes throughout the country, whither they brought their dead, and buried them, according to their custom, decorated with their most precious ornaments.

It appeared to him a matter of course, therefore, that there must be an immense accumulation of riches in the Indian tombs, from the golden ornaments that had been buried with the dead through a long series of generations.

* Herrera, Hist. Ind., decad. i. lib. vii. cap. 10.

Fired with the thought, he determined to make a foray into this province and to sack the sepulchres! Neither did he feel any compunctions at the idea of plundering the dead, considering the deceased as pagans and infidels, who had forfeited even the sanctuary of the grave, by having been buried according to the rites and ceremonies of their idolatrous religion.

Enciso, accordingly, made sail from Carthagena, and landed with his forces on the coast of Zenu. Here he was promptly opposed by two caciques, at the head of a large band of warriors. The Bachelor, though he had thus put on the soldier, retained sufficient of the spirit of his former calling not to enter into quarrel without taking care to have the law on his side; he proceeded regularly, therefore, according to the legal form recently enjoined by the crown. He caused to be read and interpreted to the caciques the same formula used by Ojeda, expounding the nature of the Deity, the supremacy of the pope, and the right of the Catholic sovereigns to all these lands, by virtue of a grant from his holiness. The caciques listened to the whole very attentively and without interruption, according to the laws of Indian courtesy. They then replied, that as to the assertion that there was but one God, the sovereign of heaven and earth, it seemed to them good, and that such must be the case; but as to the doctrine that the pope was regent of the world in place of God, and that he had made a grant of their country to the Spanish king, they observed that the pope must have been drunk to give away what was not his, and the king must have been somewhat mad to ask at his hands what belonged to others. They added, that they were lords of those lands and needed no other sovereign, and if this king should come to take possession, they would cut off his head and put it on a pole; that being their mode of dealing with their enemies. As an illustration of this custom, they pointed out to Enciso the very uncomfortable spectacle of a row of grisly heads impaled in the neighbourhood.

Nothing daunted either by the reply or the illustration, the Bachelor menaced them with war and slavery as the consequences of their refusal to believe and submit. They replied by threatening to put his head upon a pole as a representative of his sovereign. The Bachelor, having furnished them with the law, now proceeded to the commentary. He attacked the Indians, routed them, and took one of the caciques

prisoner, but in the skirmish two of his men were slightly wounded with poisoned arrows, and died raving with torment.*

It does not appear, however, that his crusade against the sepulchres was attended with any lucrative advantage. Perhaps the experience he had received of the hostility of the natives, and of the fatal effects of their poisoned arrows, prevented his penetrating into the land, with his scanty force. Certain it is, the reputed wealth of Zenu, and the tale of its fishery for gold with nets, remained unascertained and uncontradicted, and were the cause of subsequent and disastrous enterprises. The Bachelor contented himself with his victory, and returning to his ships, prepared to continue his voyage for the seat of government established by Ojeda in the Gulf of Uraba.

CHAPTER IX.

It was not without extreme difficulty, and the preremptory exercise of his authority as alcalde mayor, that Enciso prevailed upon the crew of Pizarro to return with him to the fated shores of San Sebastian. He at length arrived in sight of the long-wished-for seat of his anticipated power and authority; but here he was doomed, like his principal, Ojeda, to meet with nothing but misfortune. On entering the harbour his vessel struck on a rock on the eastern point. The rapid currents and tumultuous waves rent it to pieces; the crew escaped with great difficulty to the brigantine of Pizarro; a little flour, cheese and biscuit, and a small part of the arms were saved, but the horses, mares, swine and all other colonial supplies were swept away, and the unfortunate Bachelor beheld the proceeds of several years of prosperous litigation swallowed up in an instant.

His dream of place and dignity seemed equally on the point of vanishing; for, on landing, he found the fortress and its

* The above anecdote is related by the Bachelor Enciso himself, in a geographical work entitled *Suma de Geographia*, which he published in Seville, in 1519. As the reply of the poor savages contains something of natural logic, we give a part of it as reported by the Bachelor. "Respondieron me: que en lo que dezia que no avia sino un dios y que este governaba el cielo y la tierra, y que era señor de todo, que les parecia y que asi debia ser; pero que en lo que dezia que el papa era señor de todo el universo en lugar de dios, y que el avia fecho merced de aquella tierra al rey de Castilla; dixeron que el papa debiera estar boracho quando lo hizo, pues daba lo que no era suyo, y que el rey que pedia y tomava tam merced dabia ser algun loco pues pedia lo que era de otros, &c."

adjacent houses mere heaps of ruins, having been destroyed with fire by the Indians.

For a few days the Spaniards maintained themselves with palm-nuts, and with the flesh of a kind of wild swine, of which they met with several herds. These supplies failing, the Bachelor sallied forth with a hundred men to forage the country. They were waylaid by three Indians, who discharged all the arrows in their quivers with incredible rapidity, wounded several Spaniards, and then fled with a swiftness that defied pursuit. The Spaniards returned to the harbour in dismay. All their dread of the lurking savages and their poisoned weapons revived, and they insisted upon abandoning a place marked out for disaster.

The Bachelor Enciso was himself disheartened at the situa tion of this boasted capital of San Sebastian ;—but whither could he go where the same misfortunes might not attend him ? In this moment of doubt and despondency, Vasco Nuñez, the same absconding debtor who had been smuggled on board in the cask, stepped forward to give counsel. He informed the Bachelor that several years previous he had sailed along that coast with Rodrigo de Bastides. They had explored the whole Gulf of Uraba ; and he well remembered an Indian village situated on the western side, on the banks of a river which the natives called Darien. The country around was fertile and abundant, and was said to possess mines of gold ; and the natives, though a warlike race, never made use of poisoned weapons. He offered to guide the Bachelor to this place, where they might get a supply of provisions, and even found their colony.

The Spaniards hailed the words of Vasco Nuñez as if re-vealing a land of promise. The Bachelor adopted his advice, and, guided by him, set sail for the village, determined to eject the inhabitants and take possession of it as the seat of government Arrived at the river, he landed, put his men in martial array, and marched along the banks. The place was governed by a brave cacique named Zemaco. He sent off the women and children to a place of safety, and, posting himself with five hundred of his warriors on a height, pre-pared to give the intruders a warm reception. The Bachelor was a discoverer at all points, pious, daring and rapacious. On be-holding this martial array, he recommended himself and his followers to God, making a vow in their name to " Our Lady of Antigua," whose image is adored with great devotion in

Seville, that the first church and town which they built should be dedicated to her, and that they would make a pilgrimage to Seville to offer the spoils of the heathen at her shrine. Having thus endeavoured to propitiate the favour of Heaven, and to retain the holy Virgin in his cause, he next proceeded to secure the fidelity of his followers. Doubting that they might have some lurking dread of poisoned arrows, he exacted from them all an oath that they would not turn their backs upon the foe, whatever might happen. Never did warrior enter into battle with more preliminary forms and covenants than the Bachelor Enciso. All these points being arranged, he assumed the soldier, and attacked the enemy with such valour, that, though they made at first a show of fierce resistance, they were soon put to flight, and many of them slain. The Bachelor entered the village in triumph, took possession of it by unquestionable right of conquest, and plundered all the hamlets and houses of the surrounding country; collecting great quantities of food and cotton, with bracelets, anklets, plates and other ornaments of gold, to the value of ten thousand castellanos.* His heart was wonderfully elated by his victory and his booty; his followers, also, after so many hardships and disasters, gave themselves up to joy at this turn of good fortune, and it was unanimously agreed that the seat of government should be established in this village; to which, in fulfilment of his vow, Enciso gave the name of Santa Maria de la Antigua del Darien.

CHAPTER X.

The Bachelor Enciso now entered upon the exercise of his civil functions as alcalde mayor, and lieutenant of the absent governor, Ojeda. His first edict was stern and peremptory; he forbade all trafficking with the natives for gold, on private account, under pain of death. This was in conformity to royal command; but it was little palatable to men who had engaged in the enterprise in the hopes of enjoying free trade, lawless liberty, and golden gains. They murmured among themselves, and insinuated that Enciso intended to reserve all the profit to himself. Vasco Nuñez was the first to take advantage of the general discontent. He had risen to consequence among his fellow-adventurers, from having guided them to this place, and from his own intrinsic qualities, being hardy, bold, and intelligent, and possessing the

* Equivalent to a present sum of 53,259 dollars.

random spirit and open-handed generosity common to a soldier of fortune, and calculated to dazzle and delight the multitude.

He bore no good will to the Bachelor, recollecting his threat of landing him on an uninhabited island, when he escaped in a cask from San Domingo. He sought, therefore, to make a party against him, and to unseat him from his command. He attacked him in his own way, with legal weapons, questioning the legitimacy of his pretensions. The boundary line, he observed, which separated the jurisdiction of Ojeda and Nicuesa, ran through the centre of the Gulf of Uraba. The village of Darien lay on the western side, which had been allotted to Nicuesa. Enciso, therefore, as alcalde mayor, and lieutenant of Ojeda, could have no jurisdiction here, and his assumed authority was a sheer usurpation.

The Spaniards, already incensed at the fiscal regulations of Enciso, were easily convinced; so with one accord they refused alleigance to him; and the unfortunate Bachelor found the chair of authority to which he had so fondly and anxiously aspired, suddenly wrested from under him, before he had well time to take his seat.

CHAPTER XI.

To depose the governor had been an easy matter, for most men are ready to assist in pulling down; but to choose a successor was a task of far more difficulty. The people at first agreed to elect mere civil magistrates, and accordingly appointed Vasco Nuñez and one Zenudio as alcaldes, together with a cavalier of some merit of the name of Valdivia, as regidor. They soon, however, became dissatisfied with this arrangement, and it was generally considered advisable to vest the authority in one person. Who this person should be, was now the question. Some proposed Nicuesa, as they were within his province; others were strenuous for Vasco Nuñez. A violent dispute ensued, which was carried on with such heat and obstinacy, that many, anxious for a quiet life, declared it would be better to reinstate Enciso until the pleasure of the king should be known.

In the height of these factious altercations, the Spaniards were aroused one day by the thundering of cannon from the opposite side of the gulf, and beheld columns of smoke rising from the hills. Astonished at signals of civilized man on these wild shores, they replied in the same manner, and in a short time two ships were seen standing across the gulf. They

proved to be an armament commanded by one Rodrigo del Colmenares, and were in search of Nicuesa with supplies. They had met with the usual luck of adventurers on this disastrous coast, storms at sea, and savage foes on shore, and many of their number had fallen by poisoned arrows. Colmenares had touched at San Sebastian to learn tidings of Nicuesa: but finding the fortress in ruins, had made signals, in hopes of being heard by the Spaniards, should they be yet lingering in the neighbourhood.

The arrival of Colmenares caused a temporary suspension of the feuds of the colonists. He distributed provisions among them, and gained their hearts. Then, representing the legitimate right of Nicuesa to the command of all that part of the coast as a governor appointed by the king, he persuaded the greater part of the people to acknowledge his authority. It was generally agreed, therefore, that he should cruise along the coast in search of Nicuesa, and that Diego de Albitez, and an active member of the law, called the Bachelor Corral, should accompany him as ambassadors, to invite that cavalier to come and assume the government of Darien.

CHAPTER XII.

Rodrigo de Colmenares proceeded along the coast to the westward, looking into every bay and harbour, but for a long time without success. At length one day he discovered a brigantine at a small island in the sea. It was part of the armament of Nicuesa, and had been sent out by him to forage for provisions. By this vessel he was piloted to the port of Nombre de Dios, the nominal capital of the unfortunate governor, but which was so surrounded and overshadowed by forests, that he might have passed by without noticing it.

The arrival of Colmenares was welcomed with transports and tears of joy. It was scarcely possible for him to recognize the once buoyant and brilliant Nicuesa in the squalid and dejected man before him. He was living in the most abject misery. Of all his once gallant and powerful band of followers, but sixty men remained, and those so feeble, yellow, emaciated, and woebegone, that it was piteous to behold them.*

* The harbour of Nombre de Dios continued for a long time to present traces of the sufferings of the Spaniards. We are told by Herrera, that several years after the time here mentioned, a band of eighty Spanish soldiers, commanded by Gonzalo de Badajos, arrived in the harbour with an intention of penetrating into the interior. They found

Colmenares distributed food among them, and told them that he had come to convey them to a plenteous country, and one rich in gold. When Nicuesa heard of the settlement at Darien, and that the inhabitants had sent for him to come and govern them, he was as a man suddenly revived from death. All the spirit and munificence of the cavalier again awakened in him. He gave a kind of banquet that very day to Colmenares and the ambassadors, from the provisions brought in the ship. He presided at his table with his former hilarity, and displayed a feat of his ancient office as royal carver, by holding up a fowl in the air, and dissecting it with wonderful adroitness.

Well would it have been for Nicuesa had the sudden buoyancy of his feelings carried him no further! but adversity had not taught him prudence. In conversing with the envoys about the colony of Darien, he already assumed the tone of governor, and began to disclose the kind of policy with which he intended to rule. When he heard that great quantities of gold had been collected and retained by private individuals, his ire was kindled. He vowed to make them refund it, and even talked of punishing them for trespassing upon the privileges and monopolies of the crown. This was the very error that had unseated the Bachelor Enciso from his government, and it was a strong measure for one to threaten who as yet was governor but in expectation. The menace was not lost upon the watchful ambassadors Diego de Albitez and the Bachelor Corral. They were put still more on the alert by a conversation held that very evening with Lope de Olano, who was still detained a prisoner for his desertion, but who found means to commune with the envoys, and to prejudice them against his unsuspecting commander. "Take warning," said he, "by my treatment. I sent relief to Nicuesa and rescued him from death when starving on a desert island. Behold my recompense. He repays me with imprisonment and chains. Such is the gratitude the people of Darien may look for at his hands!"

The subtle Bachelor Corral and his fellow envoy laid these

there the ruined fort of Nicuesa, together with sculls and bones, and crosses erected on heaps of stones, dismal mementos of his followers who had perished of hunger; the sight of which struck such horror and dismay into the hearts of the soldiers that they would have abandoned their enterprise, had not their intrepid captain immediately sent away the ships, and thus deprived them of the means of retreating. Herrera, decad. xi. lib. i.

matters to heart, and took their measures accordingly. They hurried to depart before Nicuesa, and setting all sail on their caravel, hastened back to Darien. The moment they arrived they summoned a meeting of the principal inhabitants. "A blessed change we have made," said they, "in summoning this Diego de Nicuesa to the command! We have called in the stork to take the rule, who will not rest satisfied until he has devoured us." They then related, with the usual exaggeration, the unguarded threats which had fallen from Nicuesa, and instanced his treatment of Olano as a proof of a tyrannous and ungrateful disposition.

The words of the subtle Bachelor Corral and his associate produced a violent agitation among the people, especially among those who had amassed treasures which would have to be refunded. Nicuesa, too, by a transaction which almost destroys sympathy in his favour, gave time for their passions to ferment. On his way to Darien he stopped for several days among a group of small islands, for the purpose of capturing Indians to be sold as slaves. While committing these outrages against humanity, he sent forward Juan de Cayzedo in a boat to announce his coming. His messenger had a private pique against him, and played him false. He assured the people of Darien that all they had been told by their envoys concerning the tyranny and ingratitude of Nicuesa was true;—that he treated his followers with wanton severity; that he took from them all they won in battle, saying that the spoils were his rightful property; and that it was his intention to treat the people of Darien in the same manner. "What folly is it in you," added he, "being your own masters, and in such free condition, to send for a tyrant to rule over you!"

The people of Darien were convinced by this concurring testimony, and confounded by the overwhelming evil they had thus invoked upon their heads. They had deposed Enciso for his severity, and they had thrown themselves into the power of one who threatened to be ten times more severe! Vasco Nuñez de Balboa observed their perplexity and consternation. He drew them one by one apart, and conversed with them in private. "You are cast down in heart," said he, "and so you might well be, were the evil beyond all cure. But do not despair; there is an effectual relief, and you hold it in your hands. If you have committed an error in inviting Nicuesa to Darien, it is easily remedied by not receiving him

when he comes!" The obviousness and simplicity of the remedy struck every mind, and it was unanimously adopted.

CHAPTER XIII.

While this hostile plot was maturing at Darien, the unsuspecting Nicuesa pursued his voyage leisurely and serenely, and arrived in safety at the mouth of the river. On approaching the shore he beheld a multitude, headed by Vasco Nuñez, waiting, as he supposed, to receive him with all due honour. He was about to land when the public procurator, or attorney, called to him with a loud voice, warning him not to disembark, but to return with all speed to his government at Nombre de Dios,

Nicuesa remained for a moment as if thunderstruck by so unlooked-for a salutation. When he recovered his self-possession, he reminded them that he had come at their own request; he entreated, therefore, that he might be allowed to land and have an explanation, after which he would be ready to act as they should think proper. His entreaties only provoked insolent replies, and threats of violence should he venture to put foot on shore. Night coming on, he was obliged to stand out to sea, but returned the next morning, hoping to find this capricious people in a different mood.

There did, indeed, appear to be a favourable change, for he was now invited to land. It was a mere stratagem to get him in their power, for no sooner did he set foot on shore than the multitude rushed forward to seize him. Among his many bodily endowments, Nicuesa was noted for swiftness of foot. He now trusted to it for safety, and, throwing off the dignity of governor, fled for his life along the shore, pursued by the rabble. He soon distanced his pursuers, and took refuge in the woods.

Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, who was himself a man of birth, seeing this high-bred cavalier reduced to such extremity, and at the mercy of a violent rabble, repented of what he had done. He had not anticipated such popular fury, and endeavoured, though too late, to allay the tempest he had raised. He succeeded in preventing the people from pursuing Nicuesa into the forest, and then endeavoured to mollify the vindictive rage of his fellow-alcalde, Zamudio, whose hostility was quickened by the dread of losing his office, should the new governor be received; and who was supported in his boisterous conduct by the natural love of the multitude for what are

called "strong measures." Nicuesa now held a parley with the populace, through the mediation of Vasco Nuñez. He begged that, if they would not acknowledge him as governor, they would at least admit him as a companion. This they refused, saying, that if they admitted him in one capacity, he would end by attaining to the other. He then implored that, if he could be admitted on no other terms, they would treat him as a prisoner, and put him irons, for he would rather die among them than return to Nombre de Dios, to perish of famine, or by the arrows of the Indians.

It was in vain that Vasco Nuñez exerted his eloquence to obtain some grace for this unhappy cavalier; his voice was drowned by the vociferations of the multitude. Among these was a noisy, swaggering fellow named Francisco Benitez, a great talker and jester, who took a vulgar triumph in the distresses of a cavalier, and answered every plea in his behalf with scoffs and jeers. He was an adherent of the alcalde Zamudio, and under his patronage felt emboldened to bluster: his voice was ever uppermost in the general clamour, until, to the expostulations of Vasco Nuñez, he replied by merely bawling, with great vociferation, "No, no, no!—we will receive no such a fellow among us as Nicuesa!" The patience of Vasco Nuñez was exhausted; he availed himself of his authority as alcalde, and suddenly, before his fellow-magistrate could interfere, ordered the brawling ruffian to be rewarded with a hundred lashes, which were taled out roundly to him upon the shoulders.*

Seeing that the fury of the populace was not to be pacified, he sent word to Nicuesa to retire to his brigantine, and not to venture on shore until advised by him to do so. The counsel was fruitless. Nicuesa, above deceit himself, suspected it not in others. He retired to his brigantines, it is true, but suffered himself to be inveigled on shore by a deputation professing to come on the part of the public, with offers to reinstate him as governor. He had scarcely landed when he was set upon by an armed band, headed by the base-minded Zamudio, who seized him and compelled him, by menaces of death, to swear that he would immediately depart, and make no delay in any place until he had presented himself before the king and council in Castile.

In vain Nicuesa reminded them that he was governor of that territory and representative of the king, and that they

* Las Casas, Hist. Ind., lib. ii. cap. 68.

were guility of treason in thus opposing him; in vain he appealed to their humanity, or protested before God against their cruelty and persecution. The people were in that state of tumult when they are apt to add cruelty to injustice. Not content with expelling the discarded governor from their shores, they allotted him the worst vessel in the harbour; an old, crazy brigantine, totally unfit to encounter the perils and labours of the sea.

Seventeen followers embarked with him; some being of his household and attached to his person; the rest were volunteers, who accompanied him out of respect and sympathy. The frail bark set sail on the 1st of March, 1511, and steered across the Caribbean sea for the island of Hispaniola, but was never seen or heard of more!

Various attempts have been made to penetrate the mystery that covers the fate of the brigantine and its crew. A rumour prevailed some years afterwards, that several Spaniards wandering along the shore of Cuba, found the following inscription carved on a tree:—

Aqui feneciò el desdichado Nicuesa.*

Hence it was inferred that he and his followers had landed there, and been massacred by the Indians. Las Casas, however, discredits this story. He accompanied the first Spaniards who took possession of Cuba, and heard nothing of the fact, as he most probably would have done had it really occurred. He imagines, rather, that the crazy bark was swallowed up by the storms and currents of the Caribbean sea, or that the crew perished with hunger and thirst, having been but scantily supplied with provisions. The good old bishop adds, with the superstitious feeling prevalent in that age, that a short time before Nicuesa sailed from Spain on his expedition, an astrologer warned him not to depart on the day he had appointed, or under a certain sign; the cavalier replied, however, that he had less confidence in the stars than in God who made them. "I recollect, moreover," adds Las Casas, "that about this time a comet was seen over this island of Hispaniola, which, if I do not forget, was in the shape of a sword: and it was said that a monk warned several of those about to embark with Nicuesa, to avoid that captain, for the heavens foretold he was destined to be lost. The same, however," he concludes, "might be said of Alonzo de Ojeda, who sailed at the same time, yet returned to San Domingo and died in his bed."†

* Here perished the unfortunate Nicuesa. † Las Casas, ut sup. cap. 68.

VASCO NUÑEZ DE BALBOA,

DISCOVERER OF THE PACIFIC OCEAN.

CHAPTER I.

We have traced the disastrous fortunes of Alonzo de Ojeda and Diego de Nicuesa;—we have now to record the story of Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, an adventurer equally daring, far more renowned, and not less unfortunate, who in a manner rose upon their ruins.

When the bark disappeared from view which bore the ill-starred Nicuesa from the shores of Darien, the community relapsed into factions, as to who should have the rule. The Bachelor Enciso insisted upon his claims as paramount, but met with a powerful opponent in Vasco Nuñez, who had become a great favourite with the people, from his frank and fearless character, and his winning affability. In fact, he was peculiarly calculated to manage the fiery and factious, yet generous and susceptible nature of his countrymen; for the Spaniards, though proud and resentful, and impatient of indignity or restraint, are easily dazzled by valour, and won by courtesy and kindness. Vasco Nuñez had the external requisites also to captivate the multitude. He was now about thirty-five years of age; tall, well formed, and vigorous, with reddish hair, and an open, prepossessing countenance. His office of alcalde, while it clothed him with influence and importance, tempered those irregular and dissolute habits he might have indulged while a mere soldier of fortune; and his superior talent soon gave him a complete ascendancy over his official colleague Zamudio. He was thus enabled to set on foot a vigorous opposition to Enciso. Still he proceeded according to the forms of law, and summoned the Bachelor to trial, on the charge of usurping the powers of alcalde mayor, on the mere appointment of Alonzo de Ojeda, whose jurisdiction did not extend to this province.

Enciso was an able lawyer, and pleaded his cause skilfully; but his claims were, in fact, fallacious, and, had they not been so, he had to deal with men who cared little for law; who had been irritated by his legal exactions, and who were disposed to be governed by a man of the sword rather than of the robe. He was readily found guilty, therefore, and thrown into prison, and all his property was confiscated. This was a violent verdict, and rashly executed; but justice seemed to grow fierce

and wild when transplanted to the wilderness of the New World. Still there is no place where wrong can be committed with impunity; the oppression of the Bachelor Enciso, though exercised under the forms of law, and in a region remote from the pale of civilized life, redounded to the eventful injury of Vasco Nuñez, and contributed to blast the fruits of that ambition it was intended to promote.

The fortunes of the enterprising Bachelor had indeed run strangely counter to the prospects with which he had embarked at San Domingo; he had become a culprit at the bar instead of a judge upon the bench; and now was left to ruminate in a prison on the failure of his late attempt at general command. His friends, however, interceded warmly in his behalf, and at length obtained his release from confinement, and permission for him to return to Spain. Vasco Nuñez foresaw that the lawyer would be apt to plead his cause more effectually at the court of Castile than he had done before the partial and prejudiced tribunal of Darien. He prevailed upon his fellow-alcalde Zamudio, therefore, who was implicated with him in the late transactions, to return to Spain in the same vessel with the Bachelor, so as to be on the spot to answer his charges, and to give a favourable report of the case. He was also instructed to set forth the services of Vasco Nuñez, both in guiding the colonists to this place, and in managing the affairs of the settlement; and to dwell with emphasis on the symptoms of great riches in the surrounding country.

The Bachelor and the alcalde embarked in a small caravel; and, as it was to touch at Hispaniola, Vasco Nuñez sent his confidential friend, the regidor Valdivia, to that island to obtain provisions and recruits. He secretly put into his hands a round sum of gold as a present to Miguel de Pasamonte, the royal treasurer of Hispaniola, whom he knew to have great credit with the king, and to be invested with extensive powers, craving at the same time his protection in the New World, and his influence at court.

Having taken these shrewd precautions, Vasco Nuñez saw the caravel depart without dismay, though bearing to Spain his most dangerous enemy; he consoled himself, moreover, with the reflection that it likewise bore off his fellow-alcalde Zamudio, and thus left him in sole command of the colony.

CHAPTER II.

Vasco Nunez now exerted himself to prove his capacity

for the government to which he had aspired: and as he knew that no proof was more convincing to King Ferdinand than ample remittances, and that gold covered all sins in the New World, his first object was to discover those parts of the country which most abounded in the precious metals. Hearing exaggerated reports of the riches of a province about thirty leagues distant, called Coyba, he sent Francisco Pizarro with six men to explore it.

The cacique Zemaco, the native lord of Darien, who cherished a bitter hostility against the European intruders, and hovered with his warriors about the settlement, received notice of this detachment from his spies, and planted himself in ambush to waylay and destroy it. The Spaniards had scarcely proceeded three leagues along the course of the river when a host of savages burst upon them from the surrounding thickets, uttering frightful yells, and discharging showers of stones and arrows. Pizarro and his men, though sorely bruised and wounded, rushed into the thickest of the foe, slew many, wounded more, and put the rest to flight; but fearing another assault, made a precipitate retreat, leaving one of their companions, Francisco Hernan, disabled on the field. They arrived at the settlement crippled and bleeding; but when Vasco Nuñez heard the particulars of the action, his anger was roused against Pizarro, and he ordered him, though wounded, to return immediately and recover the disabled man. "Let it not be said, for shame," said he, "that Spaniards fled before savages, and left a comrade in their hands!" Pizarro felt the rebuke, returned to the scene of combat, and brought off Francisco Hernan in safety.

Nothing having been heard of Nicuesa since his departure, Vasco Nuñez dispatched two brigantines for those followers of that unfortunate adventurer who had remained at Nombre de Dios. They were overjoyed at being rescued from their forlorn situation, and conveyed to a settlement where there was some prospect of comfortable subsistence. The brigantines, in coasting the shores of the Isthmus, picked up two Spaniards, clad in painted skins, and looking as wild as the native Indians. These men, to escape some punishment, had fled from the ship of Nicuesa about a year and half before, and taken refuge with Careta, the cacique of Coyba. The savage chieftain had treated them with hospitable kindness; their first return for which, now that they found themselves safe among their countrymen, was to advise the latter to invade

the cacique in his dwelling, where they assured them they would find immense booty. Finding their suggestions listened to, one of them proceeded to Darien, to serve as a guide to any expedition that might be set on foot; the other returned to the cacique, to assist in betraying him.

Vasco Nuñez was elated by the intelligence received through these vagabonds of the wilderness. He chose a hundred and thirty well-armed and resolute men, and set off for Coyba. The cacique received the Spaniards in his mansion with the accustomed hospitality of a savage, setting before them meat and drink, and whatever his house afforded; but when Vasco Nuñez asked for a large supply of provisions for the colony, he declared that he had none to spare, his people having been prevented from cultivating the soil by a war which he was waging with the neighbouring cacique of Ponca. The Spanish outcast who had remained to betray his benefactor, now took Vasco Nuñez aside, and assured him that the cacique had an abundant hoard of provisions in secret; he advised him, however, to seem to believe his words, and to make a pretended departure for Darien with his troops, but to return in the night and take the village by surprise. Vasco Nuñez adopted the advice of the traitor. He took a cordial leave of Careta, and set off for the settlement. In the dead of the night, however, when the savages were buried in deep sleep, Vasco Nuñez led his men into the midst of the village, and, before the inhabitants could rouse themselves to resistance, made captives of Careta, his wives, and children, and many of his people. He discovered also the hoard of provisions, with which he loaded two brigantines, and returned with his booty and his captives to Darien.

When the unfortunate cacique beheld his family in chains, and in the hands of strangers, his heart was wrung with despair; "What have I done," said he to Vasco Nunez, "that thou shouldst treat me thus cruelly? None of thy people ever came to my land that were not fed, and sheltered, and treated with loving kindness. When thou camest to my dwelling, did I meet thee with a javelin in my hand? Did I not set meat and drink before thee, and welcome thee as a brother? Set me free, therefore, with my family and people, and we will remain thy friends. We will supply thee with provisions, and reveal to thee the riches of the land. Dost thou doubt my faith? Behold my daughter, I give her to thee as a pledge of friendship. Take her for thy wife, and be assured of the fidelity of her family and her people."

Vasco Nuñez felt the force of these words, and knew the importance of forming a strong alliance among the natives. The captive maid, also, as she stood trembling and dejected before him, found great favour in his eyes, for she was young and beautiful. He granted, therefore, the prayer of the cacique, and accepted his daughter, engaging, moreover, to aid the father against his enemies, on condition of his furnishing provisions to the colony.

Careta remained three days at Darien, during which time he was treated with the utmost kindness. Vasco Nuñez took him on board of his ships, and showed him every part of them. He displayed before him also the war-horses, with their armour and rich caparisons, and astonished him with the thunder of artillery. Lest he should be too much daunted by these warlike spectacles, he caused the musicians to perform a harmonious concert on their instruments, at which the cacique was lost in admiration. Thus having impressed him with a wonderful idea of the power and endowments of his new allies, he loaded him with presents, and permitted him to depart.*

Careta returned joyfully to his territories, and his daughter remained with Vasco Nuñez, willingly for his sake giving up her family and native home. They were never married, but she considered herself his wife, as she really was, according to the usages of her own country; and he treated her with fondness, allowing her gradually to acquire great influence over him. To his affection for this damsel, his ultimate ruin is in some measure to be ascribed.

CHAPTER III.

Vasco Nunez kept his word with the father of his Indian beauty. Taking with him eighty men, and his companion in arms Rodrigo Enriquez de Colmenares, he repaired by sea to Coyba, the province of the cacique. Here landing, he invaded the territories of Ponca, the great adversary of Careta, and obliged him to take refuge in the mountains. He then ravaged his lands, and sacked his villages, in which he found considerable booty. Returning to Coyba, where he was joyfully entertained by Careta, he next made a friendly visit to the adjacent province of Comagre, which was under the sway of a cacique, of the same name, who had 3000 fighting men at his command.

* Peter Martyr, decad. ii. cap. vi.

This province was situated at the foot of a lofty mountain in a beautiful plain, twelve leagues in extent. On the approach of Vasco Nuñez, the cacique came forth to meet him, attended by seven sons, all fine young men, the offspring of his various wives. He was followed by his principal chiefs and warriors, and by a multitude of his people. The Spaniards were conducted with great ceremony to the village, where quarters were assigned them, and they were furnished with abundance of provisions, and men and women were appointed to attend upon them.

The dwelling of the cacique surpassed any they had yet seen for magnitude, and for the skill and solidity of the architecture. It was one hundred and fifty paces in length, and eighty in breadth, founded upon great logs, surrounded with a stone wall; while the upper part was of wood work, curiously interwoven, and wrought with such beauty as to cause surprise and admiration. It contained many commodious apartments. There were store rooms also; one filled with bread, with venison, and other provisions; another with various spirituous beverages, which the Indians made from maize, from a species of the palm, and from roots of different kinds. There was also a great hall in a retired and secret part of the building, wherein Comagre preserved the bodies of his ancestors and relatives. These had been dried by the fire, so as to free them from corruption, and afterwards wrapped in mantles of cotton, richly wrought and interwoven with pearls and jewels of gold, and with certain stones held precious by the natives. They were then hung about the hall with cords of cotton, and regarded with great reverence, if not with religious devotion.

The eldest son of the cacique was of a lofty and generous spirit, and distinguished above the rest by his superior intelligence and sagacity. Perceiving, says old Peter Martyr, that the Spaniards were a "wandering kind of men, living only by shifts and spoil," he sought to gain favour for himself and family by gratifying their avarice. He gave Vasco Nuñez and Colmenares, therefore, 4000 ounces of gold, wrought into various ornaments, together with sixty slaves, captives taken in the wars. Vasco Nuñez ordered one-fifth of the gold to be weighed out and set apart for the crown, and the rest to be shared among his followers.

The division of the gold took place in the porch of the dwelling of Comagre, in the presence of the youthful cacique

who had made the gift. As the Spaniards were weighing it out, a violent quarrel arose among them as to the size and value of the pieces which fell to their respective shares. The high-minded savage was disgusted at this sordid brawl among beings whom he had regarded with such reverence. In the first impulse of his disdain, he struck the scales with his fist, and scattered the glittering gold about the porch. "Why," said he, "should you quarrel for such a trifle? If this gold is indeed so precious in your eyes, that for it alone you abandon your homes, invade the peaceful lands of others, and expose yourselves to such sufferings and perils, I will tell you of a region where you may gratify your wishes to the utmost. Behold those lofty mountains," continued he, pointing to the south; "beyond these lies a mighty sea, which may be discerned from their summit. It is navigated by people who have vessels almost as large as yours, and furnished, like them, with sails and oars. All the streams which flow down the southern side of those mountains into that sea, abound in gold; and the kings who reign upon its borders eat and drink out of golden vessels. Gold, in fact, is as plentiful and common among those people of the south as iron is among you Spaniards."

Vasco Nuñez inquired eagerly as to the means of penetrating to this sea and to the opulent regions on its shores. "The task," replied the prince, "is difficult and dangerous. You must pass through the territories of many powerful caciques, who will oppose you with hosts of warriors. Some parts of the mountains are infested by fierce and cruel cannibals, a wandering, lawless race: but, above all, you will have to encounter the great cacique Tubanamà, whose territories are at the distance of six days' journey, and more rich in gold than any other province; this cacique will be sure to come forth against you with a mighty force. To accomplish your enterprise, therefore, will require at least a thousand men armed like those who follow you."

The youthful cacique gave him farther information on the subject, collected from various captives taken in battle, and from one of his own nation, who had been for a long time in captivity to Tubanamà, the powerful cacique of the golden realm. He moreover offered to prove the sincerity of his words by accompanying Vasco Nuñez, in any expedition to those parts, at the head of his father's warriors.

Such was the first intimation received by Vasco Nunez of

the Pacific Ocean and its golden realms, and it had an immediate effect upon his whole character and conduct. This hitherto wandering and desperate man had now an enterprise opened to his ambition, which, if accomplished, would elevate him to fame and fortune, and entitle him to rank among the great captains and discoverers of the earth. Henceforth the discovery of the sea beyond the mountains was the great object of his thoughts, and his whole spirit seemed roused and ennobled by the idea.

He hastened his return to Darien, to make the necessary preparations for this splendid enterprise. Before departing from the province of Comagre he baptized that cacique by the name of Don Carlos, and performed the same ceremony upon his sons and several of his subjects;—thus singularly did avarice and religion go hand in hand in the conduct of the Spanish discoverers.

Scarcely had Vasco Nuñez returned to Darien when the Regidor Valdivia arrived from Hispaniola, but with no more provisions than could be brought in his small caravel. These were soon consumed, and the general scarcity continued. It was heightened by a violent tempest of thunder, lightning, and rain, which brought such torrents from the mountains that the river swelled and overflowed its banks, laying waste all the adjacent fields which had been cultivated. In this extremity, Vasco Nuñez dispatched Valdivia a second time to Hispaniola for provisions. Animated also by the loftier views of his present ambition, he wrote to Don Diego Columbus, who governed at San Domingo, informing him of the intelligence he had received of a great sea and opulent realms beyond the mountains, and entreating him to use his influence with the king that one thousand men might be immediately furnished him for the prosecution of so grand a discovery. He sent him also the amount of fifteen thousand crowns in gold, to be remitted to the king as the royal fifths of what had already been collected under his jurisdiction. Many of his followers, likewise, forwarded sums of gold to be remitted to their creditors in Spain. In the meantime, Vasco Nuñez prayed the admiral to yield him prompt succour to enable him to keep his footing in the land, representing the difficulty he had in maintaining, with a mere handful of men, so vast a country in a state of subjection.

CHAPTER IV.—[1512.]

While Vasco Nuñez awaited the result of this mission of Valdivia, his active disposition prompted foraging excursions into the surrounding country.

Among various rumours of golden realms in the interior of this unknown land, was one concerning a province called Dobayba, situated about forty feagues distant, on the banks of a great river which emptied itself, by several mouths, into a corner of the Gulf of Uraba.

This province derived its name, according to Indian tradition, from a mighty female of the olden time, the mother of the god who created the sun, and moon, and all good things. She had power over the elements, sending thunder and lightning to lay waste the lands of those who displeased her, but showering down fertility and abundance upon the possessions of her faithful worshippers. Others described her as having been an Indian princess, who once reigned among the mountains of Dobayba, and was renowned throughout the land for her supernatural power and wisdom. After her death, divine honours were paid her, and a great temple was erected for her worship. Hither the natives repaired from far and near, on a kind of pilgrimage, bearing offerings of their most valuable effects. The caciques who ruled over distant territories also sent golden tributes, at certain times of the year, to be deposited in this temple, and slaves to be sacrificed at its shrine. At one time, it was added, this worship fell into disuse, the pilgrimages were discontinued, and the caciques neglected to send their tributes; whereupon the deity, as a punishment, inflicted a drought upon the country. The springs and fountains failed, the rivers were dried up; the inhabitants of the mountains were obliged to descend into the plains, where they digged pits and wells, but these likewise failing, a great part of the nations perished with thirst. The remainder hastened to propitiate the deity by tributes and sacrifices, and thus succeeded in averting her displeasure. In consequence of offerings of the kind, made for generations from all parts of the country, the temple was said to be filled with treasure, and its walls to be covered with golden gifts.* In addition to the tale of this temple, the Indians gave marvellous accounts of the general wealth of this province, declaring that it abounded with mines of gold, the veins of

* Peter Martyr, decad. iii. cap. 6. Idem, decad. vii. cap. 10.

which reached from the dwelling of the cacique to the borders of his dominions.

To penetrate to this territory, and above all to secure the treasures of the golden temple, was an enterprise suited to the adventurous spirit of the Spaniards. Vasco Nuñez chose one hundred and seventy of his hardiest men for the purpose. Embarking them in two brigantines and a number of canoes, he set sail from Darien, and, after standing about nine leagues to the east, came to the mouth of the Rio Grande de San Juan, or the Great River of St. John, also called the Atrato, which is since ascertained to be one of the branches of the river Darien. Here he detached Rodrigo Enriquez de Colmenares with one-third of his forces, to explore the stream, while he himself proceeded with the residue to another branch of the river, which he was told flowed from the province of Dobayba, and which he ascended, flushed with sanguine expectations.*

His old enemy Zemaco, the cacique of Darien, however, had discovered the object of his expedition, and had taken measures to disappoint it; repairing to the province of Dobayba, he had prevailed upon its cacique to retire at the approach of the Spaniards, leaving his country deserted.

Vasco Nuñez found a village situated in a marshy neighbourhood, on the banks of the river, and mistook it for the residence of the cacique: it was silent and abandoned. There was not an Indian to be met with from whom he could obtain any information about the country, or who could guide him to the golden temple. He was disappointed, also, in his hopes of obtaining a supply of provisions, but he found weapons of various kinds hanging in the deserted houses, and gathered jewels and pieces of gold to the value of seven

* In recording this expedition, the author has followed the old Spanish narratives, written when the face of the country was but little known, and he was much perplexed to reconcile the accounts given of numerous streams with the rivers laid down on modern maps. By a clear and judicious explanation, given in the recent work of Don Manuel Josef Quintana, it appears that the different streams explored by Vasco Nuñez and Colmenares were all branches of one grand river, which, descending from the mountains of the interior, winds about in crystal streams among the plains and morasses bordering the bottom of the great Gulf of Darien, and discharges itself by various mouths into the gulph. In fact, the stream which ran by the infant city of Santa Maria de la Antigua was but one of its branches, a fact entirely unknown to Vasco Nuñez and his companions.

thousand castellanos. Discouraged by the savage look of the surrounding wilderness, which was perplexed by deep morasses, and having no guides to aid him in exploring it, he put all the booty he had collected into two large canoes, and made his way back to the Gulf of Uraba. Here he was assailed by a violent tempest which nearly wrecked his two brigantines, and obliged him to throw a great part of their cargoes overboard. The two canoes containing the booty were swallowed up by the raging sea, and all their crews perished.

Thus baffled and tempest-tost, Vasco Nuñez at length succeeded in getting into what is termed the Grand River, which he ascended, and rejoined Colmenares and his detachment. They now extended their excursions up a stream which emptied itself into the Grand River, and which, from the dark hue of its waters, they called Rio Negro, or the Black River. They also explored certain other tributary streams, branching from it, though not without occasional skirmishes with the natives.

Ascending one of these minor rivers with a part of his men, Vasco Nuñez came to the territories of a cacique named Abibeyba, who reigned over a region of marshes and shallow lakes. The habitations of the natives were built amidst the branches of immense and lofty trees. They were large enough to contain whole family connections, and were constructed partly of wood, partly of a kind of wicker-work, combining strength and pliability, and yielding uninjured to the motion of the branches when agitated by the wind. The inhabitants ascended to them, with great agility, by light ladders, formed of great reeds split through the middle, for the reeds on this coast grow to the thickness of a man's body. These ladders they drew up after them at night, or in case of attack. These habitations are well stocked with provisions; but the fermented beverages, of which these people had always a supply, were buried in vessels in the earth, at the foot of the tree, lest they should be rendered turbid by the rocking of the houses. Close by, also, were the canoes with which they navigated the rivers and ponds of their marshy country, and followed their main occupation of fishing.

On the approach of the Spaniards, the Indians took refuge in their tree-built castles, and drew up the ladders. The former called upon them to descend and to fear nothing. Upon this the cacique replied, entreating that he might not be molested seeing he had done them no injury. They

threatened, unless he came down, to fell the trees, or to set fire to them and burn him and his wives and children. The cacique was disposed to consent, but was prevented by the entreaties of his people. Upon this the Spaniards prepared to hew down the trees, but were assailed by showers of stones. They covered themselves however with their bucklers, assailed the trees vigorously with their hatchets, and soon compelled the inhabitants to capitulate. The cacique descended with his wife and two of the children. The first demand of the Spaniards was for gold. He assured them he had none; for, having no need of it, he had never made it an object of his search. Being importuned, however, he said that if he were permitted to repair to certain mountains at a distance, he would in a few days return, and bring them what they desired. They permitted him to depart, retaining his wife and children as hostages, but they saw no more of the cacique. After remaining here a few days and regaling on the provisions which they found in abundance, they continued their foraging expeditions, often opposed by the bold and warlike natives, and suffering occasional loss, but inflicting great havoc on their opposers.

Having thus overrun a considerable extent of country, and no grand object presenting to lure him on to further enterprise, Vasco Nuñez at length returned to Darien with the spoils and captives he had taken, leaving Bartolome Hurtado with thirty men in an Indian village on the Rio Negro, or Black River, to hold the country in subjection. Thus terminated the first expedition in quest of the golden temple of Dobayba, which for some time continued to be a favourite object of enterprise among the adventurers of Darien.

CHAPTER V.

Bartolome Hurtado, being left to his own discretion on the banks of the Black River, occupied himself occasionally in hunting the scattered natives who struggled about the surrounding forests. Having in this way picked up twenty-four captives, he put them on board of a large canoe, like so much live stock, to be transported to Darien and sold as slaves. Twenty of his followers, who were infirm, either from wounds or the disease of the climate, embarked also in the canoe, so that only ten men remained with Hurtado.

The great canoe, thus heavily freighted, descended the Black River slowly, between banks overhung with forests. Zemaco, the indefatigable cacique of Darien, was on the

watch, and waylaid the ark with four canoes filled with warriors, armed with war-clubs, and lances hardened in the fire. The Spaniards, being sick, could make but feeble resistance; some were massacred, others leaped into the river and were drowned. Two only escaped by clinging to two trunks of trees that were floating down the river, and covering themselves with the branches. Reaching the shore in safety, they returned to Bartolome Hurtado with the tragical tidings of the death of his followers. Hurtado was so disheartened by the news, and so dismayed at his own helpless situation, in the midst of a hostile country, that he resolved to abandon the fatal shores of the Black River, and return to Darien. He was quickened in this resolution by receiving intimation of a conspiracy forming among the natives. The implacable Zemaco had drawn four other caciques into a secret plan to assemble their vassals and make a sudden attack upon Darien: Hurtado hastened with the remnant of his followers to carry tidings to the settlement of this conspiracy. Many of the inhabitants were alarmed at his intelligence; others treated it as a false rumour of the Indians, and no preparations were made against what might be a mere imaginary danger.

Fortunately for the Spaniards, among the female captives owned by Vasco Nuñez was an Indian damsel named Fulvia; to whom, in consequence of her beauty, he had shown great favour, and who had become strongly attached to him. She had a brother among the warriors of Zemaco, who often visited her in secret. In one of his visits, he informed her that on a certain night the settlement would be attacked and every Spaniard destroyed. He charged her, therefore, to hide herself that night in a certain place until he should come to her aid, lest she should be slain in the confusion of the massacre.

When her brother was gone, a violent struggle took place in the bosom of the Indian girl, between her feeling for her family and her people, and her affection for Vasco Nuñez. The latter at length prevailed, and she revealed all that had been told to her. The Spaniard prevailed on her to send for her brother under pretence of aiding her to escape. Having him in his power, he extorted from him all that he knew of the designs of the enemy. His confessions showed what imminent danger had been lurking round Vasco Nuñez in his most unsuspecting moments. The prisoner informed him that he had been one of forty Indians sent some time before

by the cacique Zemaco to Vasco Nuñez, in seeming friendship, to be employed by him in cultivating the fields adjacent to the settlement. They had secret orders, however, to take an opportunity, when the Spaniard should come forth to inspect their work, to set upon him in an unguarded moment, and destroy him. Fortunately, Vasco Nuñez always visited the fields mounted on his war-horse, and armed with lance and target, and the Indians were so awed by his martial appearance, and by the terrible animal he bestrode, that they dared not attack him.

Foiled in this and other attempts of the kind, Zemaco resorted to the conspiracy with which the settlement was now menaced. Five caciques had joined in the confederacy: they had prepared a hundred canoes; amassed provisions for an army; and concerted to assemble five thousand picked warriors at a certain time and place; with these they were to make an attack on the settlement by land and water, in the middle of the night, and to slaughter every Spaniard.

Having learnt where the confederate chiefs were to be found, and where they had deposited their provision, Vasco Nuñez chose seventy of his best men well armed, and made a circuit by land, while Colmenares, with sixty men, sallied forth secretly in four canoes, guided by the Indian prisoner. In this way they surprised the general of the Indian army and several of the principal confederates, and got possession of all their provisions, though they failed to capture the formidable Zemaco. The Indian general was shot to death with arrows, and the leaders of the conspiracy were hanged in presence of their captive followers. The defeat of this deep-laid plan, and the punishment of its devisers, spread terror throughout the neighbouring provinces, and prevented any further hoslilities. Vasco Nuñez, however, caused a strong fortress of wood to be immediately erected, to guard against any future assaults of the savages.

CHAPTER VI.

A CONSIDERABLE time had now elapsed since the departure of Valdivia for Hispaniola, yet no tidings had been received from him. Many began to fear that some disaster had befallen him; while others insinuated that it was possible both he and Zamudio might have neglected the objects of their mission, and, having appropriated to their own use the gold with which they had been intrusted, abandoned the colony to its fate.

Vasco Nuñez himself was harassed by these surmises; and by the dread lest the Bachelor Enciso should succeed in prejudicing the mind of his sovereign against him. Impatient of this state of anxious suspense, he determined to repair to Spain, to communicate in person all that he had heard concerning the Southern Sea, and to ask for the troops necessary for its discovery.

Every one, however, both friend and foe, exclaimed against such a measure, representing his presence as indispensable to the safety of the colony, from his great talents as a commander, and the fear entertained of him by the Indians.

After much debate and contention, it was at length agreed that Juan de Cayzedo and Rodrigo Enriquez de Colmenares should go in his place, instructed to make all necessary representations to the king. Letters were written also, containing extravagant accounts of the riches of the country, partly dictated by the sanguine hopes of the writers, and partly by the fables of the natives. The rumoured wealth of the province of Dobayba, and the treasures of its golden temple, were not forgotten; and an Indian was taken to Spain by the commissioners, a native of the province of Zenu, where gold was said to be gathered in nets stretched across the mountain streams. To give more weight to all these stories, every one contributed some portion of gold from his private hoard, to be presented to the king in addition to the amount arising from his fifths.

But little time had elapsed after the departure of the commissioners, when new dissensions broke out in the colony. It was hardly to be expected that a fortuitous assemblage of adventurers could remain long tranquil during a time of suffering under rulers of questionable authority. Vasco Nuñez, it is true, had risen by his courage and abilities; but he had risen from among their ranks; he was in a manner of their own creation; and they had not become sufficiently accustomed to him as a governor, to forget that he was recently but a mere soldier of fortune, and an absconding debtor.

Their factious discontent, however, was directed at first against a favourite of Vasco Nuñez, rather than against himself. He had invested Bartolome Hurtado, the commander of the Black River, with considerable authority in the colony, and the latter gave great offence by his oppressive conduct. Hurtado had particularly aggrieved by his arrogance one

Alonzo Perez de la Rua, a touchy cavalier, jealous of his honour, and peculiarly gifted with the sensitive punctilio of a Spaniard. Firing at some indignity, whether real or fancied, Alonzo Perez threw himself into the ranks of the disaffected, and was immediately chosen as their leader. Thus backed by a faction, he clamoured loudly for the punishment of Hurtado; and, finding his demands unattended to, threw out threats of deposing Vasco Nuñez. The latter, with his usual spirit and promptness, seized upon the testy Alonzo Perez, and threw him into prison, to digest his indignities and cool his passion at leisure.

The conspirators flew to arms to liberate their leader. The friends of Vasco Nuñez were equally on the alert. The two parties drew out in battle array in the public square, and a sanguinary conflict was on the point of taking place. Fortunately there were some cool heads left in the colony. These interfered at the critical moment, representing to the angry adversaries that, if they fought among themselves, and diminished their already scanty numbers, even the conquerors must eventually fall a prey to the Indians.

Their remonstrances had effect. A parley ensued, and, after much noisy debate, a kind of compromise was made. Alonzo Perez was liberated, and the mutineers dispersed quietly to their homes. The next day, however, they were again in arms, and seized upon Bartolome Hurtado; but after a little while were prevailed upon to set him free. Their factious views seemed turned to a higher object. They broke forth into loud murmurs against Vasco Nuñez, complaining that he had not made a fair division of the gold and slaves taken in the late expeditions, and threatening to arrest him and bring him to account. Above all, they clamoured for an immediate distribution of ten thousand castellanos in gold, yet unshared.

Vasco Nuñez understood too well the riotous nature of the people under him, and his own precarious hold on their obedience, to attempt to cope with them in this moment of turbulence. He shrewdly determined, therefore, to withdraw from the sight of the multitude, and to leave them to divide the spoil among themselves, trusting to their own strife for his security. That very night he sallied forth into the country, under pretence of going on a hunting expedition.

The next morning the mutineers found themselves in possession of the field. Alonzo Perez, the pragmatical ring-

leader, immediately assumed the command, seconded by the Bachelor Corral. Their first measure was to seize upon the ten thousand castellanos, and to divide them among the multitude, by way of securing their own popularity. The event proved the sagacity and forethought of Vasco Nuñez. Scarcely had these hotheaded intermeddlers entered upon the partition of the gold, than a furious strife arose. Every one was dissatisfied with his share, considering his merits entitled to peculiar recompense. Every attempt to appease the rabble only augmented their violence, and in their rage they swore that Vasco Nuñez had always shown more judgment and discrimination in his distributions to men of merit.

The adherents of the latter now ventured to lift up their voices; "Vasco Nuñez," said they, "won the gold by his enterprise and valour, and would have shared it with the brave and the deserving; but these men have seized upon it by factious means, and would squander it upon their minions." The multitude, who, in fact, admired the soldier-like qualities of Vasco Nuñez, displayed one of the customary reverses of popular feeling. The touchy Alonzo Perez, his coadjutor the Bachelor Corral, and several other of the ringleaders, were seized, put into irons, and confined in the fortress; and Vasco Nuñez was recalled with loud acclamations to the settlement.

How long this pseudo-commander might have been able to manage the unsteady populace, it is impossible to say; but just at this juncture two ships arrived from Hispaniola, freighted with supplies, and bringing a reinforcement of one hundred and fifty men. They brought also a commission to Vasco Nuñez, signed by Miguel de Pasamonte, the royal treasurer of Hispaniola, (to whom he had sent a private present of gold,) constituting him captain-general of the colony. It is doubtful whether Pasamonte possessed the power to confer such a commission, though it is affirmed that the king had clothed him with it, as a kind of check upon the authority of the admiral Don Diego Columbus, then governor of Hispaniola, of whose extensive sway in the New World the monarch was secretly jealous. At any rate, the treasurer appears to have acted in full confidence of the ultimate approbation of his sovereign.

Vasco Nuñez was rejoiced at receiving a commission which clothed him with at least the semblance of royal sanction. Feeling more assured in his situation, and being naturally of a generous and forgiving temper, he was easily prevailed

upon, in his moment of exultation, to release and pardon Alonzo Perez, the Bachelor Corral, and the other ringleaders of the late commotions; and for a time the feuds and factions of this petty community were lulled to repose.

CHAPTER VII.—[1513.]

The temporary triumph of Vasco Nuñez was soon overcast by tidings from Spain. His late colleague, the alcalde Zamudio, wrote him word, that the Bachelor Enciso had carried his complaints to the foot of the throne, and succeeded in rousing the indignation of the king, and had obtained a sentence in his favour, condemning Vasco Nuñez in costs and damages. Zamudio informed him in addition, that he would be immediately summoned to repair to Spain, and answer in person the criminal charges advanced against him on account of the harsh treatment and probable death of the unfortunate Nicuesa.

Vasco Nuñez was at first stunned by this intelligence, which seemed at one blow to annihilate all his hopes and fortunes. He was a man, however, of prompt decision and intrepid spirit. The information received from Spain was private and informal; no order had yet arrived from the king; he was still master of his actions, and had control over the colony. One brilliant achievement might atone for all the past, and fix him in the favour of the monarch. Such an achievement was within his reach—the discovery of the southern sea. It is true, a thousand soldiers had been required for the expedition, but were he to wait for their arrival from Spain, his day of grace would be past. It was a desperate thing to undertake the task with the handful of men at his command, but the circumstances of the case were desperate. Fame, fortune, life itself, depended upon the successful and the prompt execution of the enterprise. To linger was to be lost.

Vasco Nuñez looked round upon the crew of daring and reckless adventurers that formed the colony, and chose one hundred and ninety of the most resolute, vigorous, and devoted to his person. These he armed with swords, targets, crossbows, and arquebuses. He did not conceal from them the danger of the enterprise into which he was about to lead them; but the spirit of these Spanish adventurers was always roused by the idea of perilous and extravagant exploit. To aid his slender forces, he took with him a number of

bloodhounds, which had been found to be terrific allies in Indian warfare.

The Spanish writers make particular mention of one of those animals, named Leoncico, which was a constant companion, and as it were body-guard of Vasco Nuñez, and describe him as minutely as they would a favourite warrior. He was of a middle size, but immensely strong: of a dull yellow or reddish colour, with a black muzzle, and his body was scarred all over with wounds received in innumerable battles with the Indians. Vasco Nuñez always took him on his expeditions, and sometimes lent him to others, receiving for his services the same share of booty allotted to an armed man. In this way he gained by him in the course of his campaigns upwards of a thousand crowns. The Indians, it is said, had conceived such terror of this animal, that the very sight of him was sufficient to put a host of them to flight.*

In addition to these forces, Vasco Nuñez took with him a number of the Indians of Darien, whom he had won to him by kindness, and whose services were important, from their knowledge of the wilderness, and of the habits and resources of savage life. Such was the motley armament that set forth from the little colony of Darien, under the guidance of a daring, if not desperate commander, in quest of the great Pacific Ocean.

CHAPTER VIII.

It was on the 1st of September that Vasco Nuñez embarked with his followers in a brigantine and nine large canoes or pirogues, followed by the cheers and good wishes of those who remained at the settlement. Standing to the northwestward, he arrived without accident at Coyba, the dominion of the cacique Careta, whose daughter he had received as a pledge of amity. That Indian beauty had acquired a great influence over Vasco Nuñez, and appears to have cemented his friendship with her father and her people. He was received by the cacique with open arms, and furnished with guides and warriors to aid him in his enterprise.

Vasco Nuñez left about half of his men at Coyba to guard the brigantine and canoes, while he should penetrate the wilderness with the residue. The importance of his present expedition, not merely as affecting his own fortunes, but as it were unfolding a mighty secret of nature, seems to have impressed itself upon his spirit, and to have given correspondent

* Oviedo, Hist. Ind., p. 2, cap. 3. MS.

solemnity to his conduct. Before setting out upon his march, he caused mass to be performed, and offered up prayers to God for the success of his perilous undertaking.

It was on the 6th of September that he struck off for the mountains. The march was difficult and toilsome. The Spaniards, encumbered with the weight of their armour and weapons, and oppressed by the heat of a tropical climate, were obliged to climb rocky precipices, and to struggle through close and tangled forests. Their Indian allies aided them by carrying their ammunition and provisions, and by guiding them to the most practicable paths.

On the 8th of September they arrived at the village of Ponca, the ancient enemy of Careta. The village was lifeless and abandoned; the cacique and his people had fled to the fastnesses of the mountains. The Spaniards remained here several days to recruit the health of some of their number who had fallen ill. It was necessary also to procure guides acquainted with the mountain wilderness they were approaching. The retreat of Ponca was at length discovered, and he was prevailed upon, though reluctantly, to come to Vasco Nuñez. The latter had a peculiar facility in winning the confidence and friendship of the natives. The cacique was soon so captivated by his kindness that he revealed to him in secret all he knew of the natural riches of the country. He assured him of the truth of what had been told him about a great pechry or sea beyond the mountains, and gave him several ornaments ingeniously wrought of fine gold, which had been brought from the countries upon its borders. He told him, moreover, that when he had attained the summit of a lofty ridge, to which he pointed, and which seemed to rise up to the skies, he would behold that sea spread out far below him.

Animated by these accounts, Vasco Nuñez procured fresh guides from the cacique, and prepared to ascend the mountains. Numbers of his men having fallen ill from fatigue and the heat of the climate, he ordered them to return slowly to Coyba, taking with him none but such as were in robust and vigorous health.

On the 20th of September he again set forward through a broken rocky country, covered with a matted forest, and intersected by deep and turbulent streams, many of which it asw necessary to cross upon rafts.

So toilsome was the journey, that in four days they did not

advance above ten leagues, and in the meantime they suffered excessively from hunger. At the end of this time they arrived at the province of a warlike cacique, named Quaraquâ, who was at war with Ponca.

Hearing that a band of strangers were entering his territories, guided by the subjects of his inveterate foe, the cacique took the field with a large number of warriors, some armed with bows and arrows, others with long spears, or with double-handed maces of palm wood, almost as heavy and hard as iron. Seeing the inconsiderable number of the Spaniards, they set upon them with furious yells, thinking to overcome them in an instant. The first discharge of fire-arms, however, struck them with dismay. They thought they were contending with demons who vomited forth thunder and lightning, especially when they saw their companions fall bleeding and dead beside them, without receiving any apparent blow. They took to headlong flight, and were hotly pursued by the Spaniards and their bloodhounds. Some were transfixed with lances, others hewn down with swords, and many were torn to pieces by the dogs, so that Quaraquâ and six hundred of his warriors were left dead upon the field.

A brother of the cacique and several chiefs were taken prisoners. They were clad in robes of white cotton. Either from their effeminate dress, or from the accusations of their enemies, the Spaniards were induced to consider them guilty of unnatural crimes, and, in their abhorrence and disgust, gave them to be torn to pieces by the bloodhounds.*

It is also affirmed, that among the prisoners were several negroes, who had been slaves to the cacique. The Spaniards, we are told, were informed by the other captives, that these black men came from a region at no great distance, where there was a people of that colour, with whom they were frequently at war. "These," adds the Spanish writer, "were the first negroes ever found in the New World, and I believe no others have since been discovered." †

* Herrera, Hist. Ind., decad. i. lib. x. cap. 1.

† Peter Martyr, in his third Decade, makes mention of these negroes in the following words:—"About two days' journey distant from Quaraquâ is a region inhabited only by black moors, exceeding fierce and cruel. It is supposed that in times past certain black moors sailed thither out of Ethiopia to rob, and that by shipwreck, or some other chance, they were driven to these mountains." As Martyr lived and wrote at the time, he of course related the mere rumour of the day, which all subsequent accounts have disproved. The other historians

After this sanguinary triumph, the Spaniards marched to the village of Quaraquà, where they found considerable booty in gold and jewels. Of this Vasco Nuñez reserved one-fifth for the crown, and shared the rest liberally among his followers. The village was at the foot of the last mountain that remained for them to climb; several of the Spaniards, however, were so disabled by wounds received in battle, or so exhausted by the fatigue and hunger they had endured, that they were unable to proceed. They were obliged, therefore, reluctantly to remain in the village, within sight of the mountain-top that commanded the long-sought prospect. Vasco Nuñez selected fresh guides from among his prisoners, who were natives of the province, and sent back the subjects of Ponca. Of the band of Spaniards who had set out with him in this enterprise, sixty-seven alone remained in sufficient health and spirits for this last effort. These he ordered to retire early to repose, that they might be ready to set off at the cool and fresh hour of daybreak, so as to reach the summit of the mountain before the noontide heat.

CHAPTER IX.

The day had scarce dawned, when Vasco Nuñez and his followers set forth from the Indian village, and began to climb the height. It was a severe and rugged toil for men so wayworn; but they were filled with new ardour at the idea of the triumphant scene that was so soon to repay them for all their hardships.

About ten o'clock in the morning they emerged from the thick forests through which they had hitherto struggled, and arrived at a lofty and airy region of the mountain. The bald summit alone remained to be ascended, and their guides pointed to a moderate eminence, from which they said the southern sea was visible.

Upon this Vasco Nuñez commanded his followers to halt, and that no man should stir from his place. Then, with a palpitating heart, he ascended alone the bare mountain-top. On reaching the summit, the long-desired prospect burst upon his view. It was as if a new world were unfolded to him, separated from all hitherto known by this mighty barrier of mountains. Below him extended a vast chaos of rock and

who mentioned the circumstance, have probably repeated it from him. It must have arisen from some misrepresentations, and is not entitled to credit.

forest, and green savannas and wandering streams, while at a distance the waters of the promised ocean glittered in the morning sun.

At this glorious prospect, Vasco Nuñez sank upon his knees, and poured out thanks to God for being the first European to whom it was given to make that great discovery. He then called his people to ascend: "Behold, my friends," said he, "that glorious sight which we have so much desired. Let us give thanks to God that he has granted us this great honour and advantage. Let us pray to Him to guide and aid us to conquer the sea and land which we have discovered, and which Christian has never entered to preach the holy doctrine of the Evangelists. As to yourselves, be as you have hitherto been, faithful and true to me, and, by the favour of Christ, you will become the richest Spaniards that have ever come to the Indies; you will render the greatest services to your king that ever vassal rendered to his lord; and you will have the eternal glory and advantage of all that is here discovered, conquered, and converted to our holy Catholic faith."

The Spaniards answered this speech by embracing Vasco Nuñez and promising to follow him to death. Among them was a priest, named Andres de Vara, who lifted up his voice and chanted *Te Deum laudamus*—the usual anthem of Spanish discoverers; the rest, kneeling down, joined in the strain with pious enthusiasm and tears of joy, and never did a more sincere oblation rise to the Deity from a sanctified altar, than from that mountain summit. It was indeed one of the most sublime discoveries that had yet been made in the New World, and must have opened a boundless field of conjecture to the wondering Spaniards. The imagination delights to picture forth the splendid confusion of their thoughts. Was this the great Indian Ocean, studded with precious islands, abounding in gold, in gems, and spices, and bordered by the gorgeous cities and wealthy marts of the East? or was it some lonely sea, locked up in the embraces of savage, uncultivated continents, and never traversed by a bark, excepting the light pirogue of the savage? The latter could hardly be the case, for the natives had told the Spaniards of golden realms, and populous, and powerful, and luxurious nations upon its shores. Perhaps it might be bordered by various people, civilized in fact, though differing from Europe in their civilization, who might have peculiar laws and customs, and arts and sciences; who might form, as it were, a world of their own, intercom-

muning by this mighty sea, and carrying on commerce between their own islands and continents, but who might exist in total ignorance and independence of the other hemisphere.

Such may naturally have been the ideas suggested by the sight of this unknown ocean. It was the prevalent belief of the Spaniards, however, that they were the first Christians who had made the discovery. Vasco Nuñez, therefore, called upon all present to witness that he took possession of that sea, its islands, and surrounding lands, in the name of the sovereigns of Castile, and the notary of the expedition made a testimonial of the same, to which all present, to the number of sixty-seven men, signed their names. He then caused a fair and tall tree to be cut down and wrought into a cross, which was elevated on the spot whence he had first beheld the sea. A mound of stones was likewise piled up to serve as a monument, and the names of the Castilian sovereigns were carved on the neighbouring trees. The Indians beheld all these ceremonials and rejoicings in silent wonder, and, while they aided to erect the cross, and pile up the mound of stones, marvelled exceedingly at the meaning of these monuments, little thinking that they marked the subjugation of their land.

The memorable event here recorded took place on the 26th of September, 1513; so that the Spaniards had spent twenty days in performing the journey from the province of Careta to the summit of the mountain, a distance which at present, it is said, does not require more than six days' travel. Indeed the isthmus in this neighbourhood is not more than eighteen leagues in breadth in its widest part, and in some places merely seven; but it consists of a ridge of extremely high and rugged mountains. When the discoverers traversed it, they had no route but the Indian paths, and often had to force their way amidst all kinds of obstacles, both from the savage country and its savage inhabitants. In fact, the details of this narrative sufficiently account for the slowness of their progress, and present an array of difficulties and perils, which, as has been well observed, none but those "men of iron" could have subdued and overcome.*

CHAPTER X.—[1513.]

HAVING taken possession of the Pacific Ocean and all its

* Vidas de Españoles Célebres, por Don Manuel Josef Quintana, tom. ii. p. 40.

realms from the summit of the mountain, Vasco Nuñez now descended with his little band, to seek the regions of reputed wealth upon its shores. He had not proceeded far when he came to the province of a warlike cacique, named Chiapes, who issuing forth at the head of his warriors, looked with scorn upon the scanty number of straggling Spaniards, and forbade them to set foot within his territories. Vasco Nuñez depended for safety upon his power of striking terror into the ignorant savages. Ordering his arquebusiers to the front, he poured a volley into the enemy, and then let loose the bloodhounds. The flash and the noise of the fire-arms, and the sulphurous smoke which was carried by the wind among the Indians, overwhelmed them with dismay. Some fell down in a panic as though they had been struck by thunderbolts, the rest betook themselves to headlong flight.

Vasco Nuñez commanded his men to refrain from needless slaughter. He made many prisoners, and on arriving at the village, sent some of them in search of their cacique, accompanied by several of his Indian guides. The latter informed Chiapes of the supernatural power of the Spaniards, assuring him that they exterminated with thunder and lightning all who dared to oppose them, but loaded all such as submitted to them with benefits. They advised him, therefore, to throw himself upon their mercy and seek their friendship.

The cacique listened to their advice, and came trembling to the Spaniards, bringing with him five hundred pounds' weight of wrought gold as a peace offering, for he had already learnt the value they set upon that metal. Vasco Nuñez received him with great kindness, and graciously accepted his gold, for which he gave him beads, hawks'-bells, and looking-glasses, making him in his own conceit the richest potentate on that side of the mountains.

Friendship being thus established between them, Vasco Nuñez remained at the village for a few days, sending back the guides who had accompanied him from Quaraquà, and ordering his people whom he had left at that place to rejoin him. In the meantime he sent out three scouting parties of twelve men each, under Francisco Pizarro, Juan de Escaray, and Alonzo Martin de Bon Benito, to explore the surrounding country and discover the best route to the sea. Alonzo Martin was the most successful. After two days' journey, he came to a beach, where he found two large canoes lying high and dry, without any water being in sight. While the

Spaniards were regarding these canoes, and wondering why they should be so far on land, the tide, which rises to a great height on that coast, came rapidly in and set them afloat; upon this, Alonzo Martin stepped into one of them, and called his companions to bear witness that he was the first European that embarked upon that sea; his example was followed by one Blas de Etienza, who called them likewise to testify that he was the second.*

We mention minute particulars of the kind, as being characteristic of these extraordinary enterprises, and of the extraordinary people who undertook them. The humblest of these Spanish adventurers seemed actuated by a swelling and ambitious spirit, which rose superior at times to mere sordid considerations, and aspired to share the glory of these great discoveries. The scouting party having thus explored a direct route to the sea-coast, returned to report their success to their commander.

Vasco Nuñez being rejoined by his men from Quaraquà, now left the greater part of his followers to repose and recover from their sickness and fatigues in the village of Chiapes; and, taking with him twenty-six Spaniards, well armed, he set out on the 29th of September, for the sea-coast, accompanied by the cacique and a number of his warriors. The thick forests, which covered the mountains, descended to the very margin of the sea, surrounding and overshadowing the wide and beautiful bays that penetrated far into the land. The whole coast, as far as the eye could reach, was perfectly wild, the sea without a sail, and both seemed never to have been under the dominion of civilized man.

Vasco Nuñez arrived on the borders of one of those vast bays, to which he gave the name of Saint Michael, it being discovered on that saint's day. The tide was out, the water was above half a league distant, and the intervening beach was covered with mud; he seated himself, therefore, under the shade of the forest trees until the tide should rise. After a while, the water came rushing in with great impetuosity, and soon reached nearly to the place where the Spaniards were reposing. Upon this Vasco Nuñez rose and took a banner on which were painted the Virgin and child, and under them the arms of Castile and Leon; and drawing his sword and throwing his buckler on his shoulder, he marched into the sea until the water reached above his knees, and

* Herera, Hist. Ind., decad. i. lib. x. cap. 2.

waving his banner, exclaimed with a loud voice, 'Long live the high and mighty monarchs Don Ferdinand and Donna Juana, sovereigns of Castile, of Leon, and of Arragon, in whose name, and for the royal crown of Castile, I take real, and corporal, and actual possession of these seas, and lands, and coasts, and ports, and islands of the south, and all thereunto annexed; and of the kingdoms and provinces which do or may appertain to them, in whatever manner or by whatever right or title, ancient or modern, in times past, present, or to come, without any contradiction; and if other prince or captain, Christian or infidel, or of any law, sect, or condition, whatsoever, shall pretend any right to these lands and seas, I am ready and prepared to maintain and defend them in the name of the Castilian sovereigns, present and future, whose is the empire and dominion over these Indian islands, and Terra Firma, northern and southern, with all their seas, both at the arctic and antarctic poles, on either side of the equinoctial line, whether within or without the tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, both now and in all times, as long as the world endures, and until the final day of judgment of all mankind."

This swelling declaration and defiance being uttered with a loud voice, and no one appearing to dispute his pretensions, Vasco Nuñez called upon his companions to bear witness of the fact of his having duly taken possession. They all declared themselves ready to defend his claim to the uttermost, as became true and loyal vassals to the Castilian sovereigns; and the notary having drawn up a document for the occasion, they subscribed it with their names.

This done, they advanced to the margin of the sea, and stooping down, tasted its waters. When they found, that, though severed by intervening mountains and continents, they were salt like the seas of the north, they felt assured that they had indeed discovered an ocean, and again returned thanks to God.

Having concluded all these ceremonies, Vasco Nuñez drew a dagger from his girdle and cut a cross on a tree which grew within the water, and made two other crosses on two adjacent trees, in honour of the Three Persons of the Trinity, and in token of possession. His followers likewise cut crosses on many of the trees of the adjacent forest, and lopped off branches with their swords to bear away as trophies.*

* Many of the foregoing particulars are from the unpublished volume of Oviedo's History of the Indies.

Such was the singular medley of chivalrous and religious ceremonial, with which these Spanish adventurers took possession of the vast Pacific Ocean, and all its lands—a scene strongly characteristic of the nation and the age.

CHAPTER XI.—[1513.]

While he made the village of Chiapes his head-quarters, Vasco Nuñez foraged the adjacent country, and obtained considerable quantities of gold from the natives. Encouraged by his success, he undertook to explore by sea the borders of a neighbouring gulf of great extent, which penetrated far into the land. The cacique Chiapes warned him of the danger of venturing to sea in the stormy season, which comprises the months of October, November, and December, assuring him that he had beheld many canoes swallowed up in the mighty waves and whirlpools, which at such time render the gulf almost unnavigable.

These remonstrances were unavailing: Vasco Nuñez expressed a confident belief that God would protect him, seeing that his voyage was to redound to the propagation of the faith, and the augmentation of the power of the Castilian monarchs over the infidels; and in truth this bigoted reliance on the immediate protection of Heaven seems to have been, in a great measure, the cause of the extravagant daring of the Spaniards in their expeditions in those days, whether against Moors or Indians.

Finding his representations of no effect, Chiapes volunteered to take part in this perilous cruise, lest he should appear wanting in courage, or in good will to his guest. Accompanied by the cacique, therefore, Vasco Nuñez embarked on the 17th of October with sixty men in nine canoes, managed by Indians, leaving the residue of his followers to recruit their health and strength in the village of Chiapes.

Scarcely, however, had they put forth on the broad bosom of the gulf, when the wisdom of the cacique's advice was made apparent. The wind began to blow freshly, raising a heavy and tumultuous sea, which broke in roaring and foaming surges on the rocks and reefs, and among the numerous islets with which the gulf was studded. The light canoes were deeply laden with men unskilled in their management. It was frightful to those in one canoe to behold their companions, one instant tossed high on the breaking crest of a wave, the next plunging out of sight, in a watery abyss. The

Indians themselves, though almost amphibious in their habits, showed signs of consternation; for amidst these rocks and breakers, even the skill of the expert swimmer would be of little avail. At length the Indians succeeded in tying the canoes in pairs, side by side, to prevent their being overturned, and in this way they kept afloat, until towards evening they were enabled to reach a small island. Here they landed, and fastening the canoes to the rocks, or to small trees that grew upon the shore, they sought an elevated dry place, and stretched themselves to take repose. They had but escaped from one danger to encounter another. Having been for a long time accustomed to the sea on the northern side of the isthmus, where there is little, if any, rise or fall of the tide, they had neglected to take any precaution against such an occurrence. In a little while, they were awakened by the rapid rising of the water. They shifted their situation to a higher ground, but the waters continued to gain upon them, the breakers rushing, and roaring, and foaming upon the beach like so many monsters of the deep seeking for their prey. Nothing, it is said, can be more dismal and appalling than the sullen bellowing of the sea among the islands of that gulf at the rising and falling of the tide. By degrees, rock after rock, and one sand bank after another, disappeared, until the sea covered the whole island, and rose almost to the girdles of the Spaniards. Their situation was now agonizing. A little more and the waters would overwhelm them: or, even as it was, the least surge might break over them and sweep them from their unsteady footing. Fortunately the wind had lulled, and the sea, having risen above the rocks which had fretted it, became calm. The tide had reached its height and began to subside, and after a time they heard the retiring waves beating against the rocks below them.

When the day dawned they sought their canoes; but here a sad spectacle met their eyes. Some were broken to pieces, others yawning open in many parts. The clothing and food left in them had been washed away, and replaced by sand and water. The Spaniards gazed on the scene in mute despair; they were faint and weary, and needed food and repose, but famine and labour awaited them, even if they should escape with their lives. Vasco Nuñez, however, rallied their spirits, and set them an example by his own cheerful exertions. Obeying his directions, they set to work to repair, in the best manner

they were able, the damages of the canoes. Such as were not too much shattered they bound and braced up with their girdles, with slips of the bark of trees, or with the tough long stalks of certain sea-weeds. They then peeled off the bark from the small sea-plants, pounded it between stones, and mixed it with grass, and with this endeavoured to calk the seams and stop the leaks. When re-embarked, their numbers weighed down the canoes to the water's edge, and as they rose and sank with the swelling waves there was danger of their being swallowed up. All day they laboured with the sea, suffering excessively from hunger and thirst, and at nightfall they landed in a corner of the gulf, near the abode of a cacique named Túmaco. Leaving a part of his men to guard the canoes, Vasco Nuñez set out with the residue for the Indian town. He arrived there about midnight, but the inhabitants were on the alert to defend their habitations. The fire-arms and dogs soon put them to flight, and the Spaniards pursuing them with their swords, drove them howling into the woods. In the village were found provisions in abundance, beside a considerable amount of gold and a great quantity of pearls, many of them of a large size. In the house of the cacique were several huge shells of mother of pearl, and four pearl oysters quite fresh, which showed that there was a pearl fishery in the neighbourhood. Eager to learn the sources of this wealth, Vasco Nuñez sent several of the Indians of Chiapes in search of the cacique, who traced him to a wild retreat among the rocks. By their persuasions Túmaco sent his son, a fine young savage, as a mediator. The latter returned to his father loaded with presents, and extolling the benignity of these superhuman beings, who had shown themselves so terrible in battle. By these means, and by a mutual exchange of presents, a friendly intercourse was soon established. Among other things the cacique gave Vasco Nuñez jewels of gold weighing six hundred and fourteen crowns, and two hundred pearls of great size and beauty, excepting that they were somewhat discoloured in consequence of the oysters having been opened by fire.

The cacique, seeing the value which the Spaniards set upon the pearls, sent a number of his men to fish for them at a place about ten miles distant. Certain of the Indians were trained from their youth to this purpose, so as to become expert divers, and to acquire the power of remaining a long time beneath the water. The largest pearls are generally

found in the deepest water, sometimes in three and four fathoms, and are only sought in calm weather; the smaller sort are found at the depth of two and three feet, and the oysters containing them are often driven in quantities on the beach during violent storms.

The party of pearl-divers sent by the cacique consisted of thirty Indians, with whom Vasco Nuñez sent six Spaniards as eye-witnesses. The sea, however, was so furious at that stormy season that the divers dared not venture into the deep water. Such a number of the shell-fish, however, had been driven on shore, that they collected enough to yield pearls to the value of twelve marks of gold. They were small, but exceedingly beautiful, being newly taken and uninjured by fire. A number of these shell-fish and their pearls were selected to be sent to Spain as specimens.

In reply to the enquiries of Vasco Nuñez, the cacique informed him that the coast which he saw stretching to the west, continued onwards without end, and that far to the south there was a country abounding in gold, where the inhabitants made use of certain quadrupeds to carry burdens. He moulded a figure of clay to represent these animals, which some of the Spaniards supposed to be a deer, others a camel; others a tapir; for as yet they knew nothing of the lama, the native beast of burden of South America. This was the second intimation received by Vasco Nuñez of the great empire of Peru; and, while it confirmed all that had been told him by the son of Comagre, it awakened glowing anticipations of the glorious triumphs that awaited him.

CHAPTER XII.—[1513.]

Lest any ceremonial should be wanting to secure this grand discovery to the crown of Spain, Vasco Nuñez determined to sally from the gulf and take possession of the main-land beyond. The cacique Túmaco furnished him with a canoe of state, formed from the trunk of an enormous tree, and managed by a great number of Indians. The handles of the paddles were inlaid with small pearls, a circumstance which Vasco Nuñez caused his companions to testify before the notary, that it might be reported to the sovereigns as a proof of the wealth of this newly discovered sea.*

Departing in the canoe on the 29th of October, he was piloted cautiously by the Indians along the borders of the

* Oviedo, Hist. Gen., p. 2. MS.

gulf, over drowned lands where the sea was fringed by inundated forests, and as still as a pool. Arrived at the point of the gulf, Vasco Nuñez landed on a smooth sandy beach, laved by the waters of the broad ocean, and, with buckler on arm, sword in hand, and banner displayed, again marched into the sea and took possession of it, with like ceremonials to those observed in the Gulf of St. Michael's.

The Indians now pointed to a line of land rising above the horizon about four or five leagues distant, which they described as being a great island, the principal one of an archipelago. The whole group abounded with pearls, but those taken on the coasts of this island were represented as being of immense size, many of them as large as a man's eye, and found in shell-fish as big as bucklers. This island and the surrounding cluster of small ones, they added, were under the dominion of a tyrannical and puissant cacique, who often, during the calm seasons, made descents upon the main-land with fleets of canoes, plundering and desolating the coasts, and carrying the people into captivity.

Vasco Nuñez gazed with an eager and wistful eye at this land of riches, and would have immediately undertaken an expedition to it, had not the Indians represented the danger of venturing on such a voyage in that tempestuous season, in their frail canoes. His own recent experience convinced him of the wisdom of their remonstrances. He postponed his visit, therefore, to a future occasion, when, he assured his allies, he would avenge them upon this tyrant invader, and deliver their coasts from his maraudings. In the meantime he gave to this island the name of Isla Rica, and the little archipelago surrounding it the general appellation of the Pearl Islands.

On the 3rd of November he departed from the province of Túmaco, to visit other parts of the coast. He embarked with his men in the canoes, accompanied by Chiapes and his Indians, and guided by the son of Túmaco, who had become strongly attached to the Spaniards. The young man piloted them along an arm of the sea, wide in some places, but in others obstructed by groves of mangrove trees, which grew within the water and interlaced their branches from shore to shore, so that at times the Spaniards were obliged to cut a passage with their swords.

At length they entered a great and turbulent river, which they ascended with difficulty, and, early the next morning,

surprised a village on its banks, making the cacique Teaochan prisoner; who purchased their favour and kind treatment by a quantity of gold and pearls, and an abundant supply of provisions. As it was the intention of Vasco Nuñez to abandon the shores of the Southern Ocean at this place, and to strike across the mountains for Darien, he took leave of Chiapes and of the youthful son of Túmaco, who were to return to their houses in the canoes. He sent at the same time a message to his men, whom he had left in the village of Chiapes, appointing a place in the mountains where they were to rejoin him on his way back to Darien.

The talent of Vasco Nuñez for conciliating and winning the good will of the savages is often mentioned, and to such a degree had he exerted it in the present instance that the two chieftains shed tears at parting. Their conduct had a favourable effect upon the cacique Teaochan; he entertained Vasco Nuñez with the most devoted hospitality during three days that he remained in his village; when about to depart he furnished him with a stock of provisions sufficient for several days, as his route would be over rocky and sterile mountains. He sent also a numerous band of his subjects to carry the burdens of the Spaniards. These he placed under the command of his son, whom he ordered never to separate from the strangers, nor to permit any of his men to return without the consent of Vasco Nuñez.

CHAPTER XIII.

Turning their backs upon the Southern Sea, the Spaniards now began painfully to clamber the rugged mountains on their return to Darien.

In the early part of their route an unlooked-for suffering awaited them: there was neither brook, nor fountain, nor standing pool. The burning heat, which produced intolerable thirst, had dried up all the mountain torrents, and they were tantalized by the sight of naked and dusty channels where water had once flowed in abundance. Their sufferings at length increased to such a height that many threw themselves fevered and panting upon the earth, and were ready to give up the ghost. The Indians, however, encouraged them to proceed, by hopes of speedy relief, and after a while, turning aside from the direct course, led them into a deep and narrow glen, refreshed and cooled by a fountain which bubbled out of a cleft of the rocks.

While refreshing themselves at the fountain, and reposing in the little valley, they learnt from their guides that they were in the territories of a powerful chief named Poncra, famous for his riches. The Spaniards had already heard of the golden stores of this Crœsus of the mountains, and being now refreshed and invigorated, pressed forward with eagerness for his village. The cacique and most of his people fled at their approach, but they found an earnest of his wealth in the deserted houses, amounting to the value of three thousand crowns in gold. Their avarice thus whetted, they dispatched Indians in search of Poncra, who found him trembling in his secret retreat, and partly by threats, partly by promises, prevailed upon him and three of his principal subjects to come to Vasco Nuñez. He was a savage, it is said, so hateful of aspect, so misshapen in body and deformed in all his members, that he was hideous to behold. The Spaniards endeavoured by gentle means to draw from him information of the places whence he procured his gold. He professed utter ignorance in the matter, declaring that the gold found in his village had been gathered by his predecessors in times long past, and that as he himself set no value on the metal, he had never troubled himself to seek it. The Spaniards resorted to menaces, and even, it is said, to tortures, to compel him to betray his reputed treasures, but with no better success. Disappointed in their expectations, and enraged at his supposed obstinacy, they listened too readily to charges advanced against him by certain caciques of the neighbourhood, who represented him as a monster of cruelty, and as guilty of crimes repugnant to nature;* whereupon, in the heat of the moment, they gave him and his three companions, who were said to be equally guilty, to be torn in pieces by the dogs. A rash and cruel sentence, issued on the evidence of avowed enemies; and which, however it may be palliated by the alleged horror and disgust of the Spaniards at the imputed crimes of the cacique, bears visibly the stamp of haste and passion, and remains accordingly a foul blot on the character of Vasco Nuñez.

The Spaniards staid for thirty days reposing in the village of the unfortunate Poncra, during which time they were rejoined by their companions, who had been left behind at the village of Chiapes. They were accompanied by a cacique of the mountains, who had lodged and fed them, and made them

* Peter Martyr, decad. iii. cap. 2.

presents of the value of two thousand crowns in gold. This hospitable savage approached Vasco Nuñez with a serene countenance, and taking him by the hand, "Behold," said he, "most valiant and powerful chief, I bring thee thy companions safe and well, as they entered under my roof. May he who made the thunder and lightning, and who gives us the fruits of the earth, preserve thee and thine in safety!" So saying, he raised his eyes to the sun, as if he worshipped that as his deity and the dispenser of all temporal blessings.*

Departing from this village, and being still accompanied by the Indians of Teaochan, the Spaniards now bent their course along the banks of the river Comagre, which descends the northern side of the Isthmus, and flows through the territories of the cacique of the same name. This wild stream, which in the course of ages had worn a channel through the deep clefts and ravines of the mountains, was bordered by precipices, or overhung by shagged forests; they soon abandoned it, therefore, and wandered on without any path, but guided by the Indians. They had to climb terrible precipices, and to descend into deep valleys, darkened by thick forests and beset by treacherous morasses, where, but for their guides they might have been smothered in the mire.

In the course of this rugged journey, they suffered excessively in consequence of their own avarice. They had been warned of the sterility of the country, and of the necessity of providing amply for the journey. When they came to lade the Indians, however, who bore their burdens, their only thought was how to convey the most treasure; and they grudged even a slender supply of provisions, as taking up the place of an equal weight of gold. The consequences were soon felt. The Indians could carry but small burdens, and at the same time assisted to consume the scanty stock of food which formed part of their load. Scarcity and famine ensued, and relief was rarely to be procured, for the villages on this elevated part of the mountains were scattered and poor, and nearly destitute of provisions. They held no communication with each other; each contenting itself with the scanty produce of its own fields and forest. Some were entirely deserted; at other places, the inhabitants, forced from their retreats, implored pardon, and declared they had hidden themselves through shame, not having the means of properly

* Herrera, decad. i. lib. x. cap. 4.

entertaining such celestial visitors. They brought peace-offerings of gold, but no provisions. For once the Spaniards found that even their darling gold could fail to cheer their drooping spirits. Their sufferings from hunger became intense, and many of their Indian companions sank down and perished by the way. At length they reached a village where they were enabled to obtain supplies, and where they remained thirty days, to recruit their wasted strength.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE Spaniards had now to pass through the territories of Tubanamà, the most potent and warlike cacique of the mountains. This was the same chieftain of whom a formidable character had been given by the young Indian prince, who first informed Vasco Nuñez of the southern sea. He had erroneously represented the dominions of Tubanamà as lying beyond the mountains; and, while he dwelt upon the quantities of gold to be found in them, had magnified the dangers of any attempt to pass their borders. The name of this redoubtable cacique was in fact a terror throughout the country; and when Vasco Nuñez looked round upon his handful of pale and emaciated followers, he doubted whether even the superiority of their weapons, and their military skill, would enable them to cope with Tubanamà and his armies in open contest. He resolved, therefore, upon a perilous stratagem. When he made it known to his men, every one pressed forward to engage in it. Choosing seventy of the most vigorous, he ordered the rest to maintain their post in the village.

As soon as night had fallen, he departed secretly with his chosen band, and made his way with such rapidity through the forests and defiles of the mountains, that he arrived in the neighbourhood of the residence of Tubanamà by the following evening, though at a distance of two regular days' journey.

There waiting until midnight he assailed the village suddenly, and captured the cacique and his whole family, in which were eighty females. Tubanamà lost all presence of mind, and wept bitterly. The Indian allies beholding their once dreaded enemy thus fallen and captive, urged that he should be put to death, accusing him of various crimes and cruelties. Vasco Nuñez pretended to listen to their prayers, and gave orders that his captive should be tied hand and foot, and given to the dogs. The cacique approached him trembling, and

laid his hand upon the pommel of his sword. "Who can pretend," said he, "to strive with one who bears this weapon, which can cleave a man asunder with a blow? Ever since thy fame has reached among these mountains have I reverenced thy valour. Spare my life, and thou shalt have all the gold I can procure."

Vasco Nuñez, whose anger was assumed, was readily pacified. As soon as the day dawned, the cacique gave him armlets and other jewels of gold to the value of three thousand crowns, and sent messengers throughout his dominions ordering his subjects to aid in paying his ransom. The poor Indians, with their accustomed loyalty, hastened in crowds, bringing their golden ornaments, until in the course of three days they had produced an amount equal to six thousand crowns. This done, Vasco Nuñez set the cacique at liberty, bestowing on him several European trinkets, with which he considered himself richer than he had been with all his gold. Nothing would draw from him, however, the disclosure of the mines whence this treasure was procured. He declared that it came from the territories of his neighbours, where gold and pearls were to be found in abundance; but that his lands produced nothing of the kind. Vasco Nuñez doubted his sincerity, and secretly caused the brooks and rivers in his dominions to be searched, where gold was found in such quantities, that he determined, at a future time, to found two settlements in the neighbourhood.

On parting with Tubanamà, the cacique sent his son with the Spaniards to learn their language and religion. It is said, also, that the Spaniards carried off his eighty women; but of this particular fact Oviedo, who writes with the papers of Vasco Nuñez before him, says nothing. He affirms, generally, however, that the Spaniards, throughout this expedition, were not scrupulous in their dealings with the wives and daughters of the Indians; and adds, that in this their commander set them the example.*

Having returned to the village where he had left the greater part of his men, Vasco Nuñez resumed his homeward march. His people were feeble and exhausted, and several of them sick; so that some had to be carried and others led by the arms. He himself was part of the time afflicted by a fever, and had to be borne in a hammock on the shoulders of the Indians.

* Oviedo, Hist. Gen., Part II. cap. 4. MS.

Proceeding thus slowly and toilfully, they at length arrived on the northern sea-coast, at the territories of their ally, Comagre. The old cacique was dead, and had been succeeded by his son, the same intelligent youth who had first given information of the southern sea and the kingdom of Peru. The young chief, who had embraced Christianity, received them with great hospitality, making them presents of gold. Vasco Nuñez gave him trinkets in return, and a shirt and a soldier's cloak; with which, says Peter Martyr, he thought himself half a god among his naked countrymen. After having reposed for a few days, Vasco Nuñez proceeded to Ponca, where he heard that a ship and caravel had arrived at Darien from Hispaniola, with reinforcements and supplies. Hastening, therefore, to Coyba, the territories of his ally, Careta, he embarked on the 18th of January, 1514, with twenty of his men, in the brigantine which he had left there, and arrived at Santa Maria de la Antigua, in the river of Darien, on the following day. All the inhabitants came forth to receive him; and when they heard the news of the great southern sea, and of his returning from its shores laden with pearls and gold, there were no bounds to their joy. He immediately dispatched the ship and caravel to Coyba for the companions left behind, who brought with them the remaining booty, consisting of gold and pearls, mantles, hammocks, and other articles of cotton, and a great number of captives of both sexes. A fifth of the spoil was set apart for the crown; the rest was shared, in just proportions, among those who had been in the expedition, and those who had remained at Darien. All were contented with their allotment, and elated with the prospect of still greater gain from future enterprises.

Thus ended one of the most remarkable expeditions of the early discoverers. The intrepidity of Vasco Nuñez in penetrating, with a handful of men, far into the interior of a wild and mountainous country, peopled by warlike tribes; his skill in managing his band of rough adventurers, stimulating their valour, enforcing their obedience, and attaching their affections, show him to have possessed great qualities as a general. We are told that he was always foremost in peril, and the last to quit the field. He shared the toils and dangers of the meanest of his followers, treating them with frank affability; watching, fighting, fasting, and labouring with them; visiting and consoling such as were sick or infirm, and dividing all his gains with fairness and liberality. He was chargeable at

times with acts of bloodshed and injustice, but it is probable that these were often called for as measures of safety and precaution; he certainly offended less against humanity than most of the early discoverers; and the unbounded amity and confidence reposed in him by the natives, when they became intimately acquainted with his character, speak strongly in favour of his kind treatment of them.

The character of Vasco Nuñez had, in fact, risen with his circumstances, and now assumed a nobleness and grandeur from the discovery he had made, and the important charge it had devolved upon him. He no longer felt himself a mere soldier of fortune, at the head of a band of adventurers, but a great commander conducting an immortal enterprise. "Behold," says old Peter Martyr, "Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, at once transformed from a rash royster to a politic and discreet captain:" and thus it is that men are often made by their fortunes; that is to say, their latent qualities are brought out, and shaped and strengthened by events, and by the necessity of every exertion to cope with the greatness of their destiny.

CHAPTER XV.

Vasco Nunez de Balboa now flattered himself that he had made a discovery calculated to silence all his enemies at court, and to elevate him to the highest favour with his sovereign. He wrote letters to the king, giving a detail of his expedition, and setting forth all that he had seen or heard of this Southern Sea, and of the rich countries upon its borders. Beside the royal fifths of the profits of the expedition, he prepared a present for the sovereign, in the name of himself and his companions, consisting of the largest and most precious pearls they had collected. As a trusty and intelligent envoy to bear these tidings, he chose Pedro de Arbolancha, an old and tried friend, who had accompanied him in his toils and dangers, and was well acquainted with all his transactions.

The fate of Vasco Nuñez furnishes a striking instance how prosperity and adversity, how even life and death, hang balanced upon a point of time, and are affected by the improvement or neglect of moments. Unfortunately the ship which was to convey the messenger to Spain lingered in port until the beginning of March; a delay which had a fatal influence on the fortunes of Vasco Nuñez. It is necessary here to cast an eye back upon the events which had taken

place in Spain while he was employed in his conquests and discoveries.

The Bachelor Enciso had arrived in Castile full of his wrongs and indignities. He had friends at court, who aided him in gaining a ready hearing, and he lost not a moment in availing himself of it. He declaimed eloquently upon the alleged usurpation of Vasco Nuñez, and represented him as governing the colony by force and fraud. It was in vain that the alcalde Zamudio, the ancient colleague and the envoy of Vasco Nuñez, attempted to speak in his defence; he was unable to cope with the facts and arguments of the Bachelor, who was a pleader by profession, and now pleaded his own cause. The king determined to send a new governor to Darien, with power to enquire into and remedy all abuses. For this office he chose Don Pedro Arias Davila, commonly called Pedrarias.* He was a native of Segovia, who had been brought up in the royal household, and had distinguished himself as a brave soldier, both in the war of Granada and at the taking of Oran and Bugia in Africa. He possessed those personal accomplishments which captivate the soldiery, and was called *el Galán*, for his gallant array and courtly demeanour, and *el Justador*, or *the Tilter*, for his dexterity in jousts and tournaments. These, it must be admitted, were not the qualifications most adapted for the government of rude and factious colonies in a wilderness; but he had an all-powerful friend in the Bishop Fonseca. The bishop was as thorough-going in patronage as in persecution. He assured the king that Pedrarias had understanding equal to his valour; that he was as capable of managing the affairs of peace as of war, and that, having been brought up in the royal household, his loyalty might be implicitly relied on.

Scarcely had Don Pedrarias been appointed, when Cayzedo and Colmenares arrived on their mission from Darien, to communicate the intelligence received from the son of the cacique Comagre, of the Southern Sea beyond the mountains, and to ask one thousand men to enable Vasco Nuñez to make the discovery.

The avarice and ambition of Ferdinand were inflamed by the tidings. He rewarded the bearers of the intelligence, and, after consulting with Bishop Fonseca, resolved to dispatch immediately a powerful armada, with twelve hundred men under the command of Pedrarias, to accomplish the enterprise.

* By the English historians he has generally been called Davila.

Just about this time the famous Gonsalvo Hernandez de Cordova, commonly called the Great Captain, was preparing to return to Naples, where the allies of Spain had experienced a signal defeat, and had craved the assistance of this renowned general to retrieve their fortunes. The chivalry of Spain thronged to enlist under the banner of Gonsalvo. The Spanish nobles, with their accustomed prodigality, sold or mortgaged their estates to buy gorgeous armour, silks, brocades, and other articles of martial pomp and luxury, that they might figure, with becoming magnificence, in the campaigns of Italy. The armament was on the point of sailing for Naples with this host of proud and gallant spirits, when the jealous mind of Ferdinand took offence at the enthusiasm thus shown towards his general, and he abruptly countermanded the expedition. The Spanish cavaliers were overwhelmed with disappointment at having their dreams of glory thus suddenly dispelled; when, as if to console them, the enterprise of Pedrarias was set on foot, and opened a different career of adventure. The very idea of an unknown sea and splendid empire, where never European ship had sailed nor foot had trodden, broke upon the imagination with the vague wonders of an Arabian tale. Even the countries already known, in the vicinity of the settlement of Darien, were described in the usual terms of exaggeration. Gold was said to lie on the surface of the ground, or to be gathered with nets out of the brooks and rivers; insomuch that the region hitherto called Terra Firma, now received the pompous and delusive appellation of Castilla del Oro, or Golden Castile.

Excited by these reports, many of the youthful cavaliers, who had prepared for the Italian campaign, now offered themselves as volunteers to Don Pedrarias. He accepted their services, and appointed Seville as the place of assemblage. The streets of that ancient city soon swarmed with young and noble cavaliers splendidly arrayed, full of spirits, and eager for the sailing of the Indian armada. Pedrarias, on his arrival at Seville, made a general review of his forces, and was embarrassed to find that the number amounted to three thousand. He had been limited in his first armament to twelve hundred; on representing the nature of the case, however, the number was extended to fifteen hundred; but through influence, entreaty, and stratagem, upwards of two thousand eventually embarked.* Happy did he think

* Oviedo, lib. ii. cap. 7. MS

himself who could in any manner, and by any means, get admitted on board of the squadron. Nor was this eagerness for the enterprise confined merely to young, and buoyant, and ambitious adventurers; we are told that there were many covetous old men, who offered to go at their own expense, without seeking any pay from the king. Thus every eye was turned with desire to this squadron of modern argonauts, as it lay anchored on the bosom of the Guadalquiver.

The pay and appointments of Don Pedrarias Davila were on the most liberal scale, and no expense was spared in fitting out the armament: for the objects of the expedition were colonization and conquest. Artillery and powder were procured from Malaga. Beside the usual weapons, such as muskets, cross-bows, swords, pikes, lances, and Neapolitan targets, there was armour devised of quilted cotton, as being light and better adapted to the climate, and sufficiently proof against the weapons of the Indians; and wooden bucklers from the Canary islands, to ward off the poisoned arrows of the Caribs.

Santa Maria de la Antigua was, by royal ordinance, elevated into the metropolitan city of Golden Castile, and a Franciscan friar, named Juan de Quevedo, was appointed as bishop, with powers to decide in all cases of conscience. A number of friars were nominated to accompany him, and he was provided with the necessary furniture and vessels for a chapel.

Among the various regulations made for the good of the infant colony, it was ordained that no lawyers should be admitted there, it having been found at Hispaniola and elsewhere, that they were detrimental to the welfare of the settlements, by fomenting disputes and litigations. The judicial affairs were to be entirely confided to the Licentiate Gaspar de Espinosa, who was to officiate as alcalde mayor or chief judge.

Don Pedrarias had intended to leave his wife in Spain. Her name was Doña Isabella de Bobadilla; she was niece to the Marchioness de Moya, a great favourite to the late Queen Isabella, who had been instrumental in persuading her royal mistress to patronize Columbus.* Her niece partook of her

* This was the same Marchioness de Moya, who during the war of Granada, while the court and royal army were encamped before Malaga, was mistaken for the queen by a Moorish fanatic, and had nearly fallen beneath his dagger.

high and generous nature. She refused to remain behind in selfish security, but declared that she would accompany her husband in every peril, whether by sea or land. This self-devotion is the more remarkable when it is considered that she was past the romantic period of youth; and that she left behind her in Spain a family of four sons and four daughters.

Don Pedrarias was instructed to use great indulgence towards the people of Darien, who had been the followers of Nicuesa, and to remit the royal tithe of all the gold they might have collected previous to his arrival. Towards Vasco Nuñez de Balboa alone the royal countenance was stern and severe. Pedrarias was to depose him from his assumed authority, and to call him to strict account before the alcalde mayor, Gaspar de Espinosa, for his treatment of the Bachelor Enciso.

The splendid fleet, consisting of fifteen sail, weighed anchor at St. Lucar on the 12th of April, 1514, and swept proudly out of the Guadalquiver, thronged with chivalrous adventurers for Golden Castile. But a short time elapsed after its departure, when Pedro Arbolancha arrived with the tardy missions of Vasco Nuñez. Had he arrived a few days sooner, how different might have been the fortune of his friend!

He was immediately admitted to the royal presence, where he announced the adventurous and successful expedition of Vasco Nuñez, and laid before the king the pearls and golden ornaments brought as the first fruits of the discovery. King Ferdinand listened with charmed attention to this tale of unknown seas and wealthy realms added to his empire. It filled, in fact, the imaginations of most sage and learned with golden dreams and anticipations of unbounded riches. Old Peter Martyr, who received letters from his friends in Darien, and communicated by word of mouth with those who came from thence, writes to Leo the Tenth in exulting terms of this event. "Spain," says he, "will hereafter be able to satisfy with pearls the greedy appetite of such as in wanton pleasures are like unto Cleopatra and Æsopus; so that henceforth we shall neither envy nor reverence the nice fruitfulness of Trapoban or the Red Sea. The Spaniards will not need hereafter to mine and dig far into the earth, nor to cut asunder mountains in quest of gold, but will find it plentifully, in a manner, on the upper crust of the earth, or in the sands of rivers dried up by the heats of summer. Certainly the reverend antiquity obtained not so great a benefit of

nature, nor even aspired to the knowledge thereof, since never man before, from the known world, penetrated to these unknown regions."*

The tidings of this discovery made all Spain resound with the praises of Vasco Nuñez; and, from being considered a lawless and desperate adventurer, he was lauded to the skies as a worthy successor to Columbus. The king repented of the harshness of his late measures towards him, and ordered the Bishop Fonseca to devise some mode of rewarding his transcendant services.

CHAPTER XVI.

While honours and rewards were preparing in Europe for Vasco Nuñez, that indefatigable commander, inspired by his fortunes with redoubled zeal and loftier ambition, was exercising the paternal forethought and discretion of a patriotic governor over the country subjected to his rule. His most strenuous exertions were directed to bring the neighbourhood of Darien into such a state of cultivation as might render the settlement independent of Europe for supplies. The town was situated on the banks of a river, and contained upwards of two hundred houses and cabins. Its population amounted to five hundred and fifteen Europeans, all men, and fifteen hundred Indians, male and female. Orchards and gardens had been laid out, where European as well as native fruits and vegetables were cultivated, and already gave promise of future abundance. Vasco Nuñez devised all kinds of means to keep up the spirits of his people. On holidays they had their favourite national sports and games, and particularly tilting matches, of which chivalrous amusement the Spaniards in those days were extravagantly fond. Sometimes he gratified their restless and roving habits by sending them in expeditions to various parts of the country, to acquire a knowledge of its resources, and to strengthen his sway over the natives. He was so successful in securing the amity or exciting the awe of the Indian tribes, that a Spaniard might go singly about the land in perfect safety; while his own followers were zealous in their devotion to him, both from admiration of his past exploits and from hopes of soon being led by him to new discoveries and conquests. Peter Martyr, in his letter to Leo the Tenth, speaks in high terms of these "old soldiers of Darien," the remnants of those well-tried adventurers who

* P Martyr, decad. 3. cap. iii. Lok's translation.

had followed the fortunes of Ojeda, Nicuesa, and Vasco Nuñez. "They were hardened," says he, "to abide all sorrows, and were exceedingly tolerant of labour, heat, hunger, and watching, insomuch that they merrily make their boast that they have observed a longer and sharper Lent than even your Holiness enjoined, since for the space of four years, their food has been herbs and fruits, with now and then fish, and very seldom flesh."*

Such were the hardy and well-seasoned veterans that were under the sway of Vasco Nuñez; and the colony gave signs of rising in prosperity under his active and fostering management, when, in the month of June, the fleet of Don Pedrarias Davila arrived in the Gulf of Uraba.

The Spanish cavaliers who accompanied the new governor were eager to get on shore, and to behold the anticipated wonders of the land; but Pedrarias, knowing the resolute character of Vasco Nuñez, and the devotion of his followers, apprehended some difficulty in getting possession of the colony. Anchoring, therefore, about a league and a half from the settlement, he sent a messenger on shore to announce his arrival. The envoy, having heard so much in Spain of the prowess and exploits of Vasco Nuñez and the riches of Golden Castile, expected, no doubt, to find a blustering warrior, maintaining barbaric state in the government which he had usurped. Great was his astonishment therefore to find this redoubtable hero a plain, unassuming man, clad in a cotton frock and drawers, and hempen sandals, directing and aiding the labour of several Indians who were thatching a cottage in which he resided.

The messenger approached him respectfully, and announced the arrival of Don Pedrarias Davila as governor of the country.

Whatever Vasco Nuñez may have felt at this intelligence, he suppressed his emotions, and answered the messenger with great discretion; "Tell Don Pedrarias Davila," said he, "that he is welcome, and I congratulate him on his safe arrival, and am ready, with all who are here, to obey his orders."

The little community of rough and daring adventurers was in an uproar when they found a new governor had arrived. Some of the most zealous adherents of Vasco Nuñez were disposed to sally forth, sword in hand, and repel the intruder; but they were restrained by their more considerate chieftain, who prepared to receive the new governor with all due submission.

* P. Martyr, decad. 3. cap. iii. Lok's translation.

Pedrarias disembarked on the 30th of June, accompanied by his heroic wife, Doña Isabella; who, according to old Peter Martyr, had sustained the roarings and rages of the ocean with no less stout courage than either her husband or the mariners who had been brought up among the surges of the sea.

Pedrarias set out for the embryo city at the head of two thousand men, all well armed. He led his wife by the hand, and on the other side of him was the bishop of Darien in his robes; while a brilliant train of youthful cavaliers, in glittering armour and brocade, formed a kind of body-guard.

All this pomp and splendour formed a striking contrast with the humble state of Vasco Nuñez, who came forth unarmed, in simple attire, accompanied by his counsellors and a handful of the "old soldiers of Darien," scarred and battered, and grown half wild in Indian warfare, but without weapons, and in garments much the worse for wear.

Vasco Nuñez saluted Don Pedrarias Davila with profound reverence, and promised him implicit obedience, both in his own name and in the name of the community. Having entered the town, he conducted his distinguished guests to his straw-thatched habitation, where he had caused a repast to be prepared of such cheer as his means afforded, consisting of roots and fruits, maize and cassava bread, with no other beverage than water from the river;—a sorry palace and a meagre banquet in the eyes of the gay cavaliers, who had anticipated far other things from the usurper of Golden Castile. Vasco Nuñez, however, acquitted himself in his humble wigwam with the courtesy and hospitality of a prince, and showed that the dignity of an entertainment depends more upon the giver than the feast. In the meantime a plentiful supply of European provisions was landed from the fleet, and a temporary abundance was diffused through the colony.

CHAPTER XVII.

On the day after his entrance into Darien, Don Pedrarias held a private conference with Vasco Nuñez in presence of the historian Oviedo, who had come out from Spain as public notary of the colony. The governor commenced by assuring him that he was instructed by the king to treat him with great favour and distinction, to consult him about the affairs of the colony, and to apply to him for information relative to the surrounding country. At the same time he professed the

most amicable feelings on his own part, and an intention to be guided by his counsels in all public measures.

Vasco Nuñez was of a frank, confiding nature, and was so captivated by this unexpected courtesy and kindness, that he threw off all caution and reserve, and opened his whole soul to the politic courtier. Pedrarias availed himself of this communicative mood to draw from him a minute and able statement in writing, detailing the circumstances of the colony, and the information collected respecting various parts of the country; the route by which he had traversed the mountains; his discovery of the South Sea; the situation and reputed wealth of the Pearl Islands; the rivers and ravines most productive of gold; together with the names and territories of the various caciques with whom he had made treaties.

When Pedrarias had thus beguiled the unsuspecting soldier of all the information necessary for his purposes, he dropped the mask, and within a few days proclaimed a judicial scrutiny into the conduct of Vasco Nuñez and his officers. It was to be conducted by the Licentiate Gaspar de Espinosa, who had come as alcalde mayor, or chief judge. The Licentiate was an inexperienced lawyer, having but recently left the university of Salamanca. He appears to have been somewhat flexible in his opinions, and prone to be guided or governed by others. At the outset of his career he was much under the influence of Quevedo, the bishop of Darien. Now, as Vasco Nuñez knew the importance of this prelate in the colony, he had taken care to secure him to his interests by paying him the most profound deference and respect, and by giving him a share in his agricultural enterprises and his schemes of traffic. In fact the good bishop looked upon him as one eminently calculated to promote his temporal prosperity, to which he was by no means insensible. Under the influence of the prelate, therefore, the alcalde commenced his investigation in the most favourable manner. He went largely into an examination of the discoveries of Vasco Nuñez, and of the nature and extent of his various services. The governor was alarmed at the course which the inquiry was taking. If thus conducted, it would but serve to illustrate the merits and elevate the reputation of the man whom it was his interest and intent to ruin. To counteract it, he immediately set on foot a secret and invidious course of interrogatories of the followers of Nicuesa and Ojeda, to draw from them testimony which might support the charge against

Vasco Nuñez of usurpation and tyrannical abuse of power. The bishop and the alcalde received information of the inquisition, carried on thus secretly, and without their sanction. They remonstrated warmly against it, as an infringement of their rights, being coadjutors in the government; and they spurned the testimony of the followers of Ojeda and Nicuesa, as dictated and discoloured by ancient enmity. Vasco Nuñez was therefore acquitted by them of the criminal charges made against him, though he remained involved in difficulties from the suits brought against him by individuals, for losses and damages occasioned by his measures.

Pedrarias was incensed at this acquittal, and insisted upon the guilt of Vasco Nuñez, which he pretended to have established to his conviction by his secret investigations; and he even determined to send him in chains to Spain, to be tried for the death of Nicuesa, and for other imputed offences.

It was not the inclination or the interest of the bishop that Vasco Nuñez should leave the colony; he therefore managed to awaken the jealous apprehensions of the governor as to the effect of his proposed measure. He intimated that the arrival of Vasco Nuñez in Spain would be signalized by triumph rather than disgrace. By that time his grand discoveries would be blazoned to the world, and would atone for all his faults. He would be received with enthusiasm by the nation, with favour by the king, and would probably be sent back to the colony clothed with new dignity and power.

Pedrarias was placed in a perplexing dilemma by these suggestions; his violent proceedings against Vasco Nuñez were also in some measure restrained by the influence of his wife, Doña Isabel de Bobadilla, who felt a great respect and sympathy for the discoverer. In his perplexity, the wily governor adopted a middle course. He resolved to detain Vasco Nuñez at Darien under a cloud of imputation, which would gradually impair his popularity; while his patience and means would be silently consumed by protracted and expensive litigation. In the meantime, however, the property which had been sequestrated was restored to him.

While Pedrarias treated Vasco Nuñez with this severity, he failed not to avail himself of the plans of that able commander. The first of these was to establish a line of posts across the mountains between Darien and the South Sea. It was his eager desire to execute this before any order should arrive from the king in favour of his predecessor, in order

that he might have the credit of having colonized the coast, and Vasco Nuñez, merely that of having discovered and visited it.* Before he could complete these arrangements, however, unlooked-for calamities fell upon the settlement, that for a time interrupted every project, and made every one turn his thoughts merely to his own security.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The town of Darien was situated in a deep valley surrounded by lofty hills, which, while they kept off the breezes so grateful in a sultry climate, reflected and concentrated the rays of the sun, insomuch, that at noontide the heat was insupportable; the river which passed it was shallow, with a muddy channel and bordered by marshes; overhanging forests added to the general humidity, and the very soil on which the town was built was of such a nature, that on digging to the depth of a foot there would ooze forth brackish water.†

It is not matter of surprise that a situation of this kind, in a tropical climate, should be fatal to the health of Europeans. Many who had recently arrived were swept off speedily; Pedrarias himself fell sick and was removed, with most of his people, to a healthier spot on the river Corobari; the malady, however, continued to increase. The provisions brought out in the ships had been partly damaged by the sea, the residue grew scanty, and the people were put upon short allowance; the debility thus produced increased the ravages of disease: at length the provisions were exhausted, and the horrors of absolute famine ensued.

Every one was more or less affected by these calamities; even the veterans of the colony quailed beneath them; but to none were they more fatal than to the crowd of youthful cavaliers who had once glittered so gaily about the streets of Seville, and had come out to the New World elated with the most sanguine expectations. From the very moment of their landing they had been disheartened at the savage scenes around them, and disgusted with the squalid life they were doomed to lead. They shrunk with disdain from the labours with which alone wealth was to be procured in this land of gold and pearls, and were impatient of the humble exertions necessary for the maintenance of existence. As the famine increased their case became desperate, for they were unable to help themselves, and their rank and dignity commanded

* Oviedo, Hist. Ind., p. 2. cap. viii. † Peter Martyr, decad. iii. cap. 6

neither deference nor aid at a time when common misery made every one selfish. Many of them, who had mortgaged estates in Spain to fit themselves out sumptuously for their Italian campaign, now perished for lack of food. Some would be seen bartering a robe of crimson silk, or some garment of rich brocade, for a pound of Indian bread or European biscuit; others sought to satisfy the cravings of hunger with the herbs and roots of the field, and one of the principal cavaliers absolutely expired of hunger in the public streets.

In this wretched way, and in the short space of one month, perished seven hundred of the little army of youthful and buoyant spirits who had embarked with Pedrarias. The bodies of some remained for a day or two without sepulture, their friends not having sufficient strength to bury them. Unable to remedy the evil, Pedrarias gave permission for his men to flee from it. A ship-load of starving adventurers departed for Cuba, where some of them joined the standard of Diego Velasquez, who was colonizing that island; others made their way back to Spain, where they arrived broken in health, in spirits, and in fortune.

CHAPTER XIX.

The departure of so many hungry mouths was some temporary relief to the colony, and Pedrarias, having recovered from his malady, bestirred himself to send expeditions in various directions for the purpose of foraging the country and collecting treasure.

These expeditions, however, were intrusted to his own favourites and partisans, while Vasco Nuñez, the man most competent to carry them into effect, remained idle and neglected. A judicial inquiry, tardily carried on, overshadowed him, and though it substantiated nothing, served to embarrass his actions, to cool his friends, and to give him the air of a public delinquent. Indeed to the other evils of the colony was now added that of excessive litigation, arising out of the disputes concerning the government of Vasco Nuñez, and which increased to such a degree, that, according to the report of the alcalde Espinosa, if the lawsuits should be divided among the people, at least forty would fall to each man's share.* This, too, was in a colony into which the government had commanded that no lawyer should be admitted!

* Herrera, decad. ii. lib. i. cap. 1.

Wearied and irritated by the check given to his favourite enterprises, and confident of the ultimate approbation of the king, Vasco Nuñez determined to take his fortunes in his own hands, and to prosecute in secret his grand project of exploring the regions beyond the mountains. For this purpose, he privately dispatched one Andres Garabito to Cuba to enlist men, and make provisions for an expedition across the isthmus, from Nombre de Dios, and for the founding a colony on the shores of the Southern Ocean, whence he proposed to extend his discoveries by sea and land.

While Vasco Nuñez awaited the return of Garabito, he had the mortification of beholding various of his colonizing plans pursued and marred by Pedrarias. Among other enterprises the governor dispatched his lieutenant-general, Juan de Ayora, at the head of four hundred men, to visit the provinces of those caciques with whom Vasco Nuñez had sojourned and made treaties on his expedition to the Southern Sea. Ayora partook of the rash and domineering spirit of Pedrarias, and harassed and devastated the countries which he pretended to explore. He was received with amity and confidence by various caciques who had formed treaties with Vasco Nuñez, but he repaid their hospitality with the basest ingratitude, seizing upon their property, taking from them their wives and daughters, and often torturing them to make them reveal their hidden or supposed treasures. Among those treated with this perfidy, we grieve to enumerate the youthful cacique who first gave Vasco Nuñez information of the sea beyond the mountains.

The enormities of Ayora and of other captains of Pedrarias produced the usual effect; the natives were roused to desperate resistance; caciques, who had been faithful friends, were converted into furious enemies, and the expedition ended in disappointment and disaster.

The adherents of Vasco Nuñez did not fail to contrast these disastrous enterprises with those which had been conducted with so much glory and advantage by their favourite commander, and their sneers and reproaches had such an effect upon the jealous and irritable disposition of Pedrarias, that he determined to employ their idol in a service likely to be attended with defeat, and to impair his popularity. None seemed more fitting for the purpose than an expedition to Dobayba, where he had once already attempted in vain to

penetrate, and where so many of his followers had fallen victims to the stratagems and assaults of the natives.

CHAPTER XX.

The rich mines of Dobayba, and the treasures of its golden temple, had continued a favourite theme with the Spanish adventurers. It was ascertained that Vasco Nuñez had stopped short of the wealthy region on his former expedition, and had mistaken a frontier village for the residence of the cacique. The enterprise of the temple was, therefore, still to be achieved, and it was solicited by several of the cavaliers in the train of Pedrarias, with all the chivalrous ardour of that romantic age. Indeed common report had invested the enterprise with difficulties and danger sufficient to stimulate the ambition of the keenest seeker of adventure. The savages who inhabited that part of the country were courageous and adroit; they fought by water as well as by land, forming ambuscades with their canoes in the bays and rivers. The country was intersected by dreary fens and morasses, infested by all kinds of reptiles. Clouds of gnats and musquitoes filled the air; there were large bats also, supposed to have the baneful properties of the vampire; alligators lurked in the waters, and the gloomy recesses of the fens were said to be the dens of dragons!*

Besides these objects of terror, both true and fabulous, the old historian, Peter Martyr, makes mention of another monstrous animal, said to infest this golden region, and which deserves to be cited, as showing the imaginary dangers with which the active minds of the discoverers peopled the unexplored wilderness around them.

According to the tales of the Indians, there had occurred, shortly before the arrival of the Spaniards, a violent tempest, or rather hurricane in the neighbourhood of Dobayba, which demolished houses, tore up trees by the roots, and laid waste whole forests. When the tempest had subsided, and the affrighted inhabitants ventured to look abroad, they found that two monstrous animals had been brought into the country by the hurricane. According to their accounts they were not unlike the ancient harpies, and one being smaller than the other was supposed to be its young. They had the faces of women, with the claws and wings of eagles, and were of such

* P. Martyr.

prodigious size that the very boughs of the trees on which they alighted broke beneath them. They would swoop down and carry off a man as a hawk would bear off a chicken, flying with him to the tops of the mountains, where they would tear him in pieces and devour him. For some time they were the scourge and terror of the land, until the Indians succeeded in killing the old one by stratagem, and hanging her on their long spears, bore her through all the towns to assuage the alarm of the inhabitants. The younger harpy, says the Indian tradition, was never seen afterwards.*

Such were some of the perils, true and fabulous, with which the land of Dobayba was said to abound; and, in fact, the very Indians had such a dread of its dark and dismal morasses, that, in their journeyings they carefully avoided them, preferring the circuitous and rugged paths of the mountains.

Several of the youthful cavaliers, as has been observed, were stimulated rather than deterred by these dangers, and contended for the honour of the expedition; but Pedrarias selected his rival for the task, hoping, as has been hinted, that it would involve him in disgrace. Vasco Nuñez promptly accepted the enterprise, for his pride was concerned in its success. Two hundred resolute men were given to him for the purpose; but his satisfaction was diminished when he found that Luis Carillo, an officer of Pedrarias, who had failed in a perilous enterprise, was associated with him in the command.

Few particulars remain to us of the events of this affair. They embarked in a fleet of canoes, and, traversing the gulf, arrived at the river which flowed down from the region of Dobayba. They were not destined, however, to achieve the enterprise of the golden temple. As they were proceeding rather confidently and unguardedly up the river, they were surprised and surrounded by a swarm of canoes, filled with armed savages, which darted out from lurking places along the shores. Some of the Indians assailed them with lances, others with a cloud of arrows, while some, plunging into the water, endeavoured to overturn their canoes. In this way one-half of the Spaniards were killed or drowned. Among the number fell Luis Carillo, pierced through the breast by an Indian lance. Vasco Nuñez himself was wounded, and had great difficulty in escaping to the shore with the residue of his forces.

The Indians pursued him, and kept up a skirmishing attack,

* P. Martyr, decad. vii. cap 10.

but he beat them off until the night, when he silently abandoned the shore of the river, and directed his retreat towards Darien. It is easier to imagine than to describe the toils, and dangers, and horrors which beset him and the remnant of his men as they traversed rugged mountains, or struggled through the fearful morasses of which they had heard such terrific tales. At length they succeeded in reaching the settlement of Darien.

The partisans of Pedrarias exulted in seeing Vasco Nuñez return thus foiled and wounded, and taunted his adherents with their previous boastings. The latter, however, laid all the blame upon the unfortunate Carillo. "Vasco Nuñez," said they, "had always absolute command in his former enterprises, but in this he has been embarrassed by an associate. Had the expedition been confided to him alone, the event had been far different."

CHAPTER XXI.—[1515.]

About this time dispatches arrived from Spain which promised to give a new turn to the fortunes of Vasco Nuñez and to the general affairs of the colony. They were written after the tidings of the discovery of the South Sea, and the subjugation of so many important provinces of the Isthmus. In a letter addressed to Vasco Nuñez, the king expressed his high sense of his merits and services, and constituted him Adelantado of the South Sea, and Governor of the provinces of Panama and Coyba, though subordinate to the general command of Pedrarias. A letter was likewise written by the king to Pedrarias, informing him of this appointment, and ordering him to consult Vasco Nuñez on all public affairs of importance. This was a humiliating blow to the pride and consequence of Pedrarias, but he hoped to parry it. In the meantime, as all letters from Spain were first delivered into his hands, he withheld that intended for Vasco Nuñez, until he should determine what course of conduct to adopt. The latter, however, heard of the circumstance, as did his friend the Bishop of Darien. The prelate made loud complaints of this interruption of the royal correspondence, which he denounced, even from the pulpit, as an outrage upon the rights of the subject, and an act of disobedience to the sovereign.

Upon this the governor called a council of his public officers; and, after imparting the contents of his letter, requested their opinion as to the propriety of investing Vasco Nuñez with the

dignities thus granted to him. The alcalde mayor, Espinosa, had left the party of the bishop, and was now devoted to the governor. He insisted, vehemently, that the offices ought in no wise to be given to Vasco Nuñez, until the king should be informed of the result of the inquest still going on against him. In this he was warmly supported by the treasurer and the accountant. The bishop replied, indignantly, that it was presumptuous and disloyal in them to dispute the commands of the king, and to interfere with the rewards conscientiously given by him to a meritorious subject. In this way, he added, they were defeating, by their passions, the grateful intentions of their sovereign. The governor was overawed by the honest warmth of the bishop, and professed to accord with him in opinion. The council lasted until midnight; and it was finally agreed that the titles and dignities should be conferred on Vasco Nuñez on the following day.*

Pedrarias and his officers reflected, however, that if the jurisdiction implied by these titles were absolutely vested in Vasco Nuñez, the government of Darien and Castilla del Oro would virtually be reduced to a trifling matter; they resolved, therefore, to adopt a middle course; to grant him the empty titles, but to make him give security not to enter upon the actual government of the territories in question, until Pedrarias should give him permission. The bishop and Vasco Nuñez assented to this arrangement; satisfied, for the present, with securing the titles, and trusting to the course of events to get dominion over the territories.†

The new honours of Vasco Nuñez were now promulgated to the world, and he was every where addressed by the title of Adelantado. His old friends lifted up their heads with exultation, and new adherents flocked to his standard. Parties began to form for him and for Pedrarias; for it was deemed impossible they could continue long in harmony.

The jealousy of the governor was excited by these circumstances; and he regarded the newly-created Adelantado as a dangerous rival and an insidious foe. Just at this critical juncture, Andres Garabito, the agent of Vasco Nuñez, arrived on the coast in a vessel which he had procured at Cuba, and freighted with arms and ammunition, and seventy resolute

* Oviedo, part ii. cap. 9, MS. Oviedo, the historian, was present at this consultation, and says that he wrote down the opinions given on the occasion, which the parties signed with their proper hands.

† Idem.

men, for the secret expedition to the shores of the Pacific Ocean. He anchored six leagues from the harbour, and sent word privately to Vasco Nuñez of his arrival.

Information was immediately carried to Pedrarias, that a mysterious vessel, full of armed men, was hovering on the coast, and holding secret communication with his rival. The suspicious temper of the governor immediately took the alarm. He fancied some treasonable plot against his authority; his passions mingled with his fears; and, in the first burst of his fury, he ordered that Vasco Nuñez should be seized and confined in a wooden cage. The Bishop of Darien interposed in time to prevent an indignity which it might have been impossible to expiate. He prevailed upon the passionate governor, not merely to retract the order respecting the cage, but to examine the whole matter with coolness and deliberation. The result proved that his suspicions had been erroneous; and that the armament had been set on foot without any treasonable intent. Vasco Nuñez was therefore set at liberty, after having agreed to certain precautionary conditions; but he remained cast down in spirit and impoverished in fortune, by the harassing measures of Pedrarias.

CHAPTER XXII.

The Bishop of Darien, encouraged by the success of his intercession, endeavoured to persuade the governor to permit the departure of Vasco Nuñez on his expedition to the South Sea. The jealousy of Pedrarias, however, was too strong to allow him to listen to such counsel. He was aware of the importance of the expedition, and was anxious that the Pearl Islands should be explored, which promised such abundant treasures; but he feared to increase the popularity of Vasco Nunez, by adding such an enterprise to the number of his achievements. Pedrarias, therefore, set on foot an expedition, consisting of sixty men, but gave the command to one of his own relations, named Gaspar Morales. The latter was accompanied by Francisco Pizarro, who had already been to those parts in the train of Vasco Nuñez, and who soon rose to importance in the present enterprise by his fierce courage and domineering genius.

A brief notice of the principal incidents of this expedition is all that is necessary for the present narration.

Morales and Pizarro traversed the mountains of the isthmus by a shorter and more expeditious route than that which had

been taken by Vasco Nuñez, and arrived on the shores of the South Sea at the territories of a cacique named Tutibrà, by whom they were amicably entertained. Their great object was to visit the Pearl Islands: the cacique, however, had but four canoes, which were insufficient to contain their whole party. One half of their number, therefore, remained at the village of Tutibrà, under the command of a captain named Peñalosa; the residue embarked in the canoes with Morales and Pizarro. After a stormy and perilous voyage, they landed on one of the smaller islands, where they had some skirmishing with the natives, and thence made their way to the principal island of the archipelago, to which, from the report of its great pearl fishery, Vasco Nuñez had given the name of Isla Rica.

The cacique of this island had long been the terror of the neighbouring coasts, invading the main-land with fleets of canoes, and carrying the inhabitants into captivity. His reception of the Spaniards was worthy of his fame. Four times did he sally forth to defend his territory, and as often was he repulsed with great slaughter. His warriors were overwhelmed with terror at the fire-arms of the Spaniards, and at their ferocious bloodhounds. Finding all resistance unavailing, the cacique was at length compelled to sue for peace. His prayers being granted, he received the conquerors into his habitation, which was well built and of immense size. Here he brought them as a peace-offering a basket curiously wrought, and filled with pearls of great beauty. Among these were two of extraordinary size and value. One weighed twenty-five carats; the other was of the size of a Muscadine pear, weighing upwards of three drachms, and of oriental colour and lustre. The cacique considered himself more than repaid by a present of hatchets, beads, and hawks'-bells: and, on the Spaniards smiling at his joy, observed, "These things I can turn to useful purposes, but of what value are those pearls to me?"

Finding, however, that these baubles were precious in the eyes of the Spaniards, he took Morales and Pizarro to the summit of a wooden tower, commanding an unbounded prospect. "Behold before you," said he, "the infinite sea, which extends even beyond the sunbeams. As to these islands, which lie to the right and left, they are all subject to my sway. They possess but little gold, but the deep places of the sea around them are full of pearls. Continue to be my

friends, and you shall have as many as you desire; for I value your friendship more than pearls, and, as far as in m lies, will never forfeit it."

He then pointed to the main-land, where it stretched awa towards the east, mountain beyond mountain, until the sum mit of the last faded in the distance, and was scarcely see above the watery horizon. In that direction, he said, ther lay a vast country of inexhaustible riches, inhabited by mighty nation. He went on to repeat the vague but wonder ful rumours which the Spaniards had frequently heard abou the great kingdom of Peru. Pizarro listened greedily to h words, and while his eye followed the finger of the caciqu as it ranged along the line of a shadowy coast, his darin mind kindled with the thought of seeking this golden empi beyond the waters.*

Before leaving the island, the two captains impressed th cacique with so great an idea of the power of the King Castile, that he agreed to become his vassal, and to rende him an annual tribute of one hundred pounds' weight pearls.

The party having returned in safety to the main-lan though to a different place from that where they had em barked, Gaspar Morales sent his relation, Bernardo Morale with ten men in quest of Peñalosa and his companions, wh had remained in the village of Tutibrà.

Unfortunately for the Spaniards, during the absence of th commanders, this Peñalosa had so exasperated the natives b his misconduct, that a conspiracy had been formed by th caciques along the coast to massacre the whole of the stra gers, when the party should return from the islands.

Bernardo Morales and his companions, on their way quest of Peñalosa, put up for the night in the village of cacique named Chuchama, who was one of the conspirator They were entertained with pretended hospitality. In th dead of the night, however, the house in which they we sleeping was wrapped in flames, and most of them we destroyed. Chuchama then prepared with his confederat to attack the main body of the Spaniards who remained wi Morales and Pizarro.

Fortunately for the latter, there was among the India who had accompanied them to the islands a cacique nam Chirucà, who was in secret correspondence with the consp

* Herrera, decad. ii. lib. i. cap. 4. P. Martyr, decad. iii. cap. 10.

rators. Some circumstances in his conduct excited their suspicious; they put him to the torture, and drew from him a relation of the massacre of their companions, and of the attack with which they were menaced.

Morales and Pizarro were at first appalled by the overwhelming danger which surrounded them. Concealing their agitation, however, they compelled Chirucà to send a message to each of the confederate caciques, inviting him to a secret conference, under pretence of giving him important information. The caciques came at the summons: they were thus taken one by one to the number of eighteen, and put in chains. Just at this juncture Peñalosa arrived with the thirty men who had remained with him at Tutibrà. Their arrival was hailed with joy by their comrades, who had given them up for lost. Encouraged by this unexpected reinforcement, the Spaniards now attacked by surprise the main body of confederate Indians, who, being ignorant of the discovery of their plot, and capture of their caciques, were awaiting the return of the latter in a state of negligent security.

Pizarro led the van, and set upon the enemy at daybreak with the old Spanish war-cry of Santiago! It was a slaughter rather than a battle, for the Indians were unprepared for resistance. Before sunrise seven hundred lay dead upon the field. Returning from the massacre, the commanders doomed the caciques who were in chains to be torn in pieces by the bloodhounds; nor was even Chirucà spared from this sanguinary sentence. Notwithstanding this bloody revenge, the vindictive spirit of the commanders was still unappeased, and they set off to surprise the village of a cacique named Birù, who dwelt on the eastern side of the Gulf of St. Michael. He was famed for valour and for cruelty: his dwelling was surrounded by the weapons and other trophies of those whom he had vanquished; and he was said never to give quarter.

The Spaniards assailed his village before daybreak with fire and sword, and made dreadful havoc. Birù escaped from his burning habitation, rallied his people, kept up a galling fight throughout the greater part of that day, and handled the Spaniards so roughly, that, when he drew off at night, they did not venture to pursue him, but returned right gladly from his territory. According to some of the Spanish writers, the kingdom of Peru derived its name from this warlike cacique, through a blunder of the early discoverers; the assertion, however, is believed to be erroneous.

The Spaniards had pushed their bloody revenge to an extreme, and were now doomed to suffer from the recoil. In the fury of their passions, they had forgotten that they were but a handful of men surrounded by savage nations. Returning wearied and disheartened from the battle with Birù, they were waylaid and assaulted by a host of Indians led on by the son of Chirucà. A javelin from his hand pierced one of the Spaniards through the breast, and came out between the shoulders; several others were wounded, and the remainder were harrassed by a galling fire kept up from among rocks and bushes.

Dismayed at the implacable vengeance they had aroused, the Spaniards hastened to abandon these hostile shores and make the best of their way back to Darien. The Indians, however, were not to be appeased by the mere departure of the intruders. They followed them perseveringly for seven days, hanging on their skirts, and harassing them by continual alarms. Morales and Pizarro, seeing the obstinacy of their pursuit, endeavoured to gain a march upon them by stratagem. Making large fires as usual one night about the place of their encampment, they left them burning to deceive the enemy while they made a rapid retreat. Among their number was one poor fellow named Velasquez, who was so grievously wounded that he could not walk. Unable to accompany his countrymen in their flight, and dreading to fall into the merciless hands of the savages, he determined to hang himself, nor could the prayers and even tears of his comrades dissuade him from his purpose.

The stratagem of the Spaniards, however, was unavailing. Their retreat was perceived, and at daybreak, to their dismay, they found themselves surrounded by three squadrons of savages. Unable, in their haggard state, to make head against so many foes, they remained drawn up all day on the defensive, some watching while others reposed. At night they lit their fires and again attempted to make a secret retreat. The Indians, however, were as usual on their traces, and wounded several with arrows. Thus pressed and goaded, the Spaniards became desperate, and fought like madmen, rushing upon the very darts of the enemy.

Morales now resorted to an inhuman and fruitless expedient to retard his pursuers. He caused several Indian prisoners to be slain, hoping that their friends would stop to lament over them; but the sight of their mangled bodies only

increased the fury of the savages and the obstinacy of their pursuit.

For nine days were the Spaniards hunted in this manner about the woods and mountains, the swamps and fens, wandering they knew not whither, and returning upon their steps, until, to their dismay, they found themselves in the very place where, several days previously, they had been surrounded by the three squadrons.

Many now despaired of ever escaping with life from this trackless wilderness, thus teeming with deadly foes. It was with difficulty their commanders could rally their spirits, and encourage them to persevere. Entering a thick forest, they were again assailed by a band of Indians, but despair and fury gave them strength: they fought like wild beasts rather than like men, and routed the foe with dreadful carnage. They had hoped to gain a breathing time by this victory, but a new distress attended them. They got entangled in one of those deep and dismal marshes which abound on those coasts, and in which the wanderer is often drowned or suffocated. For a whole day they toiled through brake, and bramble, and miry fen, with the water reaching to their girdles. At length they extricated themselves from the swamp, and arrived at the sea-shore. The tide was out, but was about to return, and on this coast it rises rapidly to a great height. Fearing to be verwhelmed by the rising surf, they hastened to climb a rock out of reach of the swelling waters. Here they threw themselves on the earth panting with fatigue and abandoned to despair. A savage wilderness, filled with still more savage foes, was on one side, on the other the roaring sea. How were they to extricate themselves from these surrounding perils? While reflecting on their desperate situation, they heard the voices of Indians. On looking cautiously round, they beheld four canoes entering a neighbouring creek. A party was immediately despatched who came upon the savages by surprise, drove them into the woods, and seized upon the canoes. In these frail barks, the Spaniards escaped from their perilous neighbourhood, and, traversing the Gulf of St. Michael, landed in a less hostile part, whence they set out a second time across the mountains.

It is needless to recount the other hardships they endured, and their further conflicts with the Indians; suffice it to say, after a series of almost incredible sufferings and disasters, they at length arrived in a battered and emaciated condition

at Darien. Throughout all their toils and troubles, however, they had managed to preserve a part of the treasure gained in the islands; especially the pearls given them by the cacique of Isla Rica. These were objects of universal admiration. One of them was put up at auction, and bought by Pedrarias, and was afterwards presented by his wife Doña Isabella de Bobadilla to the empress, who, in return, gave her four thousand ducats.*

Such was the cupidity of the colonists, that the sight of these pearls and the reputed wealth of the islands of the Southern Sea, and the kingdoms on its borders, made far greater impression on the public mind, than the tale told by the adventurers of the horrors they had past; and every one was eager to seek these wealthy regions beyond the mountains.

CHAPTER XXIII.

In narrating the preceding expedition of Morales and Pizarro, we have been tempted into what may almost be deemed an episode, though it serves to place in a proper light the lurking difficulties and dangers which beset the expeditions of Vasco Nuñez to the same regions, and his superior prudence and management in avoiding them. It is not the object of this narrative, however, to record the general events of the colony under the administration of Don Pedrarias Davila. We refrain, therefore, from detailing various expeditions set on foot by him to explore and subjugate the surrounding country; and which, being ignorantly or rashly conducted, too often ended in misfortune and disgrace. One of these was to the province of Zenu, where gold was supposed to be taken in the rivers in nets; and where the Bachelor Enciso once undertook to invade the sepulchres. A captain, named Francisco Becerra, penetrated into this country at the head of one hundred and eighty men, well armed and equipped, and provided with three pieces of artillery; but neither the commander nor any of his men returned. An Indian boy who accompanied them was the only one who escaped, and told the dismal tale of their having fallen victims to the assaults, and stratagems, and poisoned arrows of the Indians.

Another band was defeated by Tubanamà, the ferocious cacique of the mountains, who bore as his banners the bloody shirts of Spaniards slain in former battles. In fine, the colony

* Herrera, Hist. Ind. decad. ii. lib. i. cap. 4.

became so weakened by these repeated losses, and the savages so emboldened by success, that the latter beleaguered it with their forces, harassed it by assaults and ambuscades, and reduced it to great extremity. Such was the alarm in Darien, says the Bishop Las Casas, that the people feared to be burnt in their houses. They kept a watchful eye upon the mountains, the plains, and the very branches of the trees. Their imaginations were infected by their fears. If they looked towards the land, the long waving grass of the Savannas appeared to them to be moving hosts of Indians. If they looked towards the sea, they fancied they beheld fleets of canoes in the distance. Pedrarias endeavoured to prevent all rumours from abroad that might increase this fevered state of alarm; at the same time he ordered the smelting-house to be closed, which was never done but in time of war. This was done at the suggestion of the bishop, who caused prayers to be put up, and fasts proclaimed, to avert the impending calamities.

While Pedrarias was harassed and perplexed by these complicated evils, he was haunted by continual apprehensions of the ultimate ascendancy of Vasco Nuñez. He knew him to be beloved by the people, and befriended by the bishop; and he had received proofs that his services were highly appreciated by the king. He knew also that representations had been sent home by him and his partisans, of the evils and abuses of the colony under the present rule, and of the necessity of a more active and efficient governor. He dreaded lest these representations should ultimately succeed; that he should be undermined in the royal favour, and Vasco Nuñez be elevated upon his ruins.

The politic bishop perceived the uneasy state of the governor's mind, and endeavoured, by means of his apprehensions, to effect that reconciliation which he had sought in vain to produce through more generous motives. He represented to him that his treament of Vasco Nuñez was odious in the eyes of the people, and must eventually draw on him the displeasure of his sovereign. "But why persist," added he, "in driving a man to become your deadliest enemy, whom you may grapple to your side as your firmest friend? You have several daughters—give him one in marriage; you will then have for a son-in-law a man of merit and popularity, who is a hidalgo by birth, and a favourite of the king. You are advanced in life and infirm; he is in the prime and

vigour of his days, and possessed of great activity. You can make him your lieutenant; and while you repose from your toils, he can carry on the affairs of the colony with spirit and enterprise; and all his achievements will redound to the advancement of your family and the splendour of your administration."

The governor and his lady were won by the eloquence of the bishop, and readily listened to his suggestion; and Vasco Nuñez was but too happy to effect a reconciliation on such flattering terms. Written articles were accordingly drawn up and exchanged, contracting a marriage between him and the eldest daughter of Pedrarias. The young lady was then in Spain, but was to be sent for, and the nuptials were to be celebrated on her arrival at Darien.

Having thus fulfilled his office of peace-maker, and settled, as he supposed, all feuds and jealousies on the sure and permanent foundation of family alliance, the worthy bishop departed shortly afterwards for Spain.

CHAPTER XXIV.—[1516.]

Behold Vasco Nuñez once more in the high career of prosperity! His most implacable enemy had suddenly been converted into his dearest friend; for the governor, now that he looked upon him as his son-in-law, loaded him with favours. Above all, he authorized him to build brigantines and make all the necesssary preparations for his long-desired expedition to explore the Southern Ocean. The place appointed for these purposes was the port of Careta, situated to the west of Darien; whence there was supposed to be the most convenient route across the mountains. A town called Acla had been founded at this port; and the fortress was already erected, of which Lope de Olano was alcalde; Vasco Nuñez was now empowered to continue the building of the town. Two hundred men were placed under his command, to aid him in carrying his plans into execution, and a sum of money was advanced to him out of the royal treasury. His supply of funds, however, was not sufficient; but he received assistance from a private source. There was a notary at Darien, Hernando de Arguello, a man of some consequence in the community, and who had been one of the most furious opponents of the unfortunate Nicuesa. He had amassed considerable property, and now embarked a great part of it in the proposed enterprise, on condition, no doubt, of sharing largely in its anticipated profits.

On arriving at Acla, Vasco Nuñez set to work to prepare the materials of four brigantines to be launched into the South Sea. The timber was felled on the Atlantic seaboard; and was then, with the anchors and rigging, transported across the lofty ridge of mountains to the opposite shores of the Isthmus. Several Spaniards, thirty Negroes, and a great number of Indians were employed for the purpose. They had no other roads but Indian paths, straggling through almost impervious forests, across torrents, and up rugged defiles, broken by rocks and precipices. In this way they toiled like ants up the mountains, with their ponderous burthens, under the scorching rays of a tropical sun. Many of the poor Indians sank by the way and perished under this stupendous task. The Spaniards and Negroes, being of hardier constitutions, were better able to cope with the incredible hardships to which they were subjected. On the summit of the mountains a house had been provided for their temporary repose. After remaining here a little time to refresh themselves and gain strength, they renewed their labours, descending the opposite side of the mountains until they reached the navigable part of a river, which they called the Balsas, and which flowed into the Pacific.

Much time and trouble, and many lives were expended on this arduous undertaking, before they had transported to the river sufficient timber for two brigantines; while the timber for the other two, and the rigging and munitions for the whole, yet remained to be brought. To add to their difficulties, they had scarcely begun to work upon the timber before they discovered that it was totally useless, being subject to the ravages of the worms from having been cut in the vicinity of salt water. They were obliged, therefore, to begin anew, and fell trees on the border of the river.

Vasco Nuñez maintained his patience and perseverance, and displayed admirable management under these delays and difficulties. Their supply of food being scanty, he divided his people, Spaniards, Negroes, and Indians, into three bands; one was to cut and saw the wood, another to bring the rigging and iron-work from Acla, which was twenty-two leagues distant; and the third to forage the neighbouring country for provisions.

Scarcely was the timber felled and shaped for use when the rains set in, and the river swelled and overflowed its banks so suddenly, that the workmen barely escaped with their lives,

by clambering into trees; while the wood on which they had been working was either buried in sand or slime, or swept away by the raging torrent. Famine was soon added to their other distresses. The foraging party did not return with food; and the swelling of the river cut them off from that part of the country whence they obtained their supplies. They were reduced, therefore, to such scarcity, as to be fain to assuage their hunger with roots gathered in the forests.

In this extremity, the Indians bethought themselves of one of their rude and simple expedients. Plunging into the river they fastened a number of logs together with withes, and connected them with the opposite bank, so as to make a floating bridge. On this a party of the Spaniards crossed with great difficulty and peril, from the violence of the current, and the flexibility of the bridge, which often sank beneath them until the water rose above their girdles. On being safely landed they foraged the neighbourhood, and procured a supply of provisions sufficient for the present emergency.

When the river subsided, the workmen again resumed their labours; a number of recruits arrived from Acla, bringing various supplies, and the business of the enterprise was pressed with redoubled ardour, until, after a series of incredible toils and hardships, Vasco Nuñez had the satisfaction to behold two of his brigantines floating on the river Balsas. As soon as they could be equipped for sea, he embarked in them with as many Spaniards as they could carry; and, issuing from the river, launched triumphantly on the great ocean he had discovered.

We can readily imagine the exultation of this intrepid adventurer, and how amply he was repaid for all his sufferings, when he first spread a sail on that untraversed ocean, and felt that the range of an unknown world was open to him.

There are points in the history of these Spanish discoveries of the western hemisphere, which make us pause with wonder and admiration at the daring spirit of the men who conducted them, and the appalling difficulties surmounted by their courage and perseverance. We know few instances, however, more striking than this piecemeal transportation, across the mountains of Darien, of the first European ships that ploughed the waves of the Pacific; and we can readily excuse the boast of the old Castilian writers, when they exclaim, "that none but Spaniards could ever have conceived or persisted in such

an undertaking; and no commander in the New World but Vasco Nuñez could have conducted it to a successful issue." *

CHAPTER XXV.

THE first cruise of Vasco Nuñez was to the group of Pearl Islands, on the principal one of which he disembarked the greater part of his crews, and dispatched the brigantines to the main-land to bring off the remainder. It was his intention to construct the other two vessels of his proposed squadron at this island. During the absence of the brigantines, he ranged the island with his men, to collect provisions, and to establish a complete sway over the natives. On the return of his vessels, and while preparations were making for the building of the others, he embarked with a hundred men, and departed on a reconnoitering cruise to the eastward, towards the region pointed out by the Indians as abounding in riches.

Having passed about twenty leagues beyond the Gulf of San Miguel, the mariners were alarmed at beholding a great number of whales, which resembled a reef of rocks, stretching far into the sea, and lashed by breakers. In an unknown ocean like this every unusual object is apt to inspire alarm. The seamen feared to approach these fancied dangers in the dark; Vasco Nuñez anchored, therefore, for the night, under a point of land, intending to continue in the same direction on the following day. When the morning dawned, however, the wind had changed, and was contrary; whereupon he altered his course, and thus abandoned a cruise, which, if persevered in, might have terminated in the discovery of Peru! Steering for the main-land, he anchored on that part of the coast governed by the cacique Chuchamà, who had massacred Bernardo Morales and his companions, when reposing in his village. Here landing with his men, Vasco Nuñez came suddenly upon the dwelling of the cacique. The Indians sallied forth to defend their homes, but were routed with great loss; and ample vengeance was taken upon them for their outrage upon the laws of hospitality. Having thus avenged the death of his countrymen, Vasco Nuñez re-embarked and returned to Isla Rica.

He now applied himself diligently to complete the building of his brigantines, dispatching men to Acla to bring the necessary stores and rigging across the mountains. While thus occupied, a rumour reached him that a new governor

* Herrera, decad. ii. lib. ii. cap. 11.

named Lope de Sosa was coming out from Spain to supersede Pedrarias. Vasco Nuñez was troubled at these tidings. A new governor would be likely to adopt new measures, or to have new favourites. He feared, therefore, that some order might come to suspend or embarrass his expedition; or that the command of it might be given to another. In this perplexity he held a consultation with several of his confidential officers.

After some debate, it was agreed among them that a trusty and intelligent person should be sent as a scout to Acla, under pretence of procuring munitions for the ships. Should he find Pedrarias in quiet possession of the government, he was to account to him for the delay of the expedition; to request that the time allotted to it might be extended; and to request reinforcements and supplies. Should he find, however, a new governor actually arrived, he was to return immediately with the tidings. In such case it was resolved to put to sea before any contrary orders could arrive, trusting eventually to excuse themselves on the plea of zeal and good intentions.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The person intrusted with the reconnoitering expedition to Acla was Andres Garabito, in whose fidelity and discretion Vasco Nuñez had implicit confidence. His confidence was destined to be fatally deceived. According to the assertions of contemporaries, this Garabito cherished a secret and vindictive enmity against his commander, arising from a simple but a natural cause. Vasco Nuñez had continued to have a fondness for the Indian damsel, daughter of the cacique Careta, whom he had received from her father as a pledge of amity. Some dispute arose concerning her on one occasion between him and Garabito, in the course of which he expressed himself in severe and galling language. Garabito was deeply mortified at some of his expressions, and, being of a malignant spirit, determined on a dastardly revenge. He wrote privately to Pedrarias, assuring him that Vasco Nuñez had no intention of solemnizing his marriage with his daughter, being completely under the influence of an Indian paramour; that he made use of the friendship of Pedrarias merely to further his own selfish views, intending, as soon as his ships were ready, to throw off all allegiance, and put to sea as an independent commander.

This mischievous letter Garabito had written immediately

after the last departure of Vasco Nuñez from Acla. Its effect upon the proud and jealous spirit of the governor may easily be conceived. All his former suspicions were immediately revived. They acquired strength during a long interval that elapsed without tidings being received from the expedition. There were designing and prejudiced persons at hand, who perceived and quickened these jealous feelings of the governor. Among these was the Bachelor Corral, who cherished a deep grudge against Vasco Nuñez for having once thrown him into prison for his factious conduct; and Alonzo de la Puenta, the royal treasurer, whom Vasco Nuñez had affronted by demanding the repayment of a loan. Such was the tempest gradually gathering in the factious little colony of Darien.

The subsequent conduct of Garabito gives much confirmation to the charge of perfidy advanced against him. When he arrived at Acla, he found that Pedrarias remained in possession of the government; for his intended successor had died in the very harbour. The conduct and conversation of Garabito was such as to arouse suspicions; he was arrested, and his papers and letters were sent to Pedrarias. When examined, he readily suffered himself to be wrought upon by threats of punishment and promises of pardon, and revealed all that he knew, and declared still more that he suspected and surmised, of the plans and intentions of Vasco Nuñez.

The arrest of Garabito, and the seizure of his letters, produced a great agitation at Darien. It was considered a revival of the ancient animosity between the governor and Vasco Nuñez, and the friends of the latter trembled for his safety.

Hernando de Arguello, especially, was in great alarm. He had embarked the most of his fortune in the expedition, and the failure of it would be ruinous to him. He wrote to Vasco Nuñez informing him of the critical posture of affairs, and urging him to put to sea without delay. He would be protected at all events, he said, by the Jeronimite Fathers at San Domingo, who were at that time all-powerful in the New World, and who regarded his expedition as calculated to promote the glory of God as well as the dominion of the king.

* In consequence of the eloquent representations made to the Spanish government by the venerable Las Casas, of the cruel wrongs and oppressions practised upon the Indians in the colonies, the Cardinal Ximenes, in 1516, sent out three Jeronimite Friars, chosen for their zeal and abilities, clothed with full powers to inquire into and remedy all abuses, and to take all proper measures for the good government, religious instruction, and effectual protection of the natives. The exercise

This letter fell into the hands of Pedrarias, and convinced him of the existence of a dangerous plot against his authority. He immediately ordered Arguello to be arrested; and now devised means to get Vasco Nuñez within his power. While the latter remained on the shores of the South Sea with his brigantines and his band of hearty and devoted followers, Pedrarias knew it would be vain to attempt to take him by force. Dissembling his suspicions and intentions, therefore, he wrote to him in amicable terms, requesting him to repair immediately to Acla, as he wished to confer with him about the impending expedition. Fearing, however, that Vasco Nuñez might suspect his motives and refuse to comply, he at the same time ordered Francisco Pizarro to muster all the armed force he could collect, and seek and arrest his late patron and commander wherever he might be found.

So great was the terror inspired by the arrest of Arguello, and by the general violence of Pedrarias, that, though Vasco Nuñez was a favourite with the great mass of the people, no one ventured to warn him of the danger that attended his return to Acla.

CHAPTER XXVII.

The old Spanish writers who have treated of the fortunes of Vasco Nuñez, record an anecdote which is worthy of being cited, as characteristic of the people and the age. Among the motley crowd of adventurers lured across the ocean by the reputed wealth and wonders of the New World, was an Italian astrologer, a native of Venice, named Micer Codro. At the time that Vasco Nuñez held supreme sway at Darien, this reader of the stars had cast his horoscope, and pretended to foretell his destiny. Pointing one night to a certain star, he assured him that in the year in which he should behold that star in a part of the heavens which he designated, his life would be in imminent jeopardy; but should he survive this year of peril, he would become the richest and most renowned captain throughout the Indies.

Several years, it is added, had elapsed since this prediction was made; yet, that it still dwelt in the mind of Vasco Nuñez, was evident from the following circumstance. While waiting the return of his messenger, Garabito, he was on the shore of Isla Rica one serene evening, in company with some of his

of their powers at San Domingo made a great sensation in the New World, and, for a time, had a beneficial effect in checking the oppressive and licentious conduct of the colonists.

officers, when, regarding the heavens, he beheld the fated star exactly in that part of the firmament which had been pointed out by the Italian astrologer. Turning to his companions, with a smile, "Behold," said he, "the wisdom of those who believe in soothsayers, and, above all, in such an astrologer as Micer Codro! According to his prophecy, I should now be in imminent peril of my life; yet, here I am, within reach of all my wishes; sound in health, with four brigantines and three hundred men at my command, and on the point of exploring this great southern ocean."

At this fated juncture, say the chroniclers, arrived the hypocritical letter of Pedrarias, inviting him to an interview at Acla! The discreet reader will decide for himself what credit to give to this anecdote, or rather, what allowance to make for the little traits of coincidence gratuitously added to the original fact by writers who delight in the marvellous. The tenor of this letter awakened no suspicion in the breast of Vasco Nuñez, who reposed entire confidence in the amity of the governor as his intended father-in-law, and appears to have been unconscious of anything in his own conduct that could warrant hostility. Leaving his ships in command of Francisco Compañon, he departed immediately to meet the governor at Acla, unattended by any armed force.

The messengers who had brought the letter maintained at first a cautious silence as to the events which had transpired at Darien. They were gradually won, however, by the frank and genial manners of Vasco Nuñez, and grieved to see so gallant a soldier hurrying into the snare. Having crossed the mountains, and drawn near to Acla, their kind feelings got the better of their caution, and they revealed the true nature of their errand, and the hostile intentions of Pedrarias. Vasco Nuñez was struck with astonishment at the recital; but, being unconscious, it is said, of any evil intention, he could scarcely credit this sudden hostility in a man who had but recently promised him his daughter in marriage. He imagined the whole to be some groundless jealousy which his own appearance would dispel, and accordingly continued on his journey. He had not proceeded far, however, when he was met by a band of armed men, led by Francisco Pizarro. The latter stepped forward to arrest his ancient commander. Vasco Nuñez paused for a moment, and regarded him with a look of reproachful astonishment. "How is this, Francisco?" exclaimed he. "Is this the way you have been accustomed

to receive me?" Offering no further remonstrance, he suffered himself quietly to be taken prisoner by his former adherent, and conducted in chains to Acla. Here he was thrown into prison, and Bartolome Hurtado, once his favourite officer, was sent to take command of his squadron.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Don Pedrarias concealed his exultation at the success of the stratagem by which he had ensnared his generous and confiding rival. He even visited him in prison, and pretended deep concern at being obliged to treat him with this temporary rigour, attributing it entirely to certain accusations lodged against him by the treasurer, Alonzo de la Puente, which his official situation compelled him to notice and investigate.

"Be not afflicted, however, my son!" said the hypocrite, "an investigation will, doubtless, not merely establish your innocence, but serve to render your zeal and loyalty towards your sovereign still more conspicuous."

While Pedrarias assumed this soothing tone towards his prisoner, he urged the alcalde mayor, Espinosa, to proceed against him with the utmost rigour of the law.

The charge brought against him of a treasonable conspiracy to cast off all allegiance to the crown, and to assume an independent sway on the borders of the Southern Sea, was principally supported by the confessions of Andres Garabito. The evidence is also cited of a soldier, who stood sentinel one night near the quarters of Vasco Nuñez on Isla Rica, and who, being driven to take shelter from the rain under the eaves of his house, overheard a conversation between that commander and certain of his officers, wherein they agreed to put to sea with the squadron on their own account, and to set the governor at defiance. This testimony, according to Las Casas, arose from a misconstruction on the part of the sentinel, who only heard a portion of their conversation, relating to their intention of sailing without waiting for orders, in case a new governor should arrive to supersede Pedrarias.

The governor in the meantime informed himself from day to day and hour to hour, of the progress of the trial, and, considering the evidence sufficiently strong to warrant his personal hostility, he now paid another visit to his prisoner, and, throwing off all affectation of kindness, upbraided him in the most passionate manner.

"Hitherto," said he, "I have treated you as a son, because

I thought you loyal to your king, and to me as his representative; but as I find you have meditated rebellion against the crown of Castile, I cast you off from my affection, and shall henceforth treat you as an enemy."

Vasco Nuñez indignantly repelled the charge, and appealed to the confiding frankness of his conduct as a proof of his innocence. "Had I been conscious of my guilt," said he, "what could have induced me to come here and put myself into your hands? Had I meditated rebellion, what prevented me from carrying it into effect? I had four ships ready to weigh anchor, three hundred brave men at my command, and an open sea before me. What had I to do but to spread sail and press forward? There was no doubt of finding a land, whether rich or poor, sufficient for me and mine, far beyond the reach of your control. In the innocence of my heart, however, I came here promptly, at your mere request, and my reward is slander, indignity, and chains!"

The noble and ingenuous appeal of Vasco Nuñez had no effect on the prejudiced feelings of the governor: on the contrary, he was but the more exasperated against his prisoner, and ordered that his irons should be doubled.

The trial was now urged by him with increased eagerness. Lest the present accusation should not be sufficient to effect the ruin of his victim, the old inquest into his conduct as governor, which had remained suspended for many years, was revived, and he was charged anew with the wrongs inflicted on the Bachelor Enciso, and with the death of the unfortunate Nicuesa.

Notwithstanding all these charges, the trial went on slowly, with frequent delays, for the alcalde mayor, Gaspar de Espinosa, seems to have had but little relish for the task assigned him, and to have needed frequent spurring from the eager and passionate governor. He probably considered the accused as technically guilty, though innocent of all intentional rebellion, but was ordered to decide according to the strict letter of the law. He therefore, at length, gave a reluctant verdict against Vasco Nuñez, but recommended him to mercy, on account of his great services, or entreated that, at least he might be permitted to appeal. "No," said the unrelenting Pedrarias; "if he has merited death, let him suffer death!" He accordingly condemned him to be beheaded. The same sentence was passed upon several of his officers, who were implicated in his alleged conspiracy; among these was Her-

nando de Arguello, who had written the letter to Vasco Nuñez, informing him of the arrest of his messenger, and advising him to put to sea, without heeding the hostility of Pedrarias. As to the perfidious informer Garabito, he was pardoned and set at liberty.

In considering this case as far as we are enabled, from the imperfect testimony on record, we are inclined to think it one where passion and self-interest interfered with the pure administration of justice. Pedrarias had always considered Vasco Nuñez as a dangerous rival, and, though his jealousy had been for some time lulled by looking on him as an intended son-in-law, it was revived by the suggestion that he intended to evade his alliance and dispute his authority. His exasperated feelings hurried him too far to retreat, and, having loaded his prisoner with chains and indignities, his death became indispensable to his own security.

For our own part, we have little doubt that it was the fixed intention of Vasco Nuñez, after he had once succeeded in the arduous undertaking of transporting his ships across the mountains, to suffer no capricious order from Pedrarias, nor any other governor, to defeat the enterprise which he had so long meditated, and for which he had so laboriously prepared. It is probable he may have expressed such general determination in the hearing of Garabito and of others of his companions. We can find ample excuse for such a resolution in his consciousness of his own deserts; his experience of past hinderances to his expedition, arising from the jealousy of others; his feeling of some degree of authority, from his office of Adelantado; and his knowledge of the favourable disposition and kind intentions of his sovereign towards him. We acquit him entirely of the senseless idea of rebelling against the crown; and suggest these considerations in palliation of any meditated disobedience of Pedrarias, should such a charge be supposed to have been substantiated.

CHAPTER XXIX.—[1517.]

It was a day of gloom and horror at Acla, when Vasco Nuñez and his companions were led forth to execution. The populace were moved to tears at the unhappy fate of a man, whose gallant deeds had excited their admiration, and whose generous qualities had won their hearts. Most of them regarded him as the victim of a jealous tyrant; and even those who thought him guilty saw something brave and bril-

liant in the very crime imputed to him. Such, however, was the general dread inspired by the severe measures of Pedrarias, that no one dared lift up his voice, either in murmur or remonstrance.

The public crier walked before Vasco Nuñez, proclaiming; "This is the punishment inflicted by command of the king and his lieutenant, Don Pedrarias Davila, on this man, as a traitor and an usurper of the territories of the crown."

When Vasco Nuñez heard these words, he exclaimed, indignantly, "It is false! never did such a crime enter my mind. I have ever served my king with truth and loyalty, and sought to augment his dominions."

These words were of no avail in his extremity, but they were fully believed by the populace.

The execution took place in the public square of Acla; and we are assured by the historian Oviedo, who was in the colony at the time, that the cruel Pedrarias was a secret witness of the bloody spectacle; which he contemplated from between the reeds of the wall of a house, about twelve paces from the scaffold!*

Vasco Nuñez was the first to suffer death. Having confessed himself and partaken of the sacrament, he ascended the scaffold with a firm step, and a calm and manly demeanour; and, laying his head upon the block, it was severed in an instant from his body. Three of his officers, Valderrabano, Botello, and Hernan Muños, were in like manner brought one by one to the block, and the day had nearly expired before the last of them was executed.

One victim still remained. It was Hernando de Arguello, who had been condemned as an accomplice, for having written the intercepted letter.

The populace could no longer restrain their feelings. They had not dared to intercede for Vasco Nuñez, knowing the implacable enmity of Pedrarias; but they now sought the governor, and, throwing themselves at his feet, entreated that this man might be spared, as he had taken no active part in the alleged treason. The daylight, they said, was at an end, and it seemed as if God had hastened the night to prevent the execution.

The stern heart of Pedrarias was not to be touched. "No," said he, "I would sooner die myself than spare one of them." The unfortunate Arguello was led to the block. The brief

* Oviedo, Hist. Ind. p. 2. cap. 9, MS.

tropical twilight was past, and in the gathering gloom of the night, the operations on the scaffold could not be distinguished. The multitude stood listening in breathless silence, until the stroke of the executioner told that all was accomplished. They then dispersed to their homes with hearts filled with grief and bitterness, and a night of lamentation succeeded to this day of horrors.

The vengeance of Pedrarias was not satisfied with the death of his victim; he confiscated his property and dishonoured his remains, causing his head to be placed upon a pole and exposed for several days in the public square.*

Thus perished, in his forty-second year, in the prime and vigour of his days and the full career of his glory, one of the most illustrious and deserving of Spanish discoverers; a victim to the basest and most perfidious envy.

How vain are our most confident hopes, our brightest triumphs! When Vasco Nuñez from the mountains of Darien beheld the Southern Ocean revealed to his gaze, he considered its unknown realms at his disposal. When he had launched his ships upon its waters, and his sails were in a manner flapping in the wind, to bear him in quest of the wealthy empire of Peru, he scoffed at the prediction of the astrologer, and defied the influence of the stars. Behold him interrupted at the very moment of his departure, betrayed into the hands of his most invidious foe, the very enterprise that was to have crowned him with glory wrested into a crime, and himself hurried to a bloody and ignominious grave at the foot, as it were, of the mountain whence he had made his discovery! His fate, like that of his renowned predecessor, Columbus, proves that it is sometimes dangerous even to deserve too greatly.

FORTUNES OF VALDIVIA AND HIS COMPANIONS.

It was in the year 1512 that Valdivia, the regidor of Darien, was sent to Hispaniola by Vasco Nuñez de Balboa for reinforcements and supplies for the colony. He set sail in a caravel, and pursued his voyage prosperously until he arrived in sight of the island of Jamaica. Here he was encountered by one of the violent hurricanes which sweep those latitudes, and driven on the shoals and sunken rocks called the Vipers, since infamous for many a shipwreck. His vessel soon went

* Oviedo, ubi sup.

to pieces, and Valdivia and his crew, consisting of twenty men, escaped with difficulty in the boat, without having time to secure a supply either of water or provisions. Having no sails, and their oars being scarcely fit for use, they were driven about for thirteen days, at the mercy of the currents of those unknown seas. During this time their sufferings from hunger and thirst were indescribable. Seven of their number perished, and the rest were nearly famished when they were stranded on the eastern coast of Yucatan, in a province called Maya. Here they were set upon by the natives, who broke their boat in pieces, and carried them off captive to the cacique of the province, by whose orders they were mewed up in a kind of pen.

At first their situation appeared tolerable enough, considering the horrors from which they had escaped. They were closely confined, it is true, but they had plenty to eat and drink, and soon began to recover flesh and vigour. In a little while, however, their enjoyment of this good cheer met with a sudden check, for the unfortunate Valdivia, and four of his companions, were singled out by the cacique, on account of their improved condition, to be offered up to his idols. The natives of this coast, in fact, were cannibals, devouring the flesh of their enemies, and of such strangers as fell into their hands. The wretched Valdivia and his fellow victims, therefore, were sacrificed in the bloody temple of the idol, and their limbs were afterwards served up at a grand feast held by the cacique and his subjects.

The horror of the survivors may be more readily imagined than described. Their hearts died within them when they heard the yells and howlings of the savages over their victims, and the still more horrible revelry of their cannibal orgies. They turned with loathing from the food set so abundantly before them, at the idea that it was but intended to fatten them for a future banquet.

Recovering from the first stupor of alarm, their despair lent them additional force. They succeeded in breaking in the night from the kind of cage in which they were confined, and fled to the depths of the forest. Here they wandered about forlorn, exposed to all the dangers and miseries of the wilderness; famishing with hunger, yet dreading to approach the haunts of men. At length their sufferings drove them forth from the woods into another part of the country, where they were again taken captive. The cacique of this province.

however, was an enemy to the one from whom they had escaped, and of less cruel propensities. He spared their lives and contented himself with making them slaves, exacting from them the severest labour. They had to cut and draw wood, to procure water from a distance, and to carry enormous burdens. The cacique died soon after their capture, and was succeeded by another called Taxmar. He was a chief of some talent and sagacity, but he continued the same rigorous treatment of the captives. By degrees they sank beneath the hardships of their lot, until only two were left; one of them a sturdy sailor, named Gonzalo Guerrero, the other a kind of clerical adventurer, named Jeronimo de Aguilar. The sailor had the good luck to be transferred to the service of the cacique of the neighbouring province of Chatemal, by whom he was treated with kindness. Being a thorough son of the ocean, seasoned to all weathers, and ready for any chance or change, he soon accommodated himself to his new situation, followed the cacique to the wars, rose by his hardihood and prowess to be a distinguished warrior, and succeeded in gaining the heart and hand of an Indian princess.

The other survivor, Jeronimo de Aguilar, was of a different complexion. He was a native of Ecija, in Andalusia, and had been brought up to the church, and regularly ordained, and shortly afterwards had sailed in one of the expeditions to San Domingo, whence he had passed to Darien.

He proceeded in a different mode from that adopted by his comrade, the sailor, in his dealings with the Indians, and in one more suited to his opposite calling. Instead of playing the hero among the men, and the gallant among the women, he recollected his priestly obligations to humility and chastity. Accordingly, he made himself a model of meekness and obedience to the cacique and his warriors, while he closed his eyes to the charms of the infidel women. Nay, in the latter respect, he reinforced his clerical vows by a solemn promise to God to resist all temptations of the flesh, so he might be delivered out of the hands of these Gentiles.

Such were the opposite measures of the sailor and the saint, and they appear to have been equally successful. Aguilar, by his meek obedience to every order, however arbitrary and capricious, gradually won the good will of the cacique and his family. Taxmar, however, subjected him to many trials before he admitted him to his entire confidence. One day when

the Indians, painted and decorated in warlike style, were shooting at a mark, a warrior, who had for some time fixed his eyes on Aguilar, approached suddenly and seized him by the arm. "Thou seest," said he. "the certainty of these archers; if they aim at the eye, they hit the eye—if at the mouth, they hit the mouth—what wouldst thou think, if thou wert to be placed instead of the mark, and they were to shoot at and miss thee?"

Aguilar secretly trembled lest he should be the victim of some cruel caprice of the kind. Dissembling his fears, however, he replied with great submission, "I am your slave, and you may do with me as you please; but you are too wise to destroy a slave who is so useful and obedient." His answer pleased the cacique, who had secretly sent this warrior to try his humility.

Another trial of the worthy Jeronimo was less stern and fearful indeed, but equally perplexing. The cacique had remarked his unexampled discretion with respect to the sex, but doubted his sincerity. After laying many petty temptations in his way, which Jeronimo resisted with the self-denial of a saint, he at length determined to subject him to a fiery ordeal. He accordingly sent him on a fishing expedition accompanied by a buxom damsel of fourteen years of age: they were to pass the night by the sea-side, so as to be ready to fish at the first dawn of day, and were allowed but one hammock to sleep in. It was an embarrassing predicament —not apparently to the Indian beauty, but certainly to the scrupulous Jeronimo. He remembered, however, his double vow, and, suspending his hammock to two trees, resigned it to his companion; while, lighting a fire on the sea-shore, he stretched himself before it on the sand. It was, as he acknowledged, a night of fearful trial, for his sandy couch was cold and cheerless, the hammock warm and tempting; and the infidel damsel had been instructed to assail him with all manner of blandishments and reproaches. His resolution, however, though often shaken, was never overcome; and the morning dawned upon him still faithful to his vow.

The fishing over, he returned to the residence of the cacique, where his companion being closely questioned, made known the triumph of his self-denial before all the people. From that time forward he was held in great respect; the cacique especially treated him with unlimited confidence.

intrusting to him the care, not merely of his house, but of his wives, during his occasional absence.

Aguilar now felt ambitious of rising to greater consequence among the savages, but this he knew was only to be done by deeds of arms. He had the example of the sturdy seaman, Gonzalo Guerrero, before his eyes, who had become a great captain in the province in which he resided. He entreated Taxmar, therefore, to intrust him with bow and arrows, buckler and war-club, and to enroll him among his warriors. The cacique complied. Aguilar soon made himself expert at his new weapons, signalized himself repeatedly in battle, and, from his superior knowledge of the art of war, rendered Taxmar such essential service, as to excite the jealousy of some of the neighbouring caciques. One of them remonstrated with Taxmar for employing a warrior who was of a different religion, and insisted that Aguilar should be sacrificed to their gods. "No," replied Taxmar, "I will not make so base a return for such signal services: surely the gods of Aguilar must be good, since they aid him so effectually in maintaining a just cause."

The cacique was so incensed at this reply that he assembled his warriors and marched to make war upon Taxmar. Many of the counsellors of the latter urged him to give up the stranger who was the cause of this hostility. Taxmar, however, rejected their counsel with disdain and prepared for battle. Aguilar assured him that his faith in the Christians' God would be rewarded with victory; he, in fact, concerted a plan of battle, which was adopted. Concealing himself, with a chosen band of warriors, among thickets and herbage, he suffered the enemy to pass by in making their attack. Taxmar and his host pretended to give way at the first onset. The foe rushed heedlessly in pursuit; whereupon Aguilar and his ambuscade assaulted them in the rear. Taxmar turned upon them in front; they were thrown in confusion, routed with great slaughter and many of their chiefs taken prisoners. This victory gave Taxmar the sway over the land, and strengthened Aguilar more than ever in his good graces.

Several years had elapsed in this manner, when intelligence was brought to the province of the arrival on the neighbouring coast of great vessels of wonderful construction, filled with white and bearded men, who fought with thunder and lightning. It was, in fact, the squadron of Francisco Hernan-

dez de Cordova, then on a voyage of discovery. The tidings of this strange invasion spread consternation through the country, heightened, if we may credit the old Spanish writers, by a prophecy current among the savages of these parts, and uttered in former times by a priest named Chilam Cambal, who foretold that a white and bearded people would come from the region of the rising sun, who would overturn their idols and subjugate the land,

The heart of Jeronimo de Aguilar beat quick with hope when he heard of European ships at hand; he was distant from the coast, however, and perceived that he was too closely watched by the Indians to have any chance of escape. Dissembling his feelings, therefore, he affected to hear of the ships with perfect indifference, and to have no desire to join the strangers. The ships disappeared from the coast, and he remained disconsolate at heart, but was regarded with increased confidence by the natives.

His hopes were again revived in the course of a year or two by the arrival on the coast of other ships, which were those commanded by Juan de Grijalva, who coasted Yucatan in 1518; Aguilar, however, was again prevented by the jealous watchfulness of the Indians from attempting his escape, and when this squadron left the coast he considered all chance of deliverance at an end.

Seven years had gone by since his capture, and he had given up all hopes of being restored to his country and friends, when, in 1519, there arrived one day at the village three Indians, natives of the small island of Cozumel, which lies a few leagues in the sea, opposite the eastern coast of Yucatan. They brought tidings of another visit of white and bearded men to their shores, and one of them delivered a letter to Aguilar, which, being entirely naked, he had concealed in the long tresses of his hair which were bound round his head.

Aguilar received the letter with wonder and delight, and read it in presence of the cacique and his warriors. It proved to be from Hernando Cortez, who was at that time on his great expedition, which ended in the conquest of Mexico. He had been obliged by stress of weather to anchor at the island of Cozumel, where he learned from the natives that several white men were detained in captivity among the Indians on the neighbouring coast of Yucatan. Finding it impossible to approach the main-land with his ships, he prevailed upon three of the islanders, by means of gifts and promises, to

venture upon an embassy among their cannibal neighbours, and to convey a letter to the captive white men. Two of the smallest caravels of the squadron were sent under the command of Diego de Ordas, who was ordered to land the three messengers at the point of Cotoche, and to wait there eight days for their return.

The letter brought by these envoys informed the Christian captives of the force and destination of the squadron of Cortes, and of his having sent the caravels to wait for them at the point of Cotoche, with a ransom for their deliverance, inviting them to hasten and join him at Cozumel.

The transport of Aguilar on first reading the letter, was moderated when he reflected on the obstacles that might prevent him from profiting by this chance of deliverance. He had made himself too useful to the cacique to hope that he would readily give him his liberty, and he knew the jealous and irritable nature of the savages too well not to fear that even an application for leave to depart might draw upon him the severest treatment. He endeavoured, therefore, to operate upon the cacique through his apprehensions. To this end he informed him that the piece of paper which he held in his hand brought him a full account of the mighty armament that had arrived on the coast. He described the number of the ships and various particulars concerning the squadron, all which were amply corroborated by the testimony of the messengers. The cacique and his warriors were astonished at this strange mode of conveying intelligence from a distance, and regarded the letter as something mysterious and supernatural. Aguilar went on to relate the tremendous and superhuman powers of the people in these ships, who, armed with thunder and lightning, wreaked destruction on all who displeased them, while they dispensed inestimable gifts and benefits on such as proved themselves their friends. He, at the same time, spread before the cacique various presents brought by the messengers, as specimens of the blessings to be expected from the friendship of the strangers. The intimation was effectual. The cacique was filled with awe at the recital of the terrific powers of the white men, and his eyes were dazzled by the glittering trinkets displayed before him. He entreated Aguilar, therefore, to act as his ambassador and mediator, and to secure him the amity of the strangers.

Aguilar saw with transport the prospect of a speedy deliverance. In this moment of exultation, he bethought

himself of the only surviving comrade of his past fortunes, Gonzalo Guerrero, and, sending the letter of Cortez to him, invited him to accompany him in his escape. The sturdy seaman was at this time a great chieftain in his province, and his Indian bride had borne him a numerous progeny. His heart, however, yearned after his native country, and he might have been tempted to leave his honours and dignities, his infidel wife and half-savage offspring, behind him, but an insuperable, though somewhat ludicrous, obstacle presented itself to his wishes. Having long since given over all expectation of a return to civilized life, he had conformed to the customs of the country, and had adopted the external signs and decorations that marked him as a warrior and a man of rank. His face and hands were indelibly painted or tattooed; his ears and lips were slit to admit huge Indian ornaments, and his nose was drawn down almost to his mouth by a massy ring of gold, and a dangling jewel.

Thus curiously garbled and disfigured, the honest seaman felt, that, however he might be admired in Yucatan, he should be apt to have a hooting rabble at his heels in Spain. He made up his mind, therefore, to remain a great man among the savages, rather than run the risk of being shown as a man monster at home.

Finding that he declined accompanying him, Jeronimo de Aguilar set off for the point of Cotoche, escorted by three Indians. The time he had lost in waiting for Guerrero had nearly proved fatal to his hopes, for, when he arrived at the point, the caravels sent by Cortez had departed, though several crosses of reeds set up in different places gave tokens of the recent presence of Christians.

The only hope that remained was, that the squadron of Cortez might yet linger at the opposite island of Cozumel; but how was he to get there? While wandering disconsolately along the shore, he found a canoe, half buried in sand and water, and with one side in a state of decay; with the assistance of the Indians he cleaned it, and set it afloat, and on looking further found the stave of a hogshead which might serve for a paddle. It was a frail embarkation in which to cross an arm of the sea, several leagues wide, but there was no alternative. Prevailing on the Indians to accompany him, he launched forth in the canoe and coasted the main-land until he came to the narrowest part of the strait, where it was but four leagues across; here he stood directly for Cozu-

mel, contending, as well as he was able, with a strong current, and at length succeeded in reaching the island.

He had scarce landed when a party of Spaniards, who had been lying in wait, rushed forth from their concealment, sword in hand. The three Indians would have fled, but Aguilar reassured them, and, calling out to the Spaniards in their own language, assured them that he was a Christian. Then, throwing himself on his knees, and raising his eyes streaming with tears to heaven, he gave thanks to God for having restored him to his countrymen.

The Spaniards gazed at him with astonishment: from his language he was evidently a Castilian, but to all appearance he was an Indian. He was perfectly naked; wore his hair braided round his head in the manner of the country, and his complexion was burnt by the sun to a tawny colour. He had a bow in his hand, a quiver at his shoulder, and a net-work pouch at his side in which he carried his provisions.

The Spaniards proved to be a reconnoitring party, sent out by Cortez to watch the approach of the canoe, which had been descried coming from Yucatan. Cortez had given up all hopes of being joined by the captives, the caravel having waited the allotted time at Cotoche, and returned without news of them. He had in fact made sail to prosecute his voyage, but fortunately one of his ships sprung a leak, which obliged him to return to the island.

When Jeronimo de Aguilar and his companions arrived in presence of Cortez, who was surrounded by his officers, they made a profound reverence, squatted on the ground, laid their bows and arrows beside them, and touching their right hands, wet with spittle, on the ground, rubbed them about the region of the heart, such being their sign of the most devoted submission.

Cortez greeted Aguilar with a hearty welcome, and raising him from the earth, took from his own person a large yellow mantle lined with crimson, and threw it over his shoulders. The latter, however, had for so long a time gone entirely naked, that even this scanty covering was at first almost insupportable, and he had become so accustomed to the diet of the natives, that he found it difficult to reconcile his stomach to the meat and drink set before him.

When he had sufficiently recovered from the agitation of his arrival among Christians, Cortez drew from him the particulars of his story, and found that he was related to one of

his own friends, the licentiate Marcos de Aguilar. He treated him, therefore, with additional kindness and respect, and retained him about his person to aid him as an interpreter in his great Mexican expedition.

The happiness of Jeronimo de Aguilar at once more being restored to his countrymen, was doomed to suffer some alloy from the disasters that had happened in his family. Peter Martyr records a touching anecdote of the effect produced upon his mother by the tidings of his misfortune. A vague report reached her in Spain, that her son had fallen into the hands of cannibals. All the horrible tales concerning the treatment of these savages to their prisoners rushed to her imagination, and she went distracted. Whenever she beheld roasted meat, or flesh upon the spit, she would fill the house with her outcries. "Oh, wretched mother! oh, most miserable of women!" would she exclaim; "behold the limbs of my murdered son!"*

It is to be hoped that the tidings of his deliverance had a favourable effect upon her intellects, and that she lived to rejoice at his after fortunes. He served Hernando Cortez with great courage and ability throughout his Mexican conquests, acting sometimes as a soldier, sometimes as interpreter and ambassador to the Indians, and in reward of his fidelity, and services, was appointed regidor, or civil governor of the city of Mexico.

MICER CODRO, THE ASTROLOGER.

The fate of the Italian astrologer, Micer Codro, who predicted the end of Vasco Nuñez, is related by the historian Oviedo, with some particulars that border upon the marvelous. It appears that, after the death of his patron, he continued for several years rambling about the New World, in the train of the Spanish discoverers; but intent upon studying the secrets of its natural history, rather than searching after its treasures.

In the course of his wanderings he was once coasting the shores of the Southern Ocean, in a ship commanded by one Geronimo de Valenzuela, from whom he received such cruel treatment as to cause his death, though, what the nature of the treatment was, we are not precisely informed.

* P. Martyr, decad. iv. cap. 6.

Finding his end approaching, the unfortunate astrologer addressed Valenzuela in the most solemn manner: "Captain," said he, "you have caused my death by your cruelty; I now summon you to appear with me, within a year, before the Judgment Seat of God!"

The captain made a light and scoffing answer, and treated his summons with contempt.

They were then off the coast of Veragua, near the verdant islands of Zebaco, which lie at the entrance of the Gulf of Parita or Paria. The poor astrologer gazed wistfully with his dying eyes upon the green and shady groves, and entreated the pilot or mate of the caravel to land him on one of the islands, that he might die in peace. "Micer Codro," replied the pilot, "those are not islands, but points of land: there are no islands hereabout."

"There are, indeed," replied the astrologer, "two good and pleasant islands, well watered, and near to the coast, and within them is a great bay with a harbour. Land me, I pray you, upon one of these islands, that I may have comfort in my dying hour."

The pilot, whose rough nature had been touched with pity for the condition of the unfortunate astrologer, listened to his prayer, and conveyed him to the shore, where he found the opinion he had given of the character of the coast to be correct. He laid him on the herbage in the shade, where the poor wanderer soon expired. The pilot then dug a grave at the foot of a tree, where he buried him with all possible decency, and carved a cross on the bark to mark the grave.

Some time afterwards, Oviedo, the historian, was on the island with this very pilot, who showed him the cross on the tree, and gave his honest testimony to the good character and worthy conduct of Micer Codro. Oviedo, as he regarded the nameless grave, passed the eulogium of a scholar upon the poor astrologer: "He died," says he, "like Pliny, in the discharge of his duties, travelling about the world to explore the secrets of nature." According to his account, the prediction of Micer Codro held good with respect to Valenzuela, as it had in the case of Vasco Nuñez. The captain died within the term in which he had summoned him to appear before the tribunal of God!*

* Vide Oviedo, Hist. Gen., lib. xxxix. cap. 2.

JUAN PONCE DE LEON,

CONQUEROR OF PORTO RICO, AND DISCOVERER OF FLORIDA.

CHAPTER I.—[1508.]

MANY years had elapsed since the discovery and colonization of Hayti, yet its neighbouring island of Boriquen, or, as the Spaniards called it, St. Juan (since named Porto Rico), remained unexplored. It was beautiful to the eye as beheld from the sea, having lofty mountains clothed with forest trees of prodigious size and magnificent foliage. There were broad fertile valleys also, always fresh and green; for the frequent showers and abundant streams in these latitudes, and the absence of all wintry frosts, produce a perpetual verdure. Various ships had occasionally touched at the island, but their crews had never penetrated into the interior. It was evident, however, from the number of hamlets and scattered houses, and the smoke rising in all directions from among the trees, that it was well peopled. The inhabitants still continued to enjoy their life of indolence and freedom, unmolested by the ills that overwhelmed the neighbouring island of Hayti. The time had arrived, however, when they were to share the common lot of their fellow savages, and to sink beneath the yoke of the white man.

At the time when Nicholas de Ovando, Governor of Hispaniola, undertook to lay waste the great province of Higuey, which lay at the eastern end of Hayti, he sent as commander of part of the troops a veteran soldier, named Juan Ponce de Leon. He was a native of Leon in Spain, and in his boyhood had been page to Pedro Nuñez de Guzman, Señor of Toral.* From an early age he had been schooled to war, and had served in various campaigns against the Moors of Granada. He accompanied Columbus in his second voyage, in 1493, and was afterwards, it is said, one of the partisans of Francisco Roldan, in his rebellion against the admiral. Having distinguished himself in various battles with the Indians, and acquired a name for sagacity as well as valour, he received a command subordinate to Juan de Esquibel in the campaign against Higuey, and seconded his chief so valiantly in that sanguinary expedition, that, after the subjugation of the province, he was appointed to the command of it, as lieutenant of the Governor of Hispaniola.

* Incas, Garcilaso de la Vega, Hist. Florida, tom. iv cap. 37

Juan Ponce de Leon had all the impatience of quiet life and the passion for exploit of a veteran campaigner. He had not been long in the tranquil command of his province of Higuey, before he began to cast a wistful eye towards the green mountains of Boriquen. They were directly opposite, and but twelve or fourteen leagues distant, so as to be distinctly seen in the transparent atmosphere of the tropics. The Indians of the two islands frequently visited each other, and in this way Juan Ponce received the usual intelligence, that the mountains he had eyed so wistfully abounded with gold. He readily obtained permission from Governor Ovando to make an expedition to this island, and embarked in the year 1508 in a caravel, with a few Spaniards and several Indian interpreters and guides.

After an easy voyage, he landed on the woody shores of the island, near to the residence of the principa] cacique, Agueybanà. He found the chieftain seated in patriarchal style, under the shades of his native groves, and surrounded by his family, consisting of his mother, step-father, brother, and sister, who vied with each other in paying homage to the strangers. Juan Ponce, in fact, was received into the bosom of the family, and the cacique exchanged names with him, which is the Indian pledge of perpetual amity. Juan Ponce also gave Christian names to the mother and step-father of the cacique, and would fain have baptized them, but they declined the ceremony, though they always took a pride in the names thus given them.

In the zeal to gratify his guests, the cacique took them to various parts of the island. They found the interior to corre spond with the external appearance. It was wild and moun tainous, but magnificently wooded, with deep rich valleys fertilized by limpid streams. Juan Ponce requested the cacique to reveal to him the riches of the island. The simple Indian showed him his most productive fields of Yuca, groves laden with delicious fruit, the sweetest and purest fountains, and the coolest runs of water.

Ponce de Leon heeded but little these real blessings, and demanded whether the island produced no gold. Upon this the cacique conducted him to two rivers, the Manatuabon and the Zebuco, where the very pebbles seemed richly veined with gold, and large grains shone among the sand through the limpid water. Some of the largest of these were gathered by the Indians and given to the Spaniards. The quantity thus

procured confirmed the hopes of Juan Ponce ; and leaving several of his companions in the house of the hospitable cacique, he returned to Hayti to report the success of his expedition. He presented the specimens of gold to the governor Ovando, who assayed them in a crucible. The ore was not so fine as that of Hispaniola, but, as it was supposed to exist in greater quantities, the governor determined on the subjugation of the island, and confided the enterprise to Juan Ponce de Leon.

CHAPTER II.—[1509.]

THE natives of Boriquen were more warlike than those of Hispaniola; being accustomed to the use of arms from the necessity of repelling the frequent invasions of the Caribs. It was supposed, therefore, that the conquest of their island would be attended with some difficulty, and Juan Ponce de Leon made another, and, as it were, a preparatory visit, to make himself acquainted with the country, and with the nature and resources of the inhabitants. He found the companions whom he had left there on his former visit, in good health and spirits, and full of gratitude towards the cacique Agueybanà, who had treated them with undiminished hospitality. There appeared to be no need of violence to win the island from such simple-hearted and confiding people. Juan Ponce flattered himself with the hopes of being appointed to its government by Ovando, and of bringing it peaceably into subjection. After remaining some time on the island, he returned to San Domingo to seek the desired appointment, but, to his surprise, found the whole face of affairs had changed during his absence.

His patron, the governor Ovando, had been recalled to Spain, and Don Diego Columbus, son of the renowned discoverer, appointed in his place to the command of San Domingo. To add to the perplexities of Juan Ponce, a cavalier had already arrived from Spain, empowered by the king to form a settlement and build a fortress on the island of Porto Rico. His name was Christoval de Sotomayor; he was brother to the Count of Camina, and had been secretary to Philip I, surnamed the Handsome, king of Castile and father of Charles V.

Don Diego Columbus was highly displeased with the act of the king in granting these powers to Sotomayor, as it had been done without his knowledge and consent, and of course in disregard of his prerogative, as viceroy, to be consulted as to all appointments made within his jurisdiction. He refused,

therefore, to put Sotomayor in possession of the island. He paid as little respect to the claims of Juan Ponce de Leon, whom he regarded with an ungracious eye as a favourite of his predecessor Ovando. To settle the matter effectually, he exerted what he considered his official and hereditary privilege, and chose officers to suit himself, appointing one Juan Ceron to the government of Porto Rico, and Miguel Diaz to serve as his lieutenant.*

Juan Ponce de Leon and his rival candidate, Christoval de Sotomayor, bore their disappointment with a good grace. Though the command was denied them, they still hoped to improve their fortunes in the island, and accordingly joined the crowd of adventurers that accompanied the newly appointed governor.

New changes soon took place in consequence of the jealousies and misunderstandings between King Ferdinand and the admiral as to points of privilege. The former still seemed disposed to maintain the right of making appointments without consulting Don Diego, and exerted it in the present instance; for when Ovando, on his return to Spain, made favourable representation of the merits of Juan Ponce de Leon, and set forth his services in exploring Porto Rico, the king appointed him governor of that island, and signified specifically that Don Diego Columbus should not presume to displace him.

CHAPTER III.

Juan Ponce de Leon assumed the command of the island of Boriquen in the year 1509. Being a fiery high-handed old soldier, his first step was to quarrel with Juan Ceron and Miguel Diaz, the ex-governor and his lieutenant, and to send them prisoners to Spain.*

He was far more favourable to his late competitor, Christoval de Sotomayor. Finding him to be a cavalier of noble blood and high connections, yet void of pretension, and of most accommodating temper, he offered to make him his lieutenant, and to give him the post of alcalde mayor, an offer which was thankfully accepted.

The pride of rank, however, which follows a man even into

* If the reader has perused the history of Columbus, he may remember the romantic adventure of this Miguel Diaz with a female cacique, which led to the discovery of the gold mines of Hayna, and the founding of the city of San Domingo.

† Herrera, decad. i. lib. vii. cap. 13.

the wilderness, soon interfered with the quiet of Sotomayor; he was ridiculed for descending so much below his birth and dignity, as to accept a subaltern situation to a simple gentleman in the island which he had originally aspired to govern. He could not withstand these sneers, but resigned his appointment, and remained in the island as a private individual; establishing himself in a village where he had a large repartimiento, or allotment of Indians, assigned to him by a grant from the king.

Juan Ponce fixed his seat of government in a town called Caparra, which he founded on the northern side of the island, about a league from the sea, in a neighbourheod supposed to abound in gold. It was in front of the port called Rico, which subsequently gave its name to the island. The road to the town was up a mountain, through a dense forest, and so rugged and miry that it was the bane of man and beast. It cost more to convey provisions and merchandise up this league of mountain, than it did to bring them from Spain.

Juan Ponce, being firmly seated in his government, began to carve and portion out the island, to found towns, and to distribute the natives into repartimientos, for the purpose of exacting their labour.

The poor Indians soon found the difference between the Spaniards as guests, and the Spaniards as masters. They were driven to despair by the heavy tasks imposed upon them; for to their free spirits and indolent habits, restraint and labour were worse than death. Many of the most hardy and daring proposed a general insurrection, and a massacre of their oppressors; the great mass, however, were deterred by the belief that the Spaniards were supernatural beings and could not be killed.

A shrewd and sceptical cacique, named Brayoan, determined to put their immortality to the test. Hearing that a young Spaniard named Salzedo, was passing through his lands, he sent a party of his subjects to escort him, giving them secret instructions how they were to act. On coming to a river they took Salzedo on their shoulders to carry him across, but, when in the midst of the stream, they let him fall, and, throwing themselves upon him, pressed him under water until he was drowned. Then dragging his body to the shore, and still doubting his being dead, they wept and howled over him, making a thousand apologies for having fallen upon him, and kept him so long beneath the surface.

The cacique Brayoan came to examine the body and pronounced it lifeless; but the Indians, still fearing it might possess lurking immortality and ultimately revive, kept watch over it for three days, until it showed incontestable signs of putrefaction.

Being now convinced that the strangers were mortal men like themselves, they readily entered into a general conspiracy to destroy them.*

CHAPTER IV.

The prime mover of the conspiracy among the natives was Agueybanà, brother and successor to the hospitable cacique of the same name, who had first welcomed the Spaniards to the island, and who had fortunately closed his eyes in peace, before his native groves were made the scenes of violence and oppression. The present cacique had fallen within the repartimiento of Don Christoval de Sotomayor, and, though treated by that cavalier with kindness, could never reconcile his proud spirit to the yoke of vassalage.

Agueybanà held secret councils with his confederate caciques, in which they concerted a plan of operations. As the Spaniards were scattered about in different places, it was agreed that, at a certain time, each cacique should dispatch those within his province. In arranging the massacre of those within his own domains, Agueybanà assigned to one of his inferior caciques the task of surprising the village of Sotomayor, giving him 3000 warriors for the purpose. He was to assail the village in the dead of the night, to set fire to the houses, and to slaughter all the inhabitants. He proudly, however, reserved to himself the honour of killing Don Christoval with his own hand.

Don Christoval had an unsuspected friend in the very midst of his enemies. Being a cavalier of gallant appearance and amiable and courteous manners, he had won the affections of an Indian princess, the sister of the cacique Agueybanà. She had overheard enough of the war-council of her brother and his warriors to learn that Sotomayor was in danger. The life of her lover was more precious in her eyes than the safety of her brother and her tribe; hastening, therefore, to him, she told him all that she knew or feared, and warned him to be upon his guard. Sotomayor appears to have been of the most easy and incautious nature, void of all evil and deceit himself, and slow to suspect any thing of the kind in

* Herrera, decad. i. lib. viii. cap. 13.

others He considered the apprehension of the princess as dictated by her fond anxiety, and neglected to profit by her warning.

He received, however, about the same time, information from a different quarter, tending to the same point. A Spaniard, versed in the language and customs of the natives, had observed a number gathering together one evening, painted and decorated, as if for battle. Suspecting some lurking mischief, he stripped and painted himself in their manner, and, favoured by the obscurity of the night, succeeded in mingling among them undiscovered. They were assembled round a fire performing one of their mystic war-dances, to the chant of an areyto or legendary ballad. The strophes and responses treated of revenge and slaughter, and repeatedly mentioned the death of Sotomayor.

The Spaniard withdrew unperceived, and hastened to apprise Don Christoval of his danger. The latter still made light of these repeated warnings; revolving them, however, in his mind in the stillness of the night, he began to feel some uneasiness, and determined to repair in the morning to Juan Ponce de Leon, in his stronghold at Caparra. With his fated heedlessness, or temerity, however, he applied to Agueybana for Indians to carry his baggage, and departed slightly armed, and accompanied by but three Spaniards, although he had to pass through close and lonely forests, where he would be at the mercy of any treacherous or lurking foe.

The cacique watched the departure of his intended victim, and set out shortly afterwards, dogging his steps at a distance through the forest, accompanied by a few chosen warriors. Agueybana and his party had not proceeded far when they met a Spaniard named Juan Gonzalez, who spoke the Indian language. They immediately assailed him and wounded him in several places. He threw himself at the feet of the cacique, imploring his life in the most abject terms. The chief spared him for the moment, being eager to make sure of Don Christoval. He overtook that incautious cavalier in the very heart of the woodland, and stealing silently upon him burst forth suddenly with his warriors from the covert of the thickets, giving the fatal war-whoop. Before Sotomayor could put himself upon his guard a blow from the war-club of the cacique felled him to the earth, when he was quickly dispatched by repeated blows. The four Spaniards who accompanied him shared his fate, being assailed, not merely by the

warriors who had come in pursuit of them, but by their own Indian guides.

When Agueybanà had glutted his vengeance on this unfortunate cavalier, he returned in quest of Juan Gonzalez. The latter, however, had recovered sufficiently from his wounds to leave the place where he had been assailed, and, dreading the return of the savages, had climbed into a tree and concealed himself among the branches. From thence, with trembling anxiety, he watched his pursuers as they searched all the surrounding forest for him. Fortunately they did not think of looking up into the trees, but, after beating the bushes for some time, gave up the search. Though he saw them depart, he did not venture from his concealment until the night had closed; he then descended from the tree, and made the best of his way to the residence of certain Spaniards, where his wounds were dressed. When this was done, he waited not to take repose, but repaired by a circuitous route to Caparra, and informed Juan Ponce de Leon of the danger he supposed to be still impending over Sotomayor, for he knew not that the enemy had accomplished his death. Juan Ponce immediately sent out forty men to his relief. They came to the scene of massacre, where they found the body of the unfortunate cavalier, partly buried, but with the feet out of the earth.

In the meantime the savages had accomplished the destruction of the village of Sotomayor. They approached it unperceived, through the surrounding forest, and entering it in the dead of the night, set fire to the straw-thatched houses, and attacked the Spaniards as they endeavoured to escape from the flames.

Several were slain at the onset, but a brave Spaniard, named Diego de Salazar, rallied his countrymen, inspirited them to beat off the enemy, and succeeded in conducting the greater part of them, though sorely mangled and harassed, to the stronghold of the governor at Caparra. Scarcely had these fugitives gained the fortress, when others came hurrying in from all quarters, bringing similar tales of conflagration and massacre. For once a general insurrection, so often planned in savage life, against the domination of the white men, was crowned with success. All the villages founded by the Spaniards had been surprised, about a hundred of their inhabitants destroyed, and the survivors driven to take refuge in a beleaguered fortress.

CHAPTER V.

JUAN PONCE DE LEON might now almost be considered a governor without territories and a general without soldiers. His villages were smoking ruins, and his whole force did not amount to a hundred men, several of whom were disabled by their wounds. He had an able and implacable foe in Agueybanà, who took the lead of all the other caciques, and even sent envoys to the Caribs of the neighbouring islands, entreating them to forget all ancient animosities and to make common cause against these strangers—the deadly enemies of the whole Indian race. In the meantime the whole of this wild island was in rebellion, and the forests around the fortress of Caparra rang with the whoops and yells of the savages, the blasts of their war-conchs, and the stormy roaring of their drums.

Juan Ponce was a staunch and wary old soldier, and not easily daunted. He remained grimly ensconced within his fortress, whence he dispatched messengers in all haste to Hispaniola, imploring immediate assistance. In the meantime, he tasked his wits to divert the enemy and keep them at bay. He divided his little force into three bodies of about thirty men each, under the command of Diego Salazar, Miguel de Toro, and Luis de Anasco, and sent them out alternately to make surprises and assaults, to form ambuscades, and to practise the other stratagems of partisan warfare, which he had learnt in early life, in his campaigns against the Moors of Granada.

One of his most efficient warriors was a dog named Berezillo, renowned for courage, strength, and sagacity. It is said that he could distinguish those of the Indians who were allies, from those who were enemies of the Spaniards. To the former he was docile and friendly, to the latter fierce and implacable. He was the terror of the natives, who were unaccustomed to powerful and ferocious animals, and did more service in this wild warfare, than could have been rendered by several soldiers. His prowess was so highly appreciated that his master received for him the pay, allowance, and share of booty, assigned to a cross-bow man, which was the highest stipend given.*

* This famous dog was killed some years afterwards by a poisoned arrow, as he was swimming in the sea in pursuit of a Carib Indian. He left, however, a numerous progeny and a great name behind him; and his merits and exploits were long a favourite theme among the

At length the stout old cavalier Juan Ponce was reinforced in his stronghold, by troops from Hispaniola, whereupon he sallied forth boldly to take revenge upon those who had thus held him in a kind of durance. His foe, Agueybanà was at that time encamped in his own territories with more than five thousand warriors, but in a negligent, unwatchful state, for he knew nothing of the reinforcements of the Spaniards, and supposed Juan Ponce shut up with his handful of men in Caparra. The old soldier, therefore, took him completely by surprise, and routed him with great slaughter. Indeed it is said the Indians were struck with a kind of panic when they saw the Spaniards as numerous as ever, notwithstanding the number they had massacred. Their belief in their immortality revived, they fancied that those whom they had slain had returned to life, and they despaired of victory over beings who could thus arise with renovated vigour from the grave. Various petty actions and skirmishes afterwards took place, in which the Indians were defeated. Aguebybanà, however, disdained this petty warfare, and stirred up his countrymen to assemble their forces, and by one grand assault to decide the fate of themselves and their island. Juan Ponce received secret tidings of their intent, and of the place where they were assembling. He had at that time barely eighty men at his disposal, but they were cased in steel and proof against the weapons of the savages. Without stopping to reflect, the high-mettled old cavalier put himself at their head, and led them through the forest in quest of the foe.

It was nearly sunset when he came in sight of the Indian camp, and the multitude of warriors assembled there made him pause, and almost repent his temerity. He was as shrewd, however, as he was hardy and resolute. Ordering some of his men in the advance to skirmish with the enemy, he hastily threw up a slight fortification with the assistance of the rest. When it was finished he withdrew his forces into it, and ordered them to keep merely on the defensive. The Indians made repeated attacks but were as often repulsed with loss. Some of the Spaniards, impatient of this covert would sally forth in open field with pike and cross-bow, but were called back within the fortification by their wary commander.

The cacique Agueybanà was enraged at finding his host of

Spanish colonists. He was father to the renowned Leoncico, the faithful dog of Vasco Nuñez, which resembled him in looks and equalled him in prowess.

warriors thus baffled and kept at bay by a mere handful of Spaniards. He beheld the night closing in, and feared that in the darkness the enemy would escape. Summoning his choicest warriors round him, therefore, he led the way in a general assault, when, as he approached the fortress, he received a mortal wound from an arquebuse, and fell dead upon the spot.

The Spaniards were not aware at first of the importance of the chief whom they had slain. They soon surmised it, however, from the confusion among the enemy, who bore off the body with great lamentations, and made no further attack.

The wary Juan Ponce took advantage of the evident distress of the foe, to draw off his small forces in the night, happy to get out of the terrible jeopardy into which a rash confidence had betrayed him. Some of his fiery spirited officers would have kept the field in spite of the overwhelming force of the enemy. "No, no," said the shrewd veteran, "it is better to protract the war than to risk all upon a single battle."

While Juan Ponce de Leon was fighting hard to maintain his sway over the island, his transient dignity was overturned by another power, against which the prowess of the old soldier was of no avail. King Ferdinand had repented of the step he had ill-advisedly taken, in superseding the governor and lieutenant-governor appointed by Don Diego Columbus. He became convinced, though rather tardily, that it was an infringement of the rights of the admiral, and that policy, as well as justice, required him to retract it. When Juan Ceron and Miguel Diaz, therefore, came prisoners to Spain, he received them graciously, conferred many favours on them to atone for their rough ejectment from office, and finally, after some time, sent them back empowered to resume the command of the island. They were ordered, however, on no account to manifest rancour or ill-will against Juan Ponce de Leon, or to interfere with any property he might hold, either in houses, lands, or Indians; but, on the contrary, to cultivate the most friendly understanding with him. The king also wrote to the hardy veteran, explaining to him that this restitution of Ceron and Diaz had been determined upon in council, as a mere act of justice due to them, but was not intended as a censure upon his conduct, and that means should be sought to idemnify him for the loss of his command.

By the time that the governor and his lieutenant reached

the island, Juan Ponce had completed its subjugation. The death of the island champion, the brave Agueybanà, had in fact been a deathblow to the natives, and shows how much, in savage warfare, depends upon a single chieftain. They never made head of war afterwards, but, dispersing among their forests and mountains, fell gradually under the power of the Spaniards. Their subsequent fate was like that of the neighbours of Hayti. They were employed in the labour of the mines, and in other rude toils so repugnant to their nature that they sank beneath them, and, in a little while, almost all the aboriginals disappeared from the island.

CHAPTER VI.

Juan Ponce de Leon resigned the command of Porto Rico with tolerable grace. The loss of one wild island and wild government was of little moment, when there was a new world to be shared out, where a bold soldier like himself, with sword and buckler, might readily carve out new fortune for himself. Besides, he had now amassed wealth to assist him in his plans, and, like many of the early discoverers, his brain was teeming with the most romantic enterprises. He had conceived the idea that there was yet a third world to be discovered, and he hoped to be the first to reach its shores, and thus secure a renown equal to that of Columbus.

While cogitating these things, and considering which way he should strike forth in the unexplored regions around him, he met with some old Indians, who gave him tidings of a country which promised, not merely to satisfy the cravings of his ambition, but to realize the fondest daeams of the poets. They assured him that, far to the north, there existed a land abounding in gold and in all manner of delights; but, above all, possessing a river of such wonderful virtue, that whoever bathed in it would be restored to youth! They added, that in times past, before the arrival of the Spaniards, a large party of the natives of Cuba had departed northward in search of this happy land and this river of life, and, having never returned, it was concluded that they were flourishing in renovated youth, detained by the pleasures of that enchanting country.

Here was the dream of the alchemist realized! one had but to find this gifted land, and revel in the enjoyment of boundless riches and perennial youth! nay, some of the ancient Indians declared that it was not necessary to go so far in quest

of these rejuvenating waters, for that, in a certain island of the Bahama group, called Bimini, which lay far out in the ocean, there was a fountain possessing the same marvellous and inestimable qualities.

Juan Ponce de Leon listened to these tales with fond credulity. He was advancing in life, and the ordinary term of existence seemed insufficient for his mighty plans. Could he but plunge into this marvellous fountain or gifted river, and come out with his battered war-worn body restored to the strength and freshness and suppleness of youth, and his head still retaining the wisdom and knowledge of age, what enterprises might he not accomplish in the additional course of vigorous years insured to him!

It may seem incredible, at the present day, that a man of years and experience could yield any faith to a story which resembles the wild fiction of an Arabian tale; but the wonders and novelties breaking upon the world in that age of discovery almost realized the illusions of fable, and the imaginations of the Spanish voyagers had become so heated, that they were capable of any stretch of credulity.

So fully persuaded was the worthy old cavalier of the existence of the region described to him, that he fitted out three ships at his own expense to prosecute the discovery, nor had he any difficulty in finding adventurers in abundance ready to cruise with him in quest of this fairy-land.*

* It was not the credulous minds of voyagers and adventurers alone that were heated by these Indian traditions and romantic fables. Men of learning and eminence were likewise beguiled by them: witness the following extract from the second decade of Peter Martyr, addressed to Leo X., then bishop of Rome:—

"Among the islands on the north side of Hispaniola there is one about 325 leagues distant, as they say which have searched the same, in the which is a continual spring of running water, of such marvellous virtue, that the water thereof being drank, perhaps with some diet, maketh olde men young again. And here I must make protestation to your Holiness not to think this to be said lightly or rashly, for they have so spread this rumour for a truth throughout all the court, that not only all the people, but also many of them whom wisdom or fortune hath divided from the common sort, think it to be true; but, if you will ask my opinion herein, I will answer, that I will not attribute so great power to nature, but that God hath no lesse reserved this prerogative to himself than to search the hearts of men, &c.—P. Martyr, decad. ii. cap. 10, Lok's translation.

CHAPTER VII.—[1512.]

It was on the 3rd of March, 1512, that Juan Ponce sailed with his three ships from the port of St. Germain, in the island of Porto Rico. He kept for some distance along the coast of Hispaniola, and then, stretching away to the northward, made for the Bahama Islands, and soon fell in with the first of the group. He was favoured with propitious weather and tranquil seas, and glided smoothly with the wind and current along that verdant archipelago, visiting one island after another, until, on the fourteenth of the month, he arrived at Guanahani, or St. Salvador, where Christopher Columbus had first put his foot on the shores of the New World. His inquiries for the island of Bimini were all in vain, and as to the fountain of youth, he may have drank of every fountain, and river, and lake, in the archipelago, even to the salt pools of Turk's Island, without being a whit the younger.

Still he was not discouraged; but, having repaired his ships, he again put to sea and shaped his course to the northwest. On Sunday, the 27th of March, he came in sight of what he supposed to be an island, but was prevented from landing by adverse weather. He continued hovering about it for several days, buffeted by the elements, until, in the night of the second of April, he succeeded in coming to anchor under the land, in thirty degrees eight minutes of latitude. The whole country was in the fresh bloom of spring; the trees were gay with blossoms, and the fields covered with flowers; from which circumstance, as well as from having discovered it on Palm Sunday (Pascua Florida), he gave it the name of Florida, which it retains to the present day. The Indian name of the country was Cautio.*

Juan Ponce landed, and took possession of the country in the name of the Castilian sovereigns. He afterwards continued for several weeks ranging the coasts of this flowery land, and struggling against the gulf-stream and the various currents which sweep it. He doubled Cape Cañaveral, and reconnoitred the southern and eastern shores without suspecting that this was a part of Terra Firma. In all his attempts to explore the country, he met with resolute and implacable hostility on the part of the natives, who appeared to be a fierce and warlike race. He was disappointed, also, in his hopes of finding gold, nor did any of the rivers or

* Herrera, Hist. Ind., decad. i. lib. ix. cap. 10.

fountains which he examined, possess the rejuvenating virtue. Convinced, therefore, that this was not the promised land of Indian tradition, he turned his prow homeward on the fourteenth of June, with the intention, in the way, of making one more attempt to find the island of Bimini.

In the outset of his return he discovered a group of islets abounding with sea-fowl and marine animals. On one of them, his sailors, in the course of a single night, caught one hundred and seventy turtles, and might have taken many more, had they been so inclined. They likewise took fourteen sea-wolves, and killed a vast quantity of pelicans and other birds. To this group Juan Ponce gave the name of the Tortugas, or Turtles, which they still retain.

Proceeding in his cruise, he touched at another group of islets near the Lucayos, to whom he gave the name of La Vieja, or the Old Woman group, because he found no inhabitant there but one old Indian woman.* This ancient sibyl he took on board his ship, to give him information about the labyrinth of islands into which he was entering, and perhaps he could not have had a more suitable guide in the eccentric quest he was making. Notwithstanding her pilotage, however, he was exceedingly baffled and perplexed in his return voyage among the Bahama Islands, for he was forcing his way, as it were, against the course of nature, and encountering the currents which sweep westward along these islands, and the trade-wind which accompanies them. For a long time he struggled with all kinds of difficulties and dangers; and was obliged to remain upwards of a month in one of the islands to repair the damages which his ship had suffered in a storm.

Disheartened at length by the perils and trials with which nature seemed to have beset the approach to Bimini, as to some fairy island in romance, he gave up the quest in person, and sent in his place a trusty captain, Juan Perez de Ortubia, who departed in one of the other ships, guided by the experienced old woman of the isles, and by another Indian. As to Juan Ponce, he made the best of his way back to Porto Rico, where he arrived infinitely poorer in purse and wrinkled in brow, by this cruise after inexhaustible riches and perpetual youth.

He had not been long in port when his trusty envoy, Juan Perez, likewise arrived. Guided by the sage old woman, he

* Herrera, decad. i. lib. ix.

had succeeded in finding the long-sought-for Bimini. He described it as being large, verdant, and covered with beautiful groves. There were crystal springs and limpid streams in abundance, which kept the island in perpetual verdure, but none that could restore to an old man the vernal greenness of his youth.

Thus ended the romantic expedition of Juan Ponce de Leon. Like many other pursuits of a chimera, it terminated in the acquisition of a substantial good. Though he had failed in finding the fairy fountain of youth, he had discovered in place of it the important country of Florida.*

CHAPTER VIII.—[1514.]

Juan Ponce de Leon now repaired to Spain, to make a report of his voyage to King Ferdinand. The hardy old cavalier experienced much raillery from the witlings of the court, on account of his visionary voyage, though many wise men had been as credulous as himself at the outset. The king, however, received him with great favour, and conferred on him the title of Adelantado of Bimini and Florida, which last was as yet considered an island. Permission was also granted him to recruit men either in Spain or in the colonies for a settlement in Florida; but he deferred entering on his command for the present, being probably discouraged and impoverished by the losses in his last expedition, or finding a difficulty in enlisting adventurers. At length another enterprise presented itself. The Caribs had by this time become a terror to the Spanish inhabitants of many of the islands, making descents upon the coasts and carrying off captives, who it was supposed were doomed to be devoured by these cannibals. So frequent were their invasions of the island of Porto Rico, that it was feared they would ultimately oblige the Spaniards to abandon it.

King Ferdinand, therefore, in 1514, ordered that three

* The belief of the existence, in Florida, of a river like that sought by Juan Ponce, was long prevalent among the Indians of Cuba, and the caciques were anxious to discover it. That a party of the natives of Cuba once went in search of it and remained there, appears to be a fact, as their descendants were afterwards to be traced among the people of Florida. Las Casas says, that, even in his days, many persisted in seeking this mystery, and some thought that the river was no other than that called the Jordan, at the point of St. Helena; without considering that the name was given to it by the Spaniards in the year 1520, when they discovered the land of Chicora.

ships, well armed and manned, should be fitted out in Seville, destined to scour the islands of the Caribs, and to free the seas of those cannibal marauders. The command of the armada was given to Juan Ponce de Leon, from his knowledge in Indian warfare, and his varied and rough experience, which had mingled in him the soldier with the sailor. He was instructed in the first place to assail the Caribs of those islands most contiguous and dangerous to Porto Rico, and then to make war on those of the coast of Terra Firma, in the neighbourhood of Carthagena. He was afterwards to take the captaincy of Porto Rico, and to attend to the repartimientos, or distributions of the Indians, in conjunction with a person to be appointed by Diego Columbus.

The enterprise suited the soldier-like spirit of Juan Ponce de Leon, and the gallant old cavalier set sail full of confidence, in January, 1515, and steered direct for the Caribbees, with a determination to give a wholesome castigation to the whole savage Archipelago. Arriving at the island of Guadaloupe, he cast anchor, and sent men on shore for wood and water, and women to wash the clothing of the crews, with a party of soldiers to mount guard.

Juan Ponce had not been as wary as usual, or he had to deal with savages unusually adroit in warfare. While the people were scattered carelessly on the shore, the Caribs rushed forth from an ambuscade, killed the greater part of the men, and carried off the women to the mountains.

This blow at the very onset of his vaunted expedition sank deep into the heart of Juan Ponce, and put an end to all his military excitement. Humbled and mortified, he set sail for the island of Porto Rico, where he relinquished all further prosecution of the enterprise, under pretext of ill health, and gave the command of the squadron to a captain named Zuñiga; but it is surmised that his malady was not so much of the flesh as of the spirit. He remained in Porto Rico as governor; but, having grown testy and irritable through vexations and disappointments, he gave great offence, and caused much contention on the island by positive and strong-handed measures, in respect to the distribution of the Indians.

He continued for several years in that island, in a state of growling repose, until the brilliant exploits of Hernando Cortez, which threatened to eclipse the achievements of all the veteran discoverers, roused his dormant spirit.

Jealous of being cast in the shade in his old days, he deter-

mined to sally forth on one more expedition. He had heard that Florida, which he had discovered, and which he had hitherto considered a mere island, was part of Terra Firma, possessing vast and unknown regions in its bosom. If so, a grand field of enterprise lay before him, wherein he might make discoveries and conquests to rival, if not surpass, the far-famed conquest of Mexico.

Accordingly, in the year 1521 he fitted out two ships at the island of Porto Rico, and embarked almost the whole of his property in the undertaking. His voyage was toilsome and tempestuous, but at length he arrived at the wished-for land. He made a descent upon the coast with a great part of his men, but the Indians sallied forth with unusual valour to defend their shores. A bloody battle ensued, several of the Spaniards were slain, and Juan Ponce was wounded by an arrow, in the thigh. He was borne on board his ship, and finding himself disabled for further action, set sail for Cuba, where he arrived ill in body and dejected in heart.

He was of an age where there is no longer prompt and healthful reaction either mental or corporeal. The irritations of humiliated pride and disappointed hope exasperated the fever of his wound, and he died soon after his arrival at the island. "Thus fate," says one of the quaint old Spanish writers, "delights to reverse the schemes of man. The discovery that Juan Ponce flattered himself was to lead to a means of perpetuating his life, had the ultimate effect of hastening his death."

It may be said, however, that he has at least attained the shadow of his desire, since, though disappointed in extending the natural term of his existence, his discovery has insured a lasting duration to his name.

The following epitaph was inscribed upon his tomb, which does justice to the warrior qualities of the stout old cavalier:

Mole sub hac fortis requiescunt ossa Leonis,
Qui vicit factis nomina magna suis.

It has been thus paraphrased in Spanish by the Licentiate Juan de Castellanos:

Aqueste lugar estrecho
Es sepulchro del varon,
Que en el nombre fue Leon,
Y mucho mas en el hecho.

"In this sepulchre rest the bones of a man, who was a lion by name, and still more by nature."

APPENDIX.

No. I.—Transportation of the Remains of Columbus from St. Domingo to the Havana.

At the termination of a war between France and Spain, in 1795, all the Spanish possessions in the island of Hispaniola were ceded to France, by the 9th article of the treaty of peace. To assist in the accomplishment of this cession, a Spanish squadron was dispatched to the island at the appointed time, commanded by Don Gabriel de Aristizabal, lieutenant-general of the royal armada. On the 11th December, 1795, that commander wrote to the field-marshal and governor, Don Joaquin Garcia, resident at St. Domingo, that, being informed that the remains of the celebrated admiral Don Christopher Columbus lay in the cathedral of that city, he felt it incumbent on him as a Spaniard, and as commander-in-chief of his majesty's squadron of operations, to solicit the translation of the ashes of that hero to the island of Cuba, which had likewise been discovered by him, and where he had first planted the standard of the cross. He expressed a desire that this should be done officially, and with great care and formality, that it might not remain in the power of any one, by a careless transportation of these honoured remains, to lose a relic, connected with an event which formed the most glorious epoch of Spanish history, and that it might be manifested to all nations, that Spaniards, notwithstanding the lapse of ages, never ceased to pay all honours to the remains of that "worthy and adventurous general of the seas;" nor abandoned them, when the various public bodies, representing the Spanish dominion, emigrated from the island. As he had not time, without great inconvenience, to consult the sovereign on this subject, he had recourse to the governor, as royal vice-patron of the island, hoping that his solicitation might be granted, and the remains of the admiral exhumed and conveyed to the island of Cuba, in the ship San Lorenzo.

The generous wishes of this high-minded Spaniard met with warm concurrence on the part of the governor. He informed him in reply, that the Duke of Veraguas, lineal successor of Columbus, had manifested the same solicitude, and had sent directions that the necessary measures should be taken at his expense; and had at the same time expressed a wish that the bones of the Adelantado, Don Bartholomew Columbus, should likewise be exhumed; transmitting inscriptions to be put upon the sepulchres of both. He added, that although the king had given no orders on the subject, yet the proposition being so accordant with the grateful feelings of the Spanish nation, and meeting with the concurrence of all the authorities of the island, he was ready on his part to carry it into execution.

The commandant-general, Aristizabal, then made a similar communication to the Archbishop of Cuba, Don Fernando Portillo y Torres, whose metropolis was then the city of St. Domingo, hoping to receive his countenance and aid in this pious undertaking.

The reply of the archbishop was couched in terms of high courtesy towards the gallant commander, and deep reverence for the memory of Columbus, and expressed a zeal in rendering this tribute of gratitude and respect to the remains of one who had done so much for the glory of the nation.

The persons empowered to act for the Duke of Veraguas, the venerable dean and chapter of the cathedral, and all the other persons and authorities to whom Don Gabriel de Aristizabal made similar communications, manifested the same eagerness to assist in the performance of this solemn and affecting rite.

The worthy commander, Aristizabal, having taken all these preparatory steps with great form and punctilio, so as that the ceremony should be performed in a public and striking manner, suitable to the fame of Columbus, the whole was carried into effect with becoming pomp and solemnity.

On the 20th December, 1795, the most distinguished persons of the place, the dignitaries of the church, and civil and military officers, assembled in the metropolitan cathedral. In the presence of this august assemblage, a small vault was opened above the chancel, in the principal wall on the right side of the high altar. Within were found the fragments of a leaden coffin, a number of bones, and a quantity of mould, evidently the remains of a human body. These were carefully collected and put into a case of gilded lead, about half an ell in length and breadth, and a third in height, secured by an iron lock, the key of which was delivered to the archbishop. The case was inclosed in a coffin covered with black velvet, and ornamented with lace and fringe of gold. The whole was then placed in a temporary tomb or mausoleum.

On the following day, there was another grand convocation at the cathedral, when the vigils and masses for the dead were solemnly chanted by the archbishop, accompanied by the commandant-general of the armada, the Dominican and Franciscan friars, and the friars of the order of Mercy, together with the rest of the distinguished assemblage. After this a funeral sermon was preached by the archbishop.

On the same day, at four clock in the afternoon, the coffin was transported to the ship with the utmost state and ceremony, with a civil, religious, and military procession, banners wrapped in mourning, chants and responses and discharges of artillery. The most distinguished persons of the several orders took turn to support the coffin. The key was taken with great formality from the hands of the archbishop by the governor, and given into the hands of the commander of the armada, to be delivered by him to the governor of the Havana, to be held in deposit until the pleasure of the king should be known. The coffin was received on board of a brigantine called the Discoverer, which, with all the other shipping, displayed mourning signals, and saluted the remains with the honours paid to an admiral.

From the port of St. Domingo the coffin was conveyed to the bay of Ocoa, and there transferred to the ship San Lorenzo. It was accompanied by a portrait of Columbus, sent from Spain by the Duke of Veraguas, to be suspended close by the place where the remains of his illustrious ancestor should be deposited.

The ship immediately made sail and arrived at Havana in Cuba, on

the 15th of January, 1796. Here the same deep feeling of reverence to the memory of the discoverer was evinced. The principal authorities repaired on board of the ship, accompanied by the superior naval and military officers. Everything was conducted with the same circumstantial and solemn ceremonial. The remains were removed with great reverence, and placed in a felucca, in which they were conveyed to land in the midst of a procession of three columns of feluccas and boats in the royal service, all properly decorated, containing distinguished military and ministerial officers. Two feluccas followed, in one of which was a marine guard of honour, with mourning banners and muffled drums; and in the other were the commandant-general, the principal minister of marine, and the military staff. In passing the vessels of war in the harbour, they all paid the honours due to an admiral and captain-general of the navy. On arriving at the mole, the remains were met by the governor of the island, accompanied by the generals and the military staff. The coffin was then conveyed between files of soldiery which lined the streets to the obelisk, in the place of arms, where it was received in a hearse prepared for the purpose. Here the remains were formally delivered to the governor and captain-general of the island, the key given up to him, the coffin opened and examined, and the safe transportation of its contents authenticated. This ceremony being concluded, it was conveyed in grand procession and with the utmost pomp, to the cathedral. Masses, and the solemn ceremonies of the dead, were performed by the bishop, and the mortal remains of Columbus deposited with great reverence in the wall on the right side of the grand altar. "All these honours and ceremonies," says the document, from whence this notice is digested,* "were attended by the ecclesiastical and secular dignitaries, the public bodies and all the nobility and gentry of Havana, in proof of the high estimation and respectful remembrance in which they held the hero who had discovered the New World, and had been the first to plant the standard of the cross on that island."

This is the last occasion that the Spanish nation has had to testify its feelings towards the memory of Columbus, and it is with deep satisfaction that the author of this work has been able to cite at large a ceremonial so solemn, affecting, and noble in its details, and so honourable to the national character.

When we read of the remains of Columbus, thus conveyed from the port of St. Domingo, after an interval of nearly three hundred years, as sacred national relics, with civic and military pomp, and high religious ceremonial; the most dignified and illustrious men striving who most should pay them reverence; we cannot but reflect that it was from this very port he was carried off loaded with ignominious chains, blasted apparently in fame and fortune, and followed by the revilings of the rabble. Such honours, it is true, are nothing to the dead, nor can they atone to the heart, now dust and ashes, for all the wrongs and sorrows it may have suffered: but they speak volumes of comfort to the illustrious, yet slandered and persecuted living, encouraging them bravely to bear with present injuries, by showing them how true merit outlives all calumny, and receives its glorious reward in the admiration of after ages.

* Navarrete, Colec., tom. 2. p. 365.

No. II.—Notice of the Descendants of Columbus.

On the death of Columbus, his son Diego succeeded to his rights, as viceroy and governor of the New World, according to the express capitulations between the sovereigns and his father. He appears by the general consent of historians to have been a man of great integrity, of respectable talents, and of a frank and generous nature. Herrera speaks repeatedly of the gentleness and urbanity of his manners, and pronounces him of a noble disposition, and without deceit. This absence of all guile frequently laid him open to the stratagems of crafty men, grown old in deception, who rendered his life a continued series of embarrassments; but the probity of his character, with the irresistible power of truth, bore him through difficulties in which more politic and subtle men would have been entangled and completely lost.

Immediately after the death of the admiral, Don Diego came forward as lineal successor, and urged the restitution of the family offices and privileges, which had been suspended during the latter years of his father's life. If the cold and wary Ferdinand, however, could forget his obligations of gratitude and justice to Columbus, he had less difficulty in turning a deaf ear to the solicitations of his son. For two years Don Diego pressed his suit with fruitless diligence. He felt the apparent distrust of the monarch the more sensibly, from having been brought up under his eye, as a page in the royal household, where his character ought to be well known and appreciated. At length, on the return of Ferdinand from Naples in 1508, he put to him a direct question, with the frankness attributed to his character. He demanded "why his majesty would not grant to him as a favour, that which was his right, and why he hesitated to confide in the fidelity of one who had been reared in his house." Ferdinand replied that he could fully confide in him, but could not repose so great a trust at a venture in his children and successors. To this Don Diego rejoined, that it was contrary to all justice and reason to make him suffer for the sins of his children who might never be born.*

Still, though he had reason and justice on his side, the young admiral found it impossible to bring the wary monarch to a compliance. Finding all appeal to all his ideas of equity or sentiments of generosity in vain, he solicited permission to pursue his claim in the ordinary course of law. The king could not refuse so reasonable a request, and Don Diego commenced a process against King Ferdinand before the council of the Indies, founded on the repeated capitulations between the crown and his father, and embracing all the dignities and immunities ceded by them.

One ground of opposition to these claims was, that if the capitulation made by the sovereigns in 1492 had granted a perpetual viceroyalty to the admiral and his heirs, such grant could not stand; being contrary to the interest of the state, and to an express law promulgated in Toledo in 1480; wherein it was ordained that no office, involving the administration of justice, should be given in perpetuity; that therefore, the viceroyalty granted to the admiral could only have been for his life; and that even, during that term, it had justly been taken

* Hist Ind., decad. i. lib. vii. cap. 4.

from him for his misconduct. That such concessions were contrary to the inherent prerogatives of the crown, of which the government could not divest itself. To this Don Diego replied, that as to the validity of the capitulation, it was a binding contract, and none of its privileges ought to be restricted. That as by royal schedules dated in Villa Franca, June 2nd, 1506, and Almazan, August 28th, 1507, it had been ordered that he, Don Diego, should receive the tenths, so equally ought the other privileges to be accorded to him. As to the allegation that his father had been deprived of his viceroyalty for his demerits, it was contrary to all truth. It had been audacity on the part of Bobadilla to send him a prisoner to Spain in 1500, and contrary to the will and command of the sovereigns, as was proved by their letter, dated from Valencia de la Torre in 1502, in which they expressed grief at his arrest, and assured him that it should be redressed, and his privileges guarded entire to himself and his children.*

This memorable suit was commenced in 1508, and continued for several years. In the course of it the claims of Don Diego were disputed, likewise, on the plea that his father was not the original discoverer of Terra Firma, but only subsequently of certain portions of it. This, however, was completely controverted by overwhelming testimony. The claims of Don Diego were minutely discussed and rigidly examined ; and the unanimous decision of the council of the Indies in his favour, while it reflected honour on the justice and independence of that body, silenced many petty cavilers at the fair fame of Columbus.† Notwithstanding this decision, the wily monarch wanted neither means nor pretexts to delay the ceding of such vast powers, so repugnant to his cautious policy. The young admiral was finally indebted for his success in this suit to previous success attained in a suit of a different nature. He had become enamoured of Doña Maria de Toledo, daughter of Fernando de Toledo, grand commander of Leon, and niece to Don Fadrique de Toledo, the celebrated Duke of Alva, chief favourite of the king. This was aspiring to a high connexion. The father and uncle of the lady were the most powerful grandees of the proud kingdom of Spain, and cousins-german to Ferdinand. The glory, however, which Columbus had left behind, rested upon his children, and the claims of Don Diego, recently confirmed by the council, involved dignities and wealth sufficient to raise him to a level with the loftiest alliance. He found no difficulty in obtaining the hand of the lady, and thus was the foreign family of Columbus ingrafted on one of the proudest races of Spain. The natural consequences followed. Diego had secured that magical power called "connexions;" and the favour of Ferdinand, which had been so long withheld from him, as the son of Columbus, shone upon him, though coldly, as the nephew of the Duke of Alva. The father and uncle of his bride succeeded, though with great difficulty, in conquering the repugnance of the monarch, and after all he but granted in part the justice they required. He ceded to Don Diego merely the dignities and powers enjoyed by Nicholas de Ovando, who was recalled ; and he cautiously withheld the title of viceroy.

* Extracts from the minutes of the process taken by the historian Munoz MS.

† Further mention will be found of this lawsuit in the article relative to Amerigo Vespucci.

The recall of Ovando was not merely a measure to make room for Don Diego, it was the tardy performance of a promise made to Isabella on her death-bed. The expiring queen had demanded it as a punishment for the massacre of her poor Indian subjects at Xaragua, and the cruel and ignominous execution of the female cacique Anacaona. Thus retribution was continually going its round in the checquered destinies of this island, which has ever presented a little epitome of human history; its errors and crimes, and consequent disasters.

In complying with the request of the queen, however, Ferdinand was favourable towards Ovando. He did not feel the same generous sympathies with his late consort, and, however Ovando had sinned against humanity in his treatment of the Indians, he had been a vigilant officer, and his very oppressions had in general proved profitable to the crown. Ferdinand directed that the fleet which took out the new governor should return under the command of Ovando, and that he should retain undisturbed enjoyment of any property or Indian slaves that might be found in his possession. Some have represented Ovando as a man far from mercenary; that the wealth wrung from the miseries of the natives was for his sovereign, not for himself; and it is intimated that one secret cause of his disgrace was his having made an enemy of the all-powerful and unforgiving Fonseca.*

The new admiral embarked at St. Lucar, June 9, 1509, with his wife, his brother Don Fernando, who was now grown to man's estate, and had been well educated, and his two uncles Don Bartholomew and Don Diego. They were accompanied by a numerous retinue of cavaliers, with their wives, and of young ladies of rank and family, more distinguished, it is hinted, for high blood than large fortune, and who were sent out to find wealthy husbands in the New World.†

Though the king had not granted Don Diego the dignity of viceroy, the title was generally given to him by courtesy, and his wife was universally addressed by that of vice-queen.

Don Diego commenced his rule with a degree of splendour hitherto unknown in the colony. The vice-queen, who was a lady of great desert, surrounded by the noble cavaliers and the young ladies of family who had come in her retinue, established a sort of court, which threw a degree of lustre over the half-savage island. The young ladies were soon married to the wealthiest colonists, and contributed greatly to soften those rude manners which had grown up in a state of society hitherto destitute of the salutary restraint and pleasing decorum produced by female influence.

Don Diego had considered his appointment in the light of a viceroyalty, but the king soon took measures which showed that he admitted of no such pretension. Without any reference to Don Diego, he divided the coast of Darien into two great provinces, separated by an imaginary line running through the Gulf of Uraba, appointing Alonzo de Ojeda governor of the eastern province, which he called New Andalusia, and Diego de Nicuesa, governor of the western province, which included the rich coast of Veragua, and which he called Castilla del Oro, or Golden Castile. Had the monarch been swayed by principles of justice and gratitude, the settlement of this coast would have been given to the

* Charlevoix, ut supra, v. i. p. 272, id. 274 † Las Casas, lib. ii. cap. 28, MS

Adelantando, Don Bartholomew Columbus, who had assisted in the discovery of the country, and, together with his brother the admiral, had suffered so greatly in the enterprise. Even his superior abilities for the task should have pointed him out to the policy of the monarch; but the cautious and calculating Ferdinand knew the lofty spirit of the Adelantado, and that he would be disposed to demand high and dignified terms. He passed him by, therefore, and preferred more eager and accommodating adventurers.

Don Diego was greatly aggrieved at this measure, thus adopted without his participation or knowledge. He justly considered it an infringement of the capitulations granted and repeatedly confirmed to his father and his heirs. He had further vexations and difficulties with respect to the government of the island of St. Juan, or Porto Rico, which was conquered and settled about this time; but, after a variety of cross purposes, the officers whom he appointed were ultimately recognized by the crown.

Like his father, he had to contend with malignant factions in his government; for the enemies of the father transferred their enmity to the son. There was one Miguel Pasamonte, the king's treasurer, who became his avowed enemy, under the support and chiefly at the instigation of the Bishop Fonseca, who continued to the son the implacable hostility which he had manifested to the father. A variety of trivial circumstances continued to embroil him with some of the petty officers of the colony, and there was a remnant of the followers of Roldan who arrayed themselves against him.*

Two factions soon arose in the island; one of the admiral, the other of the treasurer Pasamonte. The latter affected to call themselves the party of the king. They gave all possible molestation to Don Diego, and sent home the most virulent and absurd misrepresentations of his conduct. Among others, they represented a large house with many windows, which he was building, as intended for a fortress, and asserted that he had a design to make himself sovereign of the island. King Ferdinand, who was now advancing in years, had devolved the affairs of the Indies in a great measure on Fonseca,† who had superintended them from the first, and he was greatly guided by the advice of that prelate, which was not likely to be favourable to the descendants of Columbus. The complaints from the colonies were so artfully enforced, therefore, that he established in 1510 a sovereign court at St. Domingo, called the Royal Audience, to which an appeal might be made from all sentences of the admiral, even in cases reserved hitherto exclusively for the crown. Don Diego considered this a suspicious and injurious measure intended to demolish his authority.

Frank, open, and unsuspicious, the young admiral was not formed for a contest with the crafty politicians arrayed against him, who were ready and adroit in seizing upon his slightest errors, and magnifying them into crimes. Difficulties were multiplied in his path, which it was out of his power to overcome. He had entered upon office full of magnanimous intentions; determined to put an end to oppression, and correct all abuses; all good men, therefore, had rejoiced at his appointment; but he soon found that he had overrated his strength, and undervalued the difficulties awaiting him. He calculated from his own good

* Herrera, decad. i. lib. vii. cap. 12. † Idem.

heart, but he had no idea of the wicked hearts of others. He was opposed to the repartimientos of Indians, that source of all kinds of inhumanity; but he found all the men of wealth in the colony, and most of the important persons of the court, interested in maintaining them. He perceived that the attempt to abolish them would be dangerous, and the result questionable: at the same time this abuse was a source of immense profit to himself. Self-interest, therefore, combined with other considerations, and what at first appeared difficult, seemed presently impracticable. The repartimientos continued in the state in which he found them, excepting that he removed such of the superintendents as had been cruel and oppressive, and substituted men of his own appointment, who probably proved equally worthless. His friends were disappointed, his enemies encouraged; a hue and cry was raised against him by the friends of those he had displaced; and it was even said that if Ovando had not died about this time, he would have been sent out to supplant Don Diego.

The subjugation and settlement of the island of Cuba in 1510, was a fortunate event in the administration of the present admiral. He congratulated King Ferdinand on having acquired the largest and most beautiful island in the world without losing a single man. The intelligence was highly acceptable to the king; but it was accompanied by a great number of complaints against the admiral. Little affection as Ferdinand felt for Don Diego, he was still aware that most of these representations were false, and had their origin in the jealousy and envy of his enemies. He judged it expedient, however, in 1512, to send out Don Bartholomew Columbus with minute instructions to his nephew the admiral.

Don Bartholomew still retained the office of Adelantado of the Indies; although Ferdinand, through selfish motives, detained him in Spain, while he employed inferior men in voyages of discovery. He now added to his appointments the property and government of the little island of Mona during life, and assigned him a repartimiento of two hundred Indians, with the superintendence of the mines which might be discovered in Cuba; an office which proved very lucrative.*

Among the instructions given by the king to Don Diego, he directed that, in consequence of the representations of the Dominican friars, the labour of the natives should be reduced to one-third; that negro slaves should be procured from Guinea as a relief to the Indians;† and that Carib slaves should be branded on the leg, to prevent other Indians from being confounded with them, and subjected to harsh treatment.‡

The two governors, Ojeda and Nicuessa, whom the king had appointed to colonize and command at the Isthmus of Darien, in Terra Firma, having failed in their undertaking, the sovereign, in 1514, wrote to Hispaniola, permitting the Adelantado, Don Bartholomew, if so inclined, to take charge of settling the coast of Veragua, and to govern that country under the admiral Don Diego, conformably to his privileges. Had the king consulted his own interest, and the deference due to the talents and services of the Adelantado, this measure would have been taken at an earlier date. It was now too late: illness prevented Don Bartholomew from executing the enterprise; and his active and toilsome life was drawing to a close.

* Charlevoix, St. Domingo, p 321. † Herrera, decad. lib. ix. cap. 5. ‡ Idem.

Many calumnies having been sent home to Spain by Pasamonte and other enemies of Don Diego, and various measures being taken by government, which he conceived derogatory to his dignity, and injurious to his privileges, he requested and obtained permission to repair to court, that he might explain and vindicate his conduct. He departed, accordingly, on April 9th, 1515, leaving the Adelantado with the vice-queen, Doña Maria. He was received with great honour by the king; and he merited such a reception. He had succeeded in every enterprise he had undertaken or directed. The pearl fishery had been successfully established on the coast of Cubagua; the islands of Cuba and of Jamaica had been subjected and brought under cultivation without bloodshed; his conduct as governor had been upright; and he had only excited the representations made against him, by endeavouring to lessen the oppression of the natives. The king ordered that all processes against him in the court of appeal and elsewhere, for damages done to individuals in regulating the repartimientos, should be discontinued, and the cases sent to himself for consideration. But with all these favours, as the admiral claimed a share of the profits of the provinces of Castilla del Oro, saying that it was discovered by his father, as the names of its places, such as Nombre de Dios, Porto Bello, and el Retrete, plainly proved, the king ordered that interrogatories should be made among the mariners who had sailed with Christopher Columbus, in the hope of proving that he had not discovered the coast of Darien nor the Gulf of Uraba. "Thus," adds Herrera, "Don Diego was always involved in litigations with the fiscal, so that he might truly say that he was heir to the troubles of his father."*

Not long after the departure of Don Diego from St. Domingo, his uncle, Don Bartholomew, ended his active and laborious life. No particulars are given of his death, nor is there mention made of his age, which must have been advanced. King Ferdinand is said to have expressed great concern at the event, for he had a high opinion of the character and talents of the Adelantado: "a man," says Herrera, "of not less worth than his brother the admiral, and who, if he had been employed, would have given great proofs of it; for he was an excellent seaman, valiant, and of great heart."† Charlevoix attributes the inaction in which Don Bartholomew had been suffered to remain for several years, to the jealousy and parsimony of the king. He found the house already too powerful; and the Adelantado, had he discovered Mexico, was a man to make as good conditions as had been made by the admiral his brother.‡ It was said, observed Herrera, that the king rather preferred to employ him in his European affairs, though it could only have been to divert him from other objects. On his death the king resumed to himself the island of Mona, which he had given to him for life, and transferred his repartimiento of two hundred Indians to the vice-queen Doña Maria.

While the admiral Don Diego was pressing for an audience in his vindication at court, King Ferdinand died on the 23rd January, 1516. His grandson and successor, Prince Charles, afterwards the Emperor Charles V., was in Flanders. The government rested for a time with

* Herrera, decad. ii. lib. ii. cap. 7. † Idem, decad i. lib. x. cap 16.
‡ Charlevoix, Hist. St. Domingo., lib. v.

Cardinal Ximenes, who would not undertake to decide on the representations and claims of the admiral. It was not until 1520 that he obtained from the Emperor Charles V. a recognition of his innocence of all the charges against him. The emperor finding that what Pasamonte and his party had written were notorious calumnies, ordered Don Diego to resume his charge, although the process with the fiscal was still pending, and that Pasamonte should be written to, requesting him to forget all past passions and differences, and to enter into amicable relations with Don Diego. Among other acts of indemnification he acknowledged his right to exercise his office of viceroy and governor in the island of Hispaniola, and in all parts discovered by his father.* His authority was, however, much diminished by new regulations, and a supervisor appointed over him with the right to give information to the council against him, but with no other powers. Don Diego sailed in the beginning of September, 1520, and on his arrival at St. Domingo, finding that several of the governors, presuming on his long absence, had arrogated to themselves independence, and had abused their powers, he immediately sent persons to supersede them, and demanded an account of their administration. This made him a host of active and powerful enemies, both in the colonies and in Spain.

Considerable changes had taken place in the island of Hispaniola, during the absence of the admiral. The mines had fallen into neglect, the cultivation of the sugar-cane having been found a more certain source of wealth. It became a by-word in Spain that the magnificent palaces erected by Charles V. at Madrid and Toledo were built of the sugar of Hispaniola. Slaves had been imported in great numbers from Africa, being found more serviceable in the culture of the cane than the feeble Indians. The treatment of the poor negroes was cruel in the extreme; and they seem to have had no advocates even among the humane. The slavery of the Indians had been founded on the right of the strong; but it was thought that the negroes, from their colour, were born to slavery, and that from being bought and sold in their own country, it was their natural condition. Though a patient and enduring race, the barbarities inflicted on them at length roused them to revenge, and on the 27th December, 1522, there was the first African revolt in Hispaniola. It began in a sugar plantation of the admiral Don Diego, where about twenty slaves, joined by an equal number from a neighbouring plantation, got possession of arms, rose on their superintendents, massacred them, and sallied forth upon the country. It was their intention to pillage certain plantations, to kill the whites, reinforce themselves by freeing their countrymen, and either to possess themselves of the town of Agua, or to escape to the mountains.

Don Diego set out from St. Domingo in search of the rebels, followed by several of the principal inhabitants. On the second day he stopped on the banks of the river Nizao to rest his party and suffer reinforcements to overtake him. Here one Melchor de Castro, who accompanied the admiral, learnt that the negroes had ravaged his plantation, sacked his house, killed one of his men, and carried off his Indian slaves. Without asking leave of the admiral, he departed in the night with two companions, visited his plantation, found all in confusion, and pursuing

* Herreca, decad. ii. lib. ix. cap. 7.

the negroes, sent to the admiral for aid. Eight horsemen were hastily dispatched to his assistance, armed with bucklers and lances, and having six of the infantry mounted behind them. De Castro had three horsemen beside this reinforcement, and at the head of this little band overtook the negroes at break of day. The insurgents put themselves in battle array, armed with stones and Indian spears, and uttering loud shouts and outcries. The Spanish horsemen braced their bucklers, couched their lances, and charged them at full speed. The negroes were soon routed, and fled to the rocks, leaving six dead and several wounded. De Castro also was wounded in the arm. The admiral coming up, assisted in the pursuit of the fugitives. As fast as they were taken they were hanged on the nearest trees, and remained suspended as spectacles of terror to their countrymen. This prompt severity checked all further attempts at revolt among the African slaves.*

In the meantime the various enemies whom Don Diego had created, both in the colonies and in Spain, were actively and successfully employed. His old antagonist, the treasurer Pasamonte, had charged him with usurping almost all the powers of the royal audience, and with having given to the royal declaration, re-establishing him in his office of viceroy, an extent never intended by the sovereign. These representations had weight at court, and in 1523 Don Diego received a most severe letter from the council of the Indies, charging him with the various abuses and excesses alleged against him, and commanding him, on pain of forfeiting all his privileges and titles, to revoke the innovations he had made, and restore things to their former state. To prevent any plea of ignorance of this mandate, the royal audience was enjoined to promulgate it and to call upon all persons to conform to it, and to see that it was properly obeyed. The admiral received also a letter from the council, informing him that his presence was necessary in Spain, to give information of the foregoing matters, and advice relative to the reformation of various abuses, and to the treatment and preservation of the Indians; he was requested, therefore to repair to court without waiting for further orders.†

Don Diego understood this to be a peremptory recall, and obeyed accordingly. On his arrival in Spain, he immediately presented himself before the court at Victoria, with the frank and fearless spirit of an upright man, and pleaded his cause so well, that the sovereign and council acknowledged his innocence on all the points of accusation. He convinced them, moreover, of the exactitude with which he had discharged his duties; of his zeal for the public good, and the glory of the crown; and that all the representations against him rose from the jealousy and enmity of Pasamonte and other royal officers in the colonies, who were impatient of any superior authority in the island to restrain them.

Having completely established his innocence, and exposed the calumnies of his enemies, Don Diego trusted that he would soon obtain justice as to all his claims. As these, however, involved a participation in the profits of vast and richly productive provinces, he experienced the delays and difficulties usual with such demands, for it is only when jus-

* Herrera, Hist. Ind., decad. iii. lib. iv. cap. 9.
† Herrera, Hist. Ind., decad. iii. lib. v. cap. 4.

tice costs nothing that it is readily rendered. His earnest solicitations at length obtained an order from the emperor, that a commission should be formed, composed of the grand chancellor, the friar Loyas, confessor to the emperor, and president of the royal council of the Indies, and a number of other distinguished personages. They were to inquire into the various points in dispute between the admiral and the fiscal, and into the proceedings which had taken place in the council of the Indies, with the power of determining what justice required in the case.

The affair, however, was protracted to such a length, and accompanied by so many toils, vexations, and disappointments, that the unfortunate Diego, like his father, died in the pursuit. For two years he had followed the court from city to city, during its migrations from Victoria to Burgos, Valladolid, Madrid, and Toledo. In the winter of 1525, the emperor set out from Toledo to Seville. The admiral undertook to follow him, though his constitution was broken by fatigue and vexation, and he was wasting under the attack of a slow fever. Oviedo, the historian, saw him at Toledo two days before his departure, and joined with his friends in endeavouring to dissuade him from a journey in such a state of health, and at such a season. Their persuasions were in vain. Don Diego was not aware of the extent of his malady: he told them that he should repair to Seville by the church of our Lady of Guadaloupe, to offer up his devotions at that shrine; and he trusted, through the intercession of the mother of God, soon to be restored to health.* He accordingly left Toledo in a litter on the 21st of February, 1526, having previously confessed and taken the communion, and arrived the same day at Montalvan, distant about six leagues. There his illness increased to such a degree that he saw his end approaching. He employed the following day in arranging the affairs of his conscience, and expired on February 23rd, being little more than fifty years of age, his premature death having been hastened by the griefs and troubles he had experienced. "He was worn out," says Herrera, "by following up his claims, and defending himself from the calumnies of his competitors, who, with many stratagems and devices, sought to obscure the glory of the father and the virtue of the son."†

We have seen how the discovery of the New World rendered the residue of the life of Columbus a tissue of wrongs, hardships and afflictions, and how the jealousy and enmity he had awakened were inherited by his son. It remains to show briefly in what degree the anticipations of perpetuity, wealth and honour to his family, were fulfilled.

When Don Diego Columbus died, his wife and family were at St. Domingo. He left two sons, Luis and Christopher, and three daughters, Maria, who afterwards married Don Sancho de Cardono; Juana, who married Don Luis de Cueva; and Isabella, who married Don George of Portugal, count of Gelves. He had also a natural son named Christopher.‡

* Charlevoix, Hist. St. Doming., lib. vi. † Herrera, decad. iii. lib. viii. cap. 15.

‡ Memorial ajustado sobre el estado de Veragua.

Charlevoix mentions another son called Diego, and calls one of the daughters Phillipine. Spotorno says that the daughter Maria took the veil; confounding her with a niece. These are trivial errors, merely noticed to avoid the imputation of inaccuracy. The account of the descendants of Columbus here given, accords with a genealogical tree of the family, produced before the council of the Indies, in a great lawsuit for the estates.

After the death of Don Diego, his noble-spirited vice-queen, left with a number of young children, endeavoured to assert and maintain the rights of the family. Understanding that, according to the privileges accorded to Christopher Columbus, they had a just claim to the vice-royalty of the province of Veragua, as having been discovered by him, she demanded a license from the royal audience of Hispaniola, to recruit men and fit out an armada to colonize that country. This the audience refused, and sent information of the demand to the emperor. He replied, that the vice-queen should be kept in suspense until the justice of her claim could be ascertained; as, although he had at various times given commissions to different persons to examine the doubts and objections which had been opposed by the fiscal, no decision had ever been made.* The enterprise thus contemplated by the vice-queen was never carried into effect.

Shortly afterwards she sailed for Spain, to protect the claim of her eldest son, Don Luis, then six years of age. Charles V. was absent, but she was most graciously received by the empress. The title of admiral of the Indies was immediately conferred on her son, Don Luis, and the emperor augmented his revenues, and conferred other favours on the family. Charles V., however, could never be prevailed on to give Don Luis the title of viceroy, although that dignity had been decreed to his father, a few years previous to his death, as an hereditary right.†

In 1538, the young admiral, Don Luis, then about eighteen years of age, was at court, having instituted proceedings before the proper tribunals, for the recovery of the viceroyalty. Two years afterwards the suit was settled by arbitration, his uncle Don Fernando and Cardinal Loyasa, president of the council of the Indies, being umpires. By a compromise Don Luis was declared captain-general of Hispaniola, but with such limitations that it was little better than a bare title. Don Luis sailed for Hispaniola, but did not remain there long. He found his dignities and privileges mere sources of vexation, and finally entered into a compromise, which relieved himself and gratified the emperor. He gave up all pretensions to the viceroyalty of the New World, receiving in its stead the titles of Duke of Veragua and Marquis of Jamaica.‡ He commuted also the claim to the tenth of the produce of the Indies for a pension of one thousand doubloons of gold.§

Don Luis did not long enjoy the substitution of a certain, though moderate, revenue for a magnificent but unproductive claim. He died shortly afterwards, leaving no other male issue than an illegitimate son, named Christopher. He left two daughters by his wife, Doña Maria de Mosquera, one named Phillippa, and the other Maria, which last became a nun in the convent of St. Quirce, at Valladolid.

Don Luis having no legitimate son, was succeeded by his nephew Diego, son to his brother Christopher. A litigation took place between this young heir and his cousin Phillippa, daughter of the late Don Luis. The convent of St. Quirce also put in a claim, on behalf of its inmate, Doña Maria, who had taken the veil. Christopher, natural son to Don Luis, likewise became a prosecutor in the suit, but was set aside on account of his illegitimacy. Don Diego and his cousin Phillippa soon

* Herrera, decad. iv. lib. ii. cap. 6. † Charlevoix, Hist. St. Doming., lib. vi. p. 443.
‡ Charlevoix, Hist. St. Dom. tom. i. lib. vi. p. 446. § Spotorno, Hist. Colom., p. 128.

thought it better to join claims and persons in wedlock, than to pursue a tedious contest. They were married, and their union was happy, though not fruitful. Diego died without issue in 1578, and with him the legitimate male line of Columbus became extinct.

One of the most important lawsuits that the world has ever witnessed now arose for the estates and dignities descended from the great discoverer. Don Diego had two sisters, Francisca and Maria, the former of whom, and the children of the latter, advanced their several claims. To these parties was added Bernard Colombo of Cogoleto, who claimed as lineal descendant from Bartholomew Columbus, the Adelantado, brother to the discoverer. He was, however, pronounced ineligible, as the Adelantado had no acknowledged, and certainly no legitimate offspring.

Baldassar, or Balthazar Colombo, of the house of Cuccaro and Conzano, in the dukedom of Montferrat, in Piedmont, was an active and persevering claimant. He came from Italy into Spain, where he devoted himself for many years to the prosecution of this suit. He produced a genealogical tree of his family, in which was contained one Domenico Colombo, lord of Cuccaro, whom he maintained to be the identical father of Christopher Columbus, the admiral. He proved that this Domenico was living at the requisite era, and produced many witnesses who had heard that the navigator was born in the castle of Cuccaro; whence, it was added, he and his two brothers had eloped at an early age, and had never returned.* A monk is also mentioned among the witnesses, who made oath that Christopher and his brothers were born in that castle of Cuccaro. This testimony was afterwards withdrawn by the prosecutor; as it was found that the monk's recollection must have extended back considerably upward of a century.† The claim of Balthazar was negatived. His proofs that Christopher Columbus was a native of Cuccaro were rejected, as only hearsay, or traditionary evidence. His ancestor Domenico, it appeared from his own showing, died in 1456; whereas it was established that Domenico, the father of the admiral, was living upwards of thirty years after that date.

The cause was finally decided by the council of the Indies, on the 2nd December, 1608. The male line was declared to be extinct. Don Nuño or Nugno Gelves de Portugallo was put in possession, and became duke of Veragua. He was grandson to Isabella, third daughter of Don Diego (son of the discoverer) by his vice-queen, Doña Maria de Toledo. The descendants of the two elder sisters of Isabella had a prior claim, but their lines became extinct previous to this decision of the suit. The Isabella just named, had married Don George of Portugal, count of Gelves. "Thus," says Charlevoix, "the dignities and wealth of Columbus passed into a branch of the Portuguese house of Braganza, established in Spain, of which the heirs are entitled *De Portugallo, Colon, Duke de Veragua, Marques de la Jamaica, y Almirante de las Indias.*"‡

The suit of Balthazar Colombo of Cuccaro was rejected under three different forms, by the council of the Indies; and his application for an allowance of support, under the legacy of Columbus, in favour of poor relations, was also refused; although the other parties had assented to

* Bossi, Hist. Columb. Dissert., p. 67. † Idem, Dissert. on the Country of Columb., p. 63.
‡ Charlevoix, Hist. St. Doming., tom. i. lib. vi. p. 447.

the demand.* He died in Spain, where he had resided many years in prosecution of this suit. His son returned to Italy, persisting in the validity of his claim : he said that it was in vain to seek justice in Spain ; they were too much interested to keep those dignities and estates among themselves; but he gave out that he had received twelve thousand doubloons of gold in compromise from the other parties. Spotorno, under sanction of Ignazio de Giovanni, a learned canon, treats this assertion as a bravado, to cover his defeat, being contradicted by his evident poverty.† The family of Cuccaro, however, still maintain their right, and express great veneration for the memory of their illustrious ancestor, the admiral ; and travellers occasionally visit their old castle in Piedmont with great reverence, as the birthplace of the discoverer of the New World.

No. III.—Fernando Columbus.

Fernando Columbus (or Colon, as he is called in Spain) the natural son and historian of the admiral, was born in Cordova. There is an uncertainty about the exact time of his birth. According to his epitaph, it must have been on the 28th September, 1488 ; but according to his original papers preserved in the library of the cathedral of Seville, and which were examined by Don Diego Ortiz de Zuñiga, historian of that city, it would appear to have been on the 29th of August, 1487. His mother, Doña Beatrix Enriquez, was of a respectable family, but was never married to the admiral, as has been stated by some of his biographers.

Early in 1494, Fernando was carried to court, together with his elder brother Diego, by his uncle Don Bartholomew, to enter the royal household in quality of page to the prince Don Juan, son and heir to Ferdinand and Isabella. He and his brother remained in this situation until the death of the prince, when they were taken by Queen Isabella as pages into her own service. Their education, of course, was well attended to, and Fernando in after-life gave proofs of being a learned man.

In the year 1502, at the tender age of thirteen or fourteen years, Fernando accompanied his father in his fourth voyage of discovery, and encountered all its singular and varied hardships with a fortitude that is mentioned with praise and admiration by the admiral.

After the death of his father, it would appear that Fernando made two voyages to the New World. He accompanied the Emperor Charles V. also, to Italy, Flanders, and Germany ; and according to Zuñiga (Anales de Seville de 1539, No. 3) travelled over all Europe and a part of Africa and Asia. Possessing talents, judgment, and industry, these opportunities were not lost upon him, and he acquired much information in geography, navigation, and natural history. Being of a studious habit, and fond of books, he formed a select, yet copious library, of more than twenty thousand volumes, in print and in manuscript. With the sanction of the Emperor Charles V., he undertook to establish an academy and college of mathematics at Seville ; and for this purpose commenced the construction of a sumptuous edifice, without the walls of the city, facing the Guadalquiver, in the place where the monastery of San Laureano is now situated. His constitution, however, had been broken by the sufferings he had experienced in his travels and voyages, and a

* Bossi Dissertation on the Country of Columbus † Spotorno, p. 127.

premature death prevented the completion of his plan of the academy, and broke off other useful labours. He died in Seville on the 12th of July, 1539, at the age, according to his epitaph, of fifty years, nine months, and fourteen days. He left no issue, and was never married. His body was interred, according to his request, in the cathedral of Seville. He bequeathed his valuable library to the same establishment.

Don Fernando devoted himself much to letters. According to the inscription on his tomb, he composed a work in four books, or volumes, the title of which is defaced on the monument, and the work itself is lost. This is much to be regretted, as, according to Zuñiga, the fragments of the inscription specify it to have contained, among a variety of matter, historical, moral, and geographical notices of the countries he had visited, but especially of the New World, and of the voyages and discoveries of his father.

His most important and permanent work, however, was a history of the admiral, composed in Spanish. It was translated into Italian by Alonzo de Ulloa, and from this Italian translation have proceeded the editions which have since appeared in various languages. It is singular that the work only exists in Spanish, in the form of a re-translation from that of Ulloa, and full of errors in the orthography of proper names, and in dates and distances.

Don Fernando was an eye-witness of some of the facts which he relates, particularly of the fourth voyage, wherein he accompanied his father. He had also the papers and charts of his father, and recent documents of all kinds to extract from, as well as familiar acquaintance with the principal personages who were concerned in the events which he records. He was a man of probity and discernment, and writes more dispassionately than could be expected, when treating of matters which affected the honour, the interests, and happiness of his father. It is to be regretted, however, that he should have suffered the whole of his father's life previous to his discoveries (a period of about fifty-six years), to remain in obscurity. He appears to have wished to cast a cloud over it, and only to have presented his father to the reader after he had rendered himself illustrious by his actions, and his history had become in a manner identified with the history of the world. His work, however, is an invaluable document, entitled to great faith, and is the corner-stone of the history of the American Continent.

No. IV.—Age of Columbus.

As the date I have assigned for the birth of Columbus, makes him about ten years older than he is generally represented, at the time of his discoveries, it is proper to state precisely my authority. In the valuable manuscript chronicle of the reign of the Catholic sovereigns, written by Andres Bernaldes, the curate of Los Palacios, there is a long tract on the subject of the discoveries of Columbus: it concludes with these words: *Murió en Valladolid, el año de* 1506, *en el mes de Mayo, in senectute bona, de edad* 70 *años, poco mas ó menos.* (He died in Valladolid in the year 1506, in the month of May, in a good old age, being seventy years old, a little more or less.) The curate of Los Palacios was a contemporary, and an intimate friend of Columbus, who was occasionally a guest in his house; no one was more competent, therefore, to form a

correct idea of his age. It is singular, that, while the biographers of Columbus have been seeking to establish the epoch of his birth by various calculations and conjectures, this direct testimony of honest Andres Bernaldes has entirely escaped their notice, though some of them had his manuscript in their hands. It was first observed by my accurate friend Don Antonio Uguina in the course of his exact investigations, and has been pointed out and ably supported by Don Martin Fernandez de Navarrete, in the introduction to his valuable collection of voyages.

Various circumstances in the life of Columbus will be found to corroborate the statement of the curate; such, for example, as the increasing infirmities with which he struggled during his voyage, and which at last rendered him a cripple and confined him to his bed. The allusion to his advanced age in one of his letters to the sovereigns, wherein he relates the consolation he had received from a secret voice in the night season: *Tu vejez no impedira a toda cosa grande. Abrahan pasaba cien años cuando engendro a Isaac, &c.* (Thy old age shall be no impediment to any great undertaking. Abraham was above a hundred years old, when he begat Isaac, &c.) The permission granted him by the king the year previous to his death to travel on a mule, instead of a horse, on account of his *age* and infirmities; and the assertion of Oveido, that at the time of his death he was quite old. *(era ya viejo.)*

This fact of the advanced age of Columbus throws quite a new colouring over his character and history. How much more extraordinary is the ardent enthusiasm which sustained him through his long career of solicitation, and the noble pride with which he refused to descend from his dignified demands, and to bargain about his proposition, though life was rapidly wasting in delays. How much more extraordinary is the hardihood with which he undertook repeated voyages into unknown seas, amidst all kinds of perils and hardships; the fortitude with which he bore up against an accumulation of mental and bodily afflictions, enough to have disheartened and destroyed the most youthful and robust, and the irrepressible buoyancy of spirit with which to the last he still rose from under the ruined concerns, and disappointed hopes, and blasted projects of one enterprise, to launch into another, still more difficult and perilous.

We have been accustomed to admire all these things in Columbus when we considered him in the full vigour of his life; how much more are they entitled to our wonder as the achievements of a man, whom the weight of years and infirmities was pressing into the grave.

No. V.—Lineage of Columbus.

The ancestry of Christopher Columbus has formed a point of zealous controversy, which is not yet satisfactorily settled. Several honourable families, possessing domains in Placentia, Montferrat, and the different parts of the Genoese territories, claim him as belonging to their houses; and to these has recently been added the noble family of Colombo in Modena.* The natural desire to prove consanguinity with a man of distinguished renown has excited this rivalry; but it has been heightened, in particular instances, by the hope of succeeding to titles and situations

* Spotorno, Hist. Mem., p. 5.

of wealth and honour, when his male line of descendants became extinct. The investigation is involved in particular obscurity, as even his immediate relatives appear to have been in ignorance on the subject.

Fernando Columbus in his biography of the admiral, after a pompous prelude, in which he attempts to throw a vague and cloudy magnificence about the origin of his father, notices slightly the attempts of some to obscure his fame, by making him a native of various small and insignificant villages; and dwells with more complacency upon others who make him a native of places in which there were persons of much honour of the name, and many sepulchral monuments with arms and epitaphs of the Colombos. He relates his having himself gone to the castle of Cucureo, to visit two brothers of the family of Colombo, who were rich and noble, the youngest of whom was above one hundred years of age, and who, he had heard, were relatives of his father; but they could give him no information upon the subject; whereupon he breaks forth into his professed contempt for these adventitious claims, declaring, that he thinks it better to content himself with dating from the glory of the admiral, than to go about inquiring whether his father "were a merchant, or one who kept his hawks;"* since, adds he, of persons of similar pursuits, there are thousands who die every day, whose memory, even among their own neighbours and relatives, perishes immediately, without its being possible afterwards to ascertain even whether they existed.

After this, and a few more expressions of similar disdain for these empty distinctions, he indulges in vehement abuse of Agostino Giustiniani, whom he calls a false historian, an inconsiderate, partial or malignant compatriot, for having, in his Psalter, traduced his father, by saying, that in his youth he had been employed in mechanical occupations.

As, after all this discussion, Fernando leaves the question of his father's parentage in all its original obscurity, yet appears irritably sensitive to any derogatory suggestions of others, his whole evidence tends to the conviction that he really knew nothing to boast of in his ancestry.

Of the nobility and antiquity of the Colombo family, of which the admiral probably was a remote descendant, we have some account in Herrera. "We learn," he says, "that the emperor Otto the Second, in 940, confirmed to the counts Pietro, Giovanni, and Alexandro Colombo, brothers, the feudatory possessions which they held within the jurisdiction of the cities of Ayqui, Savona, Aste, Montferrato, Turin, Viceli, Parma, Cremona, and Bergamo, and all others which they held in Italy. It appears that the Colombos of Cuccaro, Cucureo, and Placentia, were the same, and that the emperor in the same year, 940, made donation to the said three brothers of the castles of Cuccaro, Conzano, Rosignano and others, and of the fourth part of Bistanio, which appertained to the empire."†

One of the boldest attempts of those biographers bent on ennobling Columbus, has been to make him son of the Lord of Cuccaro, a burgh of Montferrat, in Piedmont, and to prove that he was born in his father's castle at that place; whence he and his brothers eloped at an early age, and never returned. This was asserted in the course of a process brought

* Literally, in the original, *Cazador de Volateria*, a Falconer. Hawking was in those days an amusement of the highest classes; and to keep hawks was almost a sign of nobility.

† Herrera, decad. i. lib. i. cap. 7.

by a certain Baldasser or Balthazar Colombo, resident in Genoa, but originally of Cuccaro, claiming the title and estates, on the death of Diego Colon, duke of Veragua, in 1578, the great-grandson, and last legitimate male descendant of the admiral. The council of the Indies decided against this claim to relationship. Some account of the lawsuit will be found in another part of the work.

This romantic story, like all others of the nobility of his parentage, is at utter variance with the subsequent events of his life, his long struggles with indigence and obscurity, and the difficulties he endured from the want of family connexions. How can it be believed, says Bossi, that this same man, who, in his most cruel adversities, was incessantly taunted by his enemies with the obscurity of his birth, should not reply to this reproach, by declaring his origin, if he were really descended from the Lords of Cuccaro, Conzano and Rosignano? a circumstance which would have obtained him the highest credit with the Spanish nobility.*

The different families of Colombo which lay claim to the great navigator, seem to be various branches of one tree, and there is little doubt of his appertaining remotely to the same respectable stock.

It appears evident, however, that Columbus sprang immediately from a line of humble but industrious citziens, which had existed in Genoa, even from the time of Giacomo Colombo the wool-carder, in 1311, mentioned by Spotorno; nor is this in any wise incompatible with the intimation of Fernando Columbus, that the family had been reduced from high estate to great poverty, by the wars of Lombardy. The feuds of Italy, in those ages, had broken down and scattered many of the noblest families; and while some branches remained in the lordly heritage of castles and domains, others were confounded with the humblest population of the cities.

No. VI.—Birthplace of Columbus.

There has been much controversy about the birthplace of Columbus. The greatness of his renown has induced various places to lay claim to him as a native, and from motives of laudable pride, for nothing reflects greater lustre upon a city than to have given birth to distinguished men. The original and long established opinion was in favour of Genoa; but such strenuous claims were asserted by the states of Placentia, and in particular of Piedmont, that the Academy of Sciences and Letters of Genoa was induced, in 1812, to nominate three of its members, Signors Serra, Carrega, and Piaggio, commissioners to examine into these pretensions.

The claims of Placentia had been first advanced in 1662, by Pietro Maria Campi, in the ecclesiastical history of that place, who maintained that Columbus was a native of the village of Pradello, in that vicinity. It appeared probable, on investigation, that Bertolino Colombo, great-grandfather to the admiral, had owned a small property in Pradello, the rent of which had been received by Domenico Colombo of Genoa, and after his death by his sons Christopher and Bartholomew. Admitting this assertion to be correct, there was no proof that either the admiral, his father, or grandfather had ever resided on that estate. The very

* Dissertation, &c.

circumstances of the case indicated, on the contrary, that their home was in Genoa.

The claim of Piedmont was maintained with more plausibility. It was shown that a Domenico Colombo was lord of the castle of Cuccaro in Montferrat, at the time of the birth of Christopher Columbus, who, it was asserted, was his son, and born in his castle. Balthazar Colombo, a descendant of this person, instituted a lawsuit before the council of the Indies for the inheritance of the admiral, when his male line became extinct. The council of the Indies decided against him, as is shown in an account of that process given among the illustrations of this history. It was proved that Domenico Colombo, father of the admiral, was resident in Genoa both before and many years after the death of this lord of Cuccaro, who bore the same name.

The three commissioners appointed by the Academy of Sciences and Letters of Genoa to examine into these pretensions, after a long and diligent investigation, gave a voluminous and circumstantial report in favour of Genoa. An ample digest of their inquest may be found in the History of Columbus by Signor Bossi, who, in an able dissertation on the question, confirms their opinion. It may be added, in farther corroboration, that Peter Martyr and Bartholomew Las Casas, who were contemporaries and acquaintances of Columbus, and Juan de Barros, the Portuguese historian, all make Columbus a native of the Genoese territories.

There has been a question fruitful of discussion among the Genoese themselves, whether Columbus was born in the city of Genoa, or in some other part of the territory. Finale, and Oneglia, and Savona, towns on the Ligurian coast to the west, Boggiasco, Cogoleto, and several other towns and villages, claim him as their own. His family possessed a small property at a village or hamlet between Quinto and Nervi, called Terra Rossa; in Latin, Terra Rubra; which has induced some writers to assign his birth to one of those places. Bossi says that there is still a tower between Quinto and Nervi which bears the title of Torre dei Colombi.* Bartholomew Columbus, brother to the admiral, styled himself of Terra Rubra, in a Latin inscription on a map which he presented to Henry VII. of England, and Fernando Columbus states, in his history of the admiral, that he was accustomed to subscribe himself in the same manner before he attained to his dignities.

Cogoleto at one time bore away the palm. The families there claim the discoverer and preserve a portrait of him. One or both of the two admirals named Colombo, with whom he sailed, are stated to have come from that place, and to have been confounded with him so as to have given support to this idea.†

Savona, a city in the Genoese territories, has claimed the same honour, and this claim has recently been very strongly brought forward. Signor Giovani Battista Belloro, an advocate of Savona, has strenuously maintained this claim in an ingenious disputation, dated May 12th, 1826, in form of a letter to the Baron du Zach, editor of a valuable astronomical and geographical journal, published monthly at Genoa.‡

* Bossi. French translation, Paris, 1824, p. 69. † Idem.

‡ Correspondence Astron. Geograph. &c. de Baron du Zach, vol. 14, cahier 6, lettera 29. 1826.

Signor Belloro claims it as an admitted fact, that Domenico Colombo was for many years a resident and citizen of Savona, in which place one Christopher Columbus is shown to have signed a document in 1472.

He states that a public square in that city bore the name of Platea Columbi. toward the end of the 14th century; that the Ligurian government gave the name of Jurisdizione di Colombi to that district of the republic, under the persuasion that the great navigator was a native of Savona; and that Columbus gave the name of Saona to a little island adjacent to Hispaniola, among his earliest discoveries.

He quotes many Savonese writers, principally poets, and various historians and poets of other countries, and thus establishes the point that Columbus was held to be a native of Savona by persons of respectable authority. He lays particular stress on the testimony of the Magnifico Francisco Spinola, as related by the learned prelate Felippo Alberto Pollero, stating that he had seen the sepulchre of Christopher Columbus in the cathedral at Seville, and that the epitaph states him expressly to be a native of Savona: "Hic jacet Christophorus Columbus Savonensis."*

The proofs advanced by Signor Belloro show his zeal for the honour of his native city, but do not authenticate the fact he undertakes to establish. He shows clearly that many respectable writers believed Columbus to be a native of Savona; but a far greater number can be adduced, and many of them contemporary with the admiral, some of them his intimate friends, others his fellow-citizens, who state him to have been born in the city of Genoa. Among the Savonese writers, Giulio Salinorio, who investigated the subject, comes expressly to the same conclusion: "*Genova, città noblissima, era la patria de Colombo.*"

Signor Belloro appears to be correct in stating that Domenico, the father of the admiral, was several years resident in Savona. But it appears from his own dissertation, that the Christopher who witnessed the testament in 1472, styled himself of Genoa: "*Christophorus Columbus lanerius de Janua.*" This incident is stated by other writers, who presume this Christopher to have been the navigator on a visit to his father, in the interval of his early voyages. In as far as the circumstance bears on the point, it supports the idea that he was born at Genoa.

The epitaph on which Signor Belloro places his principal reliance, entirely fails. Christopher Columbus was not interred in the cathedral of Seville, nor was any monument erected to him in that edifice. The tomb to which the learned prelate Felippo Alberto Pollero alludes, may have been that of Fernando Columbus, son to the admiral, who, as has been already observed, was buried in the cathedral of Seville, to which he bequeathed his noble library. The place of his sepulture is designated by a broad slab of white marble, inserted in the pavement, with an inscription, partly in Spanish, partly in Latin, recording the merits of Fernando, and the achievements of his father. On either side of the epitaph is engraved an ancient Spanish Galley. The inscription quoted by Signor Belloro may have been erroneously written from memory by the Magnifico Francisco Spinola, under the mistaken idea that he had beheld the sepulchre of the great discoverer. As Fernando was born at

* Felippo Alberto Pollero, Epicherema, cioé breve discorso per difesa di sua persona e carrattere. Torino, per Gio Battista Zappata. MCIXCVI. (read 1699) in 4to. page 47.

Cordova, the term Savonensis must have been another error of memoi in the Magnifico; no such word is to be found in the inscription.

This question of birthplace has also been investigated with considerable minuteness, and a decision given in favour of Genoa, by D. Gio Battista Spotorno, of the royal university in that city, in his historical memoir of Columbus. He shows that the family of the Columbi had long been resident in Genoa. By an extract from the notarial register, it appeared that one Giacomo Colombo, a wool-carder, resided without the gate of St. Andria, in the year 1311. An agreement, also, published by the Academy of Genoa, proved, that in 1489, Domenico Colombo possessed a house and shop, and a garden with a well, in the street of St. Andrew's gate, anciently without the walls, presumed to have been the same residence with that of Giacomo Colombo. He rented also another house from the monks of St. Stephen, in the Via Mulcento, leading from the street of St. Andrew to the Strada Giulia.*

Signor Bossi states, that documents lately found in the archives of the monastery of St. Stephen, present the name of Domenico Colombo several times, from 1456 to 1459, and designate him as son of Giovanni Colombo, husband of Susanna Fontanarossa, and father of Christopher, Bartholomew, and Giacomo,† (or Diego.) He states also that the receipts of the canons show that the last payment of rent was made by Domenico Colombo for his dwelling in 1489. He surmises that the admiral was born in the before-mentioned house belonging to those monks, in Via Mulcento, and that he was baptized in the church of St. Stephen. He adds that an ancient manuscript was submitted to the commissioners of the Genoese Academy, in the margin of which the notary had stated that the name of Christopher was on the register of the parish as having been baptized in that church.‡

Andres Bernaldez, the curate of los Palacios, who was an intimate friend of Columbus, says that he was of Genoa.§ Agostino Giustiniani, a contemporary of Columbus, likewise asserts it in his Polyglot Psalter, published in Genoa, in 1516. Antonio de Herrera, an author of great accuracy, who, though not a contemporary, had access to the best documents, asserts decidedly that he was born in the city of Genoa.

To these names may be added that of Alexander Geraldini, brother to the nuncio, and instructor to the children of Ferdinand and Isabella, a most intimate friend of Columbus.‖ Also Antonio Gallo,¶ Bartolomeo Senarega,** and Uberto Foglieta,†† all contemporaries with the admiral, and natives of Genoa, together with an anonymous writer, who published an account of his voyage of discovery at Venice in 1509.‡‡ It is unnecessary to mention historians of later date agreeing in the same fact, as they must have derived their information from some of these authorities.

The question in regard to the birthplace of Columbus has been treated thus minutely, because it has been, and still continues to be, a point of warm controversy. It may be considered, however, as conclusively de-

* Spotorno, Eng. trans. p. xi. xii. † Bossi, French trans. p. 76. ‡ Idem. p. 88.
§ Cura de los Palacios, MS. cap. 118. ‖ Alex. Geraldini, Itin. ad. Reg. sub. Aquinor.
¶ Antonio Gallo, Anales of Genoa, Muratori, tom 23.
** Senarega Muratori, tom. 24. †† Foglieta, Elog. Clar. Ligur.
‡‡ Grineus, Nov. Orb.

cided by the highest authority, the evidence of Columbus himself. In a testament executed in 1498, which has been admitted in evidence before the Spanish tribunals in certain lawsuits among his descendants, he twice declares that he was a native of the city of Genoa: "*Siendo yo nacido en Genova,*" "I being born in Genoa." And again, he repeats the assertion, as a reason for enjoining certain conditions on his heirs, which manifest the interest he takes in his native place. "I command the said Diego, my son, or the person who inherits the said mayorazgo (or entailed estate), that he maintain always in the city of Genoa a person of our lineage, who shall have a house and a wife there, and to furnish him with an income on which he can live decently, as a person connected with our family, and hold footing and root in that city as a native of it, so that he may have aid and favour in that city in case of need, *for from thence I came, and there was born.*"*

In another part of his testament he expresses himself with a filial fondness in respect to Genoa. "I command the said Don Diego, or whoever shall possess the said mayorazgo, that he labour and strive always for the honour, and welfare, and increase of the city of Genoa, and employ all his abilities and means in defending and augmenting the welfare and honour of her republic, in all matters which are not contrary to the service of the church of God, and the state of the king and queen our sovereigns, and their successors."

An informal codicil, executed by Columbus at Valladolid, May 4th, 1506, sixteen days before his death, was discovered about 1785, in the Corsini library at Rome. It is termed a military codicil, from being made in the manner which the civil law allows to the soldier who executes such an instrument on the eve of battle, or in expectation of death. It was written on the blank page of a little breviary presented to Columbus by Pope Alexander VII. Columbus leaves the book "to his beloved country, the Republic of Genoa."

He directs the erection of a hospital in that city for the poor, with provision for its support; and he declares that republic his successor in the admiralty of the Indies, in the event of his male line becoming extinct.

The authenticity of this paper has been questioned. It has been said, that there was no probability of Columbus having resort to a usage with which he was, most likely, unacquainted. The objections are not cogent. Columbus was accustomed to the peculiarities of a military life, and he repeatedly wrote letters, in critical moments, as a precaution against some fatal occurrence that seemed to impend. The present codicil, from its date, must have been written a few days previous to his death, perhaps at a moment when he imagined himself at extremity. This may account for any difference in the handwriting, especially as he was, at times, so affected by the gout in his hands as not to be able to write except at night. Particular stress has been laid on the signature; but it does not appear that he was uniform in regard to that, and it is a

* "Item. Mando el dicho Don Diego mi hijo, á la persona que heredare el dicho mayorazgo, que tenga y sostenga siempre en la ciudad de Genova una persona de nuestro linage que tenga alli casa é muger, é le ordene renta con que pueda vivir honestamente, como persona tan llegada á nuestro linage, y haga pie y raiz en la dicha ciudad como natural della, porque podrá haber de la dicha ciudad ayuda e favor en las cosas de menester suyo, *pues que della sali y en ella naci.*"

point to which any one who attempted a forgery would be attentive. It does not appear, likewise, that any advantage could have been obtained by forging the paper, or that any such was attempted.

In 1502, when Columbus was about to depart on his fourth and last voyage, he wrote to his friend, Doctor Nicolo Oderigo, formerly ambassador from Genoa to Spain, and forwarded to him copies of all his grants and commissions from the Spanish sovereigns, authenticated before the alcaldes of Seville. He, at the same time, wrote to the bank of San Giorgio, at Genoa, assigning a tenth of his revenues to be paid to that city, in diminution of the duties on corn, wine, and other provisions.

Why should Columbus feel this strong interest in Genoa, had he been born in any of the other Italian states which have laid claim to him? He was under no obligation to Genoa. He had resided there but a brief portion of his early life; and his proposition for discovery, according to some writers, had been scornfully rejected by that republic. There is nothing to warrant so strong an interest in Genoa, but the filial tie which links the heart of a man to his native place, however he may be separated from it by time or distance, and however little he may be indebted to it for favours.

Again, had Columbus been born in any of the towns and villages of the Genoese coast which have claimed him for a native, why should he have made these bequests in favour of the *city* of Genoa, and not of his native town or village?

These bequests were evidently dictated by a mingled sentiment of pride and affection, which would be without all object if not directed to his native place. He was at this time elevated above all petty pride on the subject. His renown was so brilliant, that it would have shed a lustre on any hamlet, however obscure; and the strong love of country here manifested, would never have felt satisfied, until it had singled out the spot, and nestled down in the very cradle of his infancy. These appear to be powerful reasons, drawn from natural feeling, for deciding in favour of Genoa.

No. VII.—The Colombos.

During the early part of the life of Columbus, there were two other navigators, bearing the same name, of some rank and celebrity, with whom he occasionally sailed; their names occurring vaguely from time to time, during the obscure part of his career, have caused much perplexity to some of his biographers, who have supposed that they designated the discoverer. Fernando Columbus affirms them to have been family connexions,* and his father says, in one of his letters, "I am not the first admiral of our family."

These two were uncle and nephew: the latter being termed by historians Colombo the younger, (by the Spanish historians, Colombo el mozo.) They were in the Genoese service, but are mentioned, occasionally, in old chronicles as French commanders, because Genoa, during a great part of their time, was under the protection, or rather the sovereignty of France, and her ships and captains, being engaged in the expeditions of that power, were identified with the French marine.

Mention is made of the elder Colombo in Zurita's Annals of Aragon,

* Hist. del Almirante, cap. 1.

(L. xix. p. 261,) in the war between Spain and Portugal, on the subject of the claim of the Princess Juana to the crown of Castile. In 1476, the king of Portugal determined to go to the Mediterranean coast of France, to incite his ally, Louis XI., to prosecute the war in the province of Guipuzcoa.

The king left Toro, says Zurita, on the 13th June, and went by the river to the city of Porto, in order to await the armada of the king of France, the captain of which was Colon (Colombo), who was to navigate by the straits of Gibraltar to pass to Marseilles.

After some delays, Colombo arrived in the latter part of July with the French armada at Bermeo, on the coast of Biscay, where he encountered a violent storm, lost his principal ship, and ran to the coast of Galicia, with an intention of attacking Ribaldo, and lost a great many of his men. Thence he went to Lisbon to receive the king of Portugal, who embarked in the fleet in August, with a number of his noblemen, and took two thousand two hundred foot soldiers, and four hundred and seventy horse, to strengthen the Portuguese garrisons along the Barbary coast. There were in the squadron twelve ships and five caravels. After touching at Ceuta the fleet proceeded to Colibre, where the king disembarked in the middle of September, the weather not permitting them to proceed to Marseilles. (Zurita, L. xix. Ch. 51.)

This Colombo is evidently the naval commander of whom the following mention is made by Jaques George de Chaufepie, in his supplement to Bayle, (vol. 2, p. 126 of letter C.)

"I do not know what dependence," says Chaufepie, "is to be placed on a fact reported in the *Ducatiana*, (Part 1, p. 143,) that Columbus was in 1474 captain of several ships for Louis XI., and that, as the Spaniards had made at that time an irruption into Roussillon, he thought that, for reprisal, and without contravening the peace between the two crowns, he could run down Spanish vessels. He attacked, therefore, and took two galleys of that nation, freighted on the account of various individuals. On complaints of this action being made to King Ferdinand, he wrote on the subject to Louis XI.; his letter is dated the 9th December, 1474. Ferdinand terms Christopher Columbus a subject of Louis; it was because, as is known, Columbus was a Genoese, and Louis was sovereign of Genoa: although that city and Savona were held of him in fief by the duke of Milan."

It is highly probable that it was the squadron of this same Colombo of whom the circumstance is related by Bossi, and after him by Spotorno on the authority of a letter found in the archives of Milan, and written in 1476 by two illustrious Milanese gentlemen, on their return from Jerusalem. The letter states that in the previous year 1475, as the Venetian fleet was stationed off Cyprus to guard the island, a Genoese squadron, commanded by one Colombo, sailed by them with an air of defiance, shouting "Viva San Giorgio!" As the republics were then at peace they were permitted to pass unmolested.

Bossi supposes that the Colombo here mentioned was Christopher Columbus the discoverer; but it appears rather to have been the old Genoese admiral of that name, who, according to Zurita, was about that time cruising in the Mediterranean; and who, in all probability, was the hero of both the preceding occurrences.

The nephew of this Colombo, called by the Spaniards Colombo el mozo, commanded a few years afterwards a squadron in the French service, as will appear in a subsequent illustration, and Columbus may at various times have held an inferior command under both uncle and nephew, and been present on the above cited occasions.

No. VIII.—Expedition of John of Anjou.

About the time that Columbus attained his twenty-fourth year, his native city was in a state of great alarm and peril from the threatened invasion of Alphonso V. of Aragon, King of Naples. Finding itself too weak to contend singly with such a foe, and having in vain looked for assistance from Italy, it placed itself under the protection of Charles the VIIth of France. That monarch sent to its assistance John of Anjou, son of René or Renato, king of Naples, who had been dispossessed of his crown by Alphonso. John of Anjou, otherwise called the duke of Calabria,* immediately took upon himself the command of the place, repaired its fortifications, and defended the entrance of the harbour with strong chains. In the meantime, Alphonso had prepared a large land force, and assembled an armament of twenty ships and ten galleys at Ancona, on the frontiers of Genoa. The situation of the latter was considered eminently perilous, when Alphonso suddenly fell ill of a calenture and died; leaving the kingdoms of Anjou and Sicily to his brother John, and the kingdom of Naples to his son Ferdinand.

The death of Alphonso, and the subsequent division of his dominions, while they relieved the fears of the Genoese, gave rise to new hopes on the part of the house of Anjou: and the duke John, encouraged by emissaries from various powerful partisans among the Neapolitan nobility, determined to make a bold attempt upon Naples for the recovery of the crown. The Genoese entered into his cause with spirit, furnishing him with ships, galleys, and money. His father, René or Renato, fitted out twelve galleys for the expedition in the harbour of Marseilles, and sent him assurance of an abundant supply of money, and of the assistance of the king of France. The brilliant nature of the enterprise attracted the attention of the daring and restless spirits of the times. The chivalrous nobleman, the soldier of fortune, the hardy corsair, the bold adventurer, or the military partisan, enlisted under the banners of the duke of Calabria. It is stated by historians, that Columbus served in the armament from Genoa, in a squadron commanded by one of the Colombos, his relations.

The expedition sailed in October, 1459, and arrived at Sessa between the mouths of the Garigliano and the Volturno. The news of its arrival was the signal of universal revolt; the factious barons and their vassals hastened to join the standard of Anjou, and the duke soon saw the finest provinces of the Neapolitan dominions at his command, and with his army and squadron menaced the city of Naples itself.

In the history of this expedition we meet with one hazardous action of the fleet in which Columbus had embarked.

The army of John of Anjou being closely invested by a superior force, was in a perilous predicament at the mouth of the Sarno. In this conjuncture, the captain of the armada landed with his men, and scoured

* Duke of Calabria was a title of the heir apparent to the crown of Naples.

the neighbourhood, hoping to awaken in the populace their former enthusiasm for the banner of Anjou; and perhaps to take Naples by surprise. A chosen company of Neapolitan infantry was sent against them. The troops from the fleet having little of the discipline of regular soldiery, and much of the freebooting disposition of maritime rovers, had scattered themselves about the country, intent chiefly upon spoil. They were attacked by the infantry and put to rout, with the loss of many killed and wounded. Endeavouring to make their way back to the ships, they found the passes seized and blocked up by the people of Sorento, who assailed them with dreadful havoc. Their flight now became desperate and headlong, many threw themselves from rocks and precipices into the sea, and but a small portion regained the ships.

The contest of John of Anjou for the crown of Naples, lasted four years. For a time fortune favoured him, and the prize seemed almost within his grasp, but reverses succeeded: he was defeated at various points; the factious nobles, one by one, deserted him, and returned to their allegiance to Alphonso, and the duke was finally compelled to retire to the island of Ischia. Here he remained for some time, guarded by eight galleys, which likewise harassed the bay of Naples.* In this squadron, which loyally adhered to him, until he ultimately abandoned this unfortunate enterprise, Columbus is stated to have served.

No. IX.—Capture of the Venetian Galleys, by Colombo the Younger.

As the account of the sea-fight by which Fernando Columbus asserts that his father was first thrown upon the shores of Portugal, has been adopted by various respectable historians, it is proper to give particular reasons for discrediting it.

Fernando expressly says, that it was in an action mentioned by Marco Antonio Sabelico, in the eighth book of his tenth Decade; that the squadron in which Columbus served was commanded by a famous corsair, called Columbus the younger, (Colombo el mozo,) and that an embassy was sent from Venice to thank the king of Portugal for the succour he afforded to the Venetian captains and crews. All this is certainly recorded in Sabellicus, but the battle took place in 1485, after Columbus had *left* Portugal. Zurita in his Annals of Aragon, under the date of 1685, mentions this same action. He says, "at this time four Venetian galleys sailed from the island of Cadiz, and took the route for Flanders; they were laden with merchandise from the Levant, especially from the island of Sicily, and passing by Cape St. Vincent, they were attacked by a French corsair, son of captain Colon, (Colombo,) who had seven vessels in his armada; and the galleys were captured the twenty-first of August."†

A much fuller account is given in the life of King John II. of Portugal, by Garcia de Resende, who likewise records it as happening in 1485. He says the Venetian galleys were taken and robbed by the French, and the captains and crews wounded, plundered, and maltreated, were turned on shore at Cascoes. Here they were succoured by Doña Maria de Meneses, countess of Monsanto.

* Colenuccio, Hist. Nap., lib. vii. c. 17. † Zurita, Anales de Aragon, lib. xx. c. 64.

When King John II. heard of the circumstance, being much grieved that such an event should have happened on his coast, and being disposed to show his friendship for the republic of Venice, he ordered that the Venetian captains should be furnished with rich raiment of silks, and costly cloths, and provided with horses and mules, that they might make their appearance before him in a style befitting themselves and their country. He received them with great kindness and distinction, expressing himself with princely courtesy, both as to themselves and the republic of Venice; and having heard their account of the battle, and of their destitute situation, he assisted them with a large sum of money to ransom their galleys from the French cruisers. The latter took all the merchandises on board of their ships, but King John prohibited any of the spoil from being purchased within his dominions. Having thus generously relieved and assisted the captains, and administered to the necessities of their crews, he enabled them all to return in their own galleys to Venice.

The dignitaries of the republic were so highly sensible of this munificence on the part of King John, that they sent a stately embassy to that monarch, with rich presents and warm expressions of gratitude. Geronimo Donate was charged with this mission, a man eminent for learning and eloquence; he was honourably received and entertained by King John, and dismissed with royal presents, among which were jenets, and mules with sumptuous trappings and caparisons, and many negro slaves richly clad.*

The following is the account of this action as given by Sabellicus, in his History of Venice:†

Erano andate quattro Galee delle quali Bartolommeo Minio era capitano. Queste navigando per l'Iberico mare, Colombo il più giovane, nipote di quel Colombo famoso corsale, fecesi incontro a' Veniziani di notte, appresso il sacro Promontorio, che chiamasi ora capo di san Vincenzo, con sette navi guernite da combattere. Egli quantunque nel primo incontro avesse seco disposto d' opprimere le navi Veniziane, si ritenne però dal combattere sin al giorno: tuttavia per esser ala battaglia più acconcio così le seguia, che le prode del corsale toccavano le poppe de Veniziani. Venuto il giorno incontanente i Barbari diedero l' assalto. Sostennero i Veniziani allora l' empito del nemico, per numero di navi e di combattenti superiore, e durò il conflitto atroce per molte ore. Rare fiate fu combattuto contro simili nemici con tanta uccisione, perchè a pena si costuma d' attaccarsi contro di loro, se non per occasione. Affermano alcuni, che vi furono presenti, esser morte delle ciurme Veniziane da trecento uomini. Altri dicono che fu meno: morì in quella zuffa Lorenzo Michele capitano d' una galera e Giovanni Delfino, d' altro capitano fratello. Era durata la zuffa dal fare del giorno fin' ad ore venti, e erano le genti Veneziane mal trattate. Era gia la nave Delfina in potere de' nemici quando le altre ad una ad una si ren-

* Obras de Garcia de Resende, cap. 58, Avora, 1554.

† Marco Antonio Coccio, better known under the name of Sabellicus, a cognomen which he adopted on being crowned poet in the pedantic academy of Pomponius Lætus. He was a contemporary of Columbus, and makes brief mention of his discoveries in the eighth book of the tenth Ennead of his Universal History. By some writers he is called the Livy of his time; others accuse him of being full of misrepresentations in favour of Venice. The elder Scaliger charges him with venality, and with being swayed by Venetian gold.

derono. Narrano alcuni, che furono di quel aspro conflitto partecipi, aver numerato nelle loro navi da prode a poppe ottanta valorosi uomini estinti, i quali dal nemico veduti lo mossero a gemere e dire con sdegno che così avevano voluto, i Veniziani. I corpi morti furono gettati ne mare, e i feriti posti nel lido. Quei che rimasero vivi seguirono con le navi il capitano vittorioso sin' a Lisbona e ivi furono tutti licenziati. . . . . Quivi furono i Veniziani benignamente ricevuti dal Re, gli infermi furono medicati, gli altri ebbero abiti e denari secondo la loro condizione. . . . . Oltre ciò vietò in tutto il Regno, che alcuno non comprasse della preda Veniziana, portata dai corsali. La nuova dell' avuta rovina non poco afflisse la città, erano perduti in quella mercatanzia da ducento mila ducati; ma il danno particolare degli uomini uccisi diede maggior afflizione.

Marc. Ant. Sabelico, Hist. Venet., decad. iv. lib. iii.

No. X.—Amerigo Vespucci.

Among the earliest and most intelligent of the voyagers who followed the track of Columbus, was Amerigo Vespucci. He has been considered by many as the first discoverer of the southern continent, and by a singular caprice of fortune, his name has been given to the whole of the New World. It has been strenuously insisted, however, that he had no claim to the title of a discoverer; that he merely sailed in a subordinate capacity in a squadron commanded by others; that the account of his first voyage is a fabrication; and that he did not visit the main-land until after it had been discovered and coasted by Columbus. As this question has been made a matter of warm and voluminous controversy, it is proper to take a summary view of it in the present work.

Amerigo Vespucci was born in Florence, March 9th, 1451, of a noble, but not at that time a wealthy family; his father's name was Anastatio; his mother's was Elizabetta Mini. He was the third of their sons, and received an excellent education under his uncle, Georgio Antonio Vespucci, a learned friar of the fraternity of San Marco, who was instructor to several illustrious personages of that period.

Amerigo Vespucci visited Spain, and took up his residence in Seville, to attend to some commercial transactions on account of the family of the Medici of Florence, and to repair, by his ingenuity, the losses and misfortunes of an unskilful brother.*

The date of his arrival in Spain is uncertain, but from comparing dates and circumstances mentioned in his letters, he must have been at Seville when Columbus returned from his first voyage.

Padre Stanislaus Canovai, Professor of Mathematics at Florence, who has published the life and voyages of Amerigo Vespucci, says that he was commissioned by King Ferdinand, and sent with Columbus in his second voyage in 1493. He states this on the authority of a passage in the Cosmography of Sebastian Munster, published at Basle in 1550;† but Munster mentions Vespucci as having accompanied Columbus in his first voyage; the reference of Canovai is therefore incorrect; and the suggestion of Munster is disproved by the letters of Vespucci, in which he states his having been stimulated by the accounts brought of the

* Bandini, Vita d'Amerigo Vespucci. † Cosm. Munst., p. 1108.

newly-discovered regions. He never mentions such a voyage in any of his letters; which he most probably would have done, or rather would have made it the subject of a copious letter, had he actually performed it.

The first notice of a positive form which we have of Vespucci, as resident in Spain, is early in 1496. He appears, from documents in the royal archives at Seville, to have acted as agent or factor for the house of Juanoto Berardi, a rich Florentine merchant, resident in Seville, who had contracted to furnish the Spanish sovereigns with three several armaments, of four vessels each, for the service of the newly discovered countries. He may have been one of the principals in this affair, which was transacted in the name of this established house. Berardi died in December, 1495, and in the following January we find Amerigo Vespucci attending to the concerns of the expeditions, and settling with the masters of the ships for their pay and maintenance, according to the agreements made between them and the late Juanoto Berardi. On the 12th January, 1496, he received on this account 10,000 maravedis from Bernardo Pinelo, the royal treasurer. He went on preparing all things for the dispatch of four caravels to sail under the same contract between the sovereigns and the house of Berardi, and sent them to sea on the 3rd February, 1496; but on the 8th they met with a storm and were wrecked; the crews were saved with the loss of only three men.* While thus employed, Amerigo Vespucci, of course, had occasional opportunity of conversing with Columbus, with whom, according to the expression of the admiral himself, in one of his letters to his son Diego, he appears to have been always on friendly terms. From these conversations, and from his agency in these expeditions, he soon became excited to visit the newly-discovered countries, and to participate in enterprises, which were the theme of every tongue. Having made himself well acquainted with geographical and nautical science, he prepared to launch into the career of discovery. It was not very long before he carried this design into execution.

In 1498, Columbus, in his third voyage, discovered the coast of Paria, on Terra Firma; which he at that time imagined to be a great island, but that a vast continent lay immediately adjacent. He sent to Spain specimens of pearls found on this coast, and gave the most sanguine accounts of the supposed riches of the country.

In 1499, an expedition of four vessels, under command of Alonzo de Ojeda, was fitted out from Spain, and sailed for Paria, guided by charts and letters sent to the government by Columbus. These were communicated to Ojeda, by his patron the bishop Fonseca, who had the superintendence of India affairs, and who furnished him also with a warrant to undertake the voyage.

It is presumed that Vespucci aided in fitting out the armament, and sailed in a vessel belonging to the house of Berardi, and in this way was enabled to take a share in the gains and losses of the expedition; for Isabella, as queen of Castile, had rigourously forbidden all strangers to trade with her transatlantic possessions, not even excepting the natives of the kingdom of Aragon.

This squadron visited Paria and several hundred miles of the coast,

* These particulars are from manuscript memoranda, extracted from the royal archives, by the late accurate historian Munoz

which they ascertained to be Terra Firma. They returned in June, 1500; and on the 18th of July, in that year, Amerigo Vespucci wrote an account of his voyage to Lorenzo de Pier Francisco de Medici of Florence, which remained concealed in manuscript, until brought to light and published by Bandini in 1745.

In his account of this voyage, and in every other narrative of his different expeditions, Vespucci never mentions any other person concerned in the enterprise. He gives the time of his sailing, and states that he went with two caravels, which were probably his share of the expedition, or rather vessels sent by the house of Berardi. He gives an interesting narrative of the voyage, and of the various transactions with the natives, which corresponds, in many substantial points, with the accounts furnished by Ojeda and his mariners of their voyage, in a lawsuit hereafter mentioned.

In May, 1501, Vespucci, having suddenly left Spain, sailed in the service of Emanuel, king of Portugal; in the course of which expedition he visited the coast of Brazil. He gives an account of this voyage in a second letter to Lorenzo de Pier Francisco de Medici, which also remained in manuscript until published by Bartolozzi in 1789.*

No record nor notice of any such voyage undertaken by Amerigo Vespucci, at the command of Emanuel, is to be found in the archives of the Torre do Tombo, the general archives of Portugal, which have been repeatedly and diligently searched for the purpose. It is singular also that his name is not to be found in any of the Portuguese historians, who in general were very particular in naming all navigators who held any important station among them, or rendered any distinguished services. That Vespucci did sail along the coasts, however, is not questioned. His nephew, after his death, in the course of evidence on some points in dispute, gave the correct latitude of Cape St. Augustine, which he said he had extracted from his uncle's journal.

In 1504, Vespucci wrote a third letter to the same Lorenzo de Medici, containing a more extended account of the voyage just alluded to in the service of Portugal. This was the first of his narratives that appeared in print. It appears to have been published in Latin, at Strasburgh, as early as 1505, under the title "Americus Vesputius de Orbe Antarctico per Regem Portugalliæ pridem inventa."†

An edition of this letter was printed in Vicenza in 1507, in an anonymous collection of voyages edited by Francanzio di Monte Alboddo, an inhabitant of Vicentza. It was reprinted in Italian in 1508, at Milan, and also in Latin, in a book entitled Itinerarium Portugalensium. In making the present illustration, the Milan edition in Italian‡ has been consulted, and also a Latin translation of it by Simon Grinæus, in his

* Bartolozzi, Recherche Historico. Firenze, 1789.

† Panzer, tom. vi. p. 33, apud Esame Critico, p. 88, Anotazione 1.

‡ This rare book, in the possession of O. Rich, Esq., is believed to be the oldest printed collection of voyages extant. It has not the pages numbered, the sheets are merely marked with a letter of the alphabet at the foot of each eighth page. It contains the earliest account of the voyages of Columbus, from his first departure until his arrival at Cadiz in chains. The letter of Vespucci to Lorenzo de Medici occupies the fifth book of this little volume. It is stated to have been originally written in Spanish, and translated into Italian by a person of the name of Jocondo. An earlier edition is stated to have been printed in Venice by Alberto Vercellese, in 1504. The author is said to have been Angelo Trivigiani, secretary to the Venetian ambassador in Spain. This

Novus Orbis, published at Basle in 1532. It relates entirely the first voyage of Vespucci from Lisbon to the Brazils in 1501.

It is from this voyage to the Brazils that Amerigo Vespucci was first considered the discoverer of Terra Firma; and his name was at first applied to these southern regions, though afterwards extended to the whole continent. The merits of his voyage were, however, greatly exaggerated. The Brazils had been previously discovered, and formally taken possession of for Spain in 1500, by Vincente Yañez Pinzon; and also in the same year, by Pedro Alvarez Cabral, on the part of Portugal; circumstances unknown however to Vespucci and his associates. The country remained in possession of Portugal, in conformity to the line of demarcation agreed on between the two nations.

Vespucci made a second voyage in the service of Portugal. He says that he commanded a caravel in a squadron of six vessels destined for the discovery of Malacca, which they had heard to be the great depôt and magazine of all the trade between the Ganges and the Indian sea. Such an expedition did sail about this time, under the command of Gonzalo Coelho. The squadron sailed according to Vespucci on the 10th of May, 1503. It stopped at the Cape de Verd islands for refreshments, and afterwards sailed by the coast of Sierra Leone, but was prevented from landing by contrary winds and a turbulent sea. Standing to the south-west, they ran three hundred leagues until they were three degrees to the southward of the equinoctial line, where they discovered an uninhabited island, about two leagues in length and one in breadth. Here, on the 10th of August, by mismanagement, the commander of the squadron ran his vessel on a rock and lost her. While the other vessels were assisting to save the crew and property from the wreck, Amerigo Vespucci was dispatched in his caravel in search for a safe harbour in the island. He departed in his vessel without his long-boat, and with less than half of his crew, the rest having gone in the boat to the assistance of the wreck. Vespucci found a harbour, but waited in vain for several days for the arrival of the ships. Standing out to sea, he met with a solitary vessel, and learnt that the ship of the commander had sunk, and the rest had proceeded onwards. In company with this vessel he stood for the Brazils, according to a command of the king, in case that any vessel should be parted from the fleet. Arriving on the coast, he discovered the famous bay of All Saints, where he remained upwards of two months, in hopes of being joined by the rest of the fleet. He at length ran 260 leagues farther south, where he remained five months building a fort and taking in a cargo of brazil-wood. Then, leaving in the fortress a garrison of 24 men with arms and ammunition, he set sail for Lisbon, where he arrived in June, 1504.* The commander of the squadron and the other four ships were never heard of afterwards.

Vespucci does not appear to have received the reward from the king of Portugal that his services merited, for we find him at Seville early in 1505, on his way to the Spanish court, in quest of employment: and he was bearer of a letter from Columbus to his son Diego, dated February 5,

Trivigiani appears to have collected many of the particulars of the voyages of Columbus from the manuscript decades of Peter Martyr, who erroneously lays the charge of the plagiarism to Aloysius Cadamosto, whose voyages are inserted in the same collection. The book was entitled "Libretto di tutta la navigazione del Re de Espagna, delle Isole e terreni nuovamente trovati." * Letter of Vespucci to Soderini or Renato—Edit. of Canovai.

which, while it speaks warmly of him as a friend, intimates his having been unfortunate. The following is the letter:

My dear Son,—Diego Mendez departed hence on Monday, the third of this month. After his departure I conversed with Amerigo Vespucci, the bearer of this, who goes there, (to court) summoned on affairs of navigation. Fortune has been adverse to him as to many others. His labours have not profited him as much as they reasonably should have done. He goes on my account, and with much desire to do something that may result to my advantage, if within his power. I cannot ascertain here in what I can employ him that will be serviceable to me, for I do not know what may be there required. He goes with the determination to do all that is possible for me; see in what he may be of advantage and co-operate with him, that he may say and do every thing, and put his plans in operation; and let all be done secretly, that he may not be suspected. I have said every thing to him that I can say touching the business, and have informed him of the pay I have received, and what is due, &c.*

About this time Amerigo Vespucci received letters of naturalization from King Ferdinand, and shortly afterwards he and Vincente Yañez Pinzon were named captains of an armada about to be sent out in the spice trade and to make discoveries. There is a royal order, dated Toro, 11th April, 1507, for 12,000 maravedis for an outfit for "Americo de Vespuche, resident of Seville." Preparations were made for this voyage, and vessels procured and fitted out, but it was eventually abandoned. There are memoranda existing concerning it, dated in 1506, 1507, and 1508, from which it appears that Amerigo Vespucci remained at Seville, attending to the fluctuating concerns of this squadron, until the destination of the vessels was changed, their equipments were sold, and the accounts settled. During this time he had a salary of 30,000 maravedis. On the 22nd of March, 1508, he received the appointment of principal pilot, with a salary of 70,000 maravedis. His chief duties were to prepare charts, examine pilots, superintend the fitting out of expeditions, and prescribe the route that vessels were to pursue in their voyages to the New World. He appears to have remained at Seville, and to have retained this office until his death, on the 22nd of February, 1512. His widow, Maria Corezo, enjoyed a pension of 10,000 maravedis. After his death, his nephew, Juan Vespucci, was nominated pilot with a salary of 20,000 maravedis, commencing on the 22nd of May, 1512. Peter Martyr speaks with high commendation of this young man. "Young Vesputius is one to whom Americus Vesputius his uncle left the exact knowledge of the mariner's faculties, as it were by inheritance, after his death; for he was a very expert master in the knowledge of his carde, his compasse, and the elevation of the pole starre by the quadrant. . . Vesputius is my very familiar friend, and a wittie young man, in whose company I take great pleasure, and therefore use him oftentymes for my guest. He hath also made many voyages into these coasts, and diligently noted such things as he hath seen."†

Vespucci, the nephew, continued in this situation during the lifetime of Fonseca, who had been the patron of his uncle and his family. He

* Navarrete, Colec. Viag. tom. i. p. 351.
† Peter Martyr, decad. . lib. v. Eden's English trans.

was divested of his pay and his employ by a letter of the council, dated the 18th of March, 1525, shortly after the death of the bishop. No further notice of Vespucci is to be found in the archives of the Indies.

Such is a brief review of the career of Amerigo Vespucci; it remains to notice the points of controversy. Shortly after his return from his last expedition to the Brazils, he wrote a letter dated Lisbon, 4th September, 1504, containing a summary account of all his voyages. This letter is of special importance to the matters under investigation, as it is the only one known that relates to the disputed voyage, which would establish him as the discoverer of Terra Firma. It is presumed to have been written in Latin, and was addressed to René, duke of Lorraine, who assumed the title of king of Sicily and Jerusalem.

The earliest known edition of this letter was published in Latin, in 1507, at St. Diez in Lorraine. A copy of it has been found in the library of the Vatican (No. 9688) by the Abbe Cancellieri. In preparing the present illustration, a reprint of this letter in Latin has been consulted, inserted in the Novus Orbis of Grinæus, published at Bath in 1532. The letter contains a spirited narrative of four voyages which he asserts to have made to the New World. In the prologue he excuses the liberty of addressing King René by calling to his recollection the ancient intimacy of their youth, when studying the rudiments of science together, under the paternal uncle of the voyager; and adds that if the present narrative should not altogether please his majesty, he must plead to him as Pliny said to Mecænas, that he used formerly to be amused with his triflings.

In the prologue to this letter, he informs King René that affairs of commerce had brought him to Spain, where he had experienced the various changes of fortune attendant on such transactions, and was induced to abandon that pursuit and direct his labours to objects of a more elevated and stable nature. He therefore purposed to contemplate various parts of the world, and to behold the marvels which it contains. To this object both time and place were favourable; for King Ferdinand was then preparing four vessels for the discovery of new lands in the west, and appointed him among the number of those who went in the expedition. "We departed," he adds, "from the port of Cadiz, May 20, 1497, taking our course on the great gulf of ocean; in which voyage we employed eighteen months, discovering many lands and innumerable islands, chiefly inhabited, of which our ancestors make no mention."

A duplicate of this letter appears to have been sent at the same time (written, it is said, in Italian) to Piere Soderini, afterwards Gonfalonier of Florence, which was some years subsequently published in Italy, not earlier than 1510, and entitled "Lettera de Amerigo Vespucci delle Isole nuovamente trovate in quatro suoi viaggi." We have consulted the edition of this letter in Italian, inserted in the publication of Padre Stanislaus Canovai, already referred to.

It has been suggested by an Italian writer, that this letter was written by Vespucci to Soderini only, and the address altered to King René through the flattery or mistake of the Lorraine editor, without perceiving how unsuitable the reference to former intimacy, intended for Soderini, was when applied to a sovereign. The person making this

remark can hardly have read the prologue to the Latin edition, in which the title of "your majesty" is frequently repeated, and the term "illustrious king" employed. It was first published also in Lorraine, the domains of René, and the publisher would not probably have presumed to take such a liberty with his sovereign's name. It becomes a question, whether Vespucci addressed the same letter to King René and to Piere Soderini, both of them having been educated with him, or whether he sent a copy of this letter to Soderini, which subsequently found its way into print. The address to Soderini may have been substituted, through mistake, by the Italian publisher. Neither of the publications could have been made under the supervision of Vespucci.

The voyage specified in this letter as having taken place in 1497, is the great point in controversy. It is strenuously asserted that no such voyage took place; and that the first expedition of Vespucci to the coast of Paria was in the enterprise commanded by Ojeda, in 1499. The books of the armadas existing in the archives of the Indies at Seville, have been diligently examined, but no record of such voyage has been found, nor any official documents relating to it. Those most experienced in Spanish colonial regulations, insist that no command like that pretended by Vespucci could have been given to a stranger till he had first received letters of naturalization from the sovereigns for the kingdom of Castile, and he did not obtain such till 1505, when they were granted to him as preparatory to giving him the command in conjunction with Pinzon.

His account of a voyage made by him in 1497, therefore, is alleged to be a fabrication for the purpose of claiming the discovery of Paria; or rather it is affirmed that he has divided the voyage which he actually made with Ojeda, in 1499, into two; taking a number of incidents from his real voyage, altering them a little, and enlarging them with descriptions of the countries and people, so as to make a plausible narrative, which he gives as a distinct voyage; and antedating his departure to 1497, so as to make himself appear the first discoverer of Paria.

In support of this charge, various coincidences have been pointed out between his voyage said to have taken place in 1497, and that described in his first letter to Lorenzo de Medici in 1499. These coincidences are with respect to places visited, transactions and battles with the natives, and the number of Indians carried to Spain and sold as slaves.

But the credibility of this voyage has been put to a stronger test. About 1508 a suit was instituted against the crown of Spain by Don Diego, son and heir of Columbus, for the government of certain parts of Terra Firma, and for a share in the revenue arising from them, conformably to the capitulations made between the sovereigns and his father. It was the object of the crown to disprove the discovery of the coast of Paria and the pearl islands by Columbus; as it was maintained, that unless he had discovered them, the claim of his heir with respect to them would be of no validity.

In the course of this suit, a particular examination of witnesses took place in 1512–13 in the fiscal court. Alonzo de Ojeda, and nearly a hundred other persons, were interrogated on oath; that voyager having been the first to visit the coast of Paria after Columbus had left it, and that within a very few months. The interrogatories of these witnesses,

and their replies, are still extant, in the archives of the Indies at Seville, in a packet of papers entitled "Papers belonging to the admiral Don Luis Colon, about the conservation of his privileges, from ann. 1515 to 1564." The author of the present work has two several copies of these interrogatories lying before him. One made by the late historian Muñoz, and the other made in 1826, and signed by Don Jose de la Higuera y Lara, keeper of the general archives of the Indies in Seville. In the course of this testimony, the fact that Amerigo Vespucci accompanied Ojeda in this voyage of 1499, appears manifest, first from the deposition of Ojeda himself. The following are the words of the record: "In this voyage which this said witness made, he took with him Juan de la Cosa and Morego Vespuche [Amerigo Vespucci] and other pilots."* Secondly, from the coincidence of many parts of the narrative of Vespucci, with events in this voyage of Ojeda. Among these coincidences, one is particularly striking. Vespucci, in his letter to Lorenzo de Medici, and also in that to René or Soderini, says, that his ships after leaving the coast of Terra Firma, stopped at Hispaniola, where they remained about two months and a half, procuring provisions, during which time, he adds, "we had many perils and troubles with the very Christians who were in that island with Columbus, and I believe through envy."†

Now it is well known that Ojeda passed some time on the western end of the island victualling his ships; and that serious dissensions took place between him and the Spaniards in those parts, and the party sent by Columbus under Roldan to keep a watch upon his movements. If then Vespucci, as is stated upon oath, really accompanied Ojeda in this voyage, the inference appears almost irresistible, that he had not made the previous voyage of 1497, for the fact would have been well known to Ojeda; he would have considered Vespucci as the original discoverer, and would have had no motive for depriving him of the merit of it, to give it to Columbus, with whom Ojeda was not upon friendly terms.

Ojeda, however, expressly declares that the coast had been discovered by Columbus. On being asked how he knew the fact, he replied, because he saw the chart of the country discovered, which Columbus sent at the time to the king and queen, and that he came off immediately on a voyage of discovery, and found what was therein set down as discovered by the admiral was correct.‡

Another witness, Bernaldo de Haro, states that he had been with the admiral, and had written (or rather copied) a letter for the admiral to the king and queen, designating, in an accompanying sea-chart, the

* En este viage que este dicho testigo hizo trujo consigo a Juan de la Cosa, piloto, e Morego Vespuche, e otros pilotos.

† Per la necessitá del mantenimento fummo all' Isola d'Antiglia (Hispaniola che é questa che descoperse Cristoval Colombo piú anni fa, dove facemmo molto mantenimento, e stemmo que mesi e 17 giorni; dove passammo moti pericoli e travagli con li miedesimi christiani que in questa isola stavanno col Colombo (credó per invidia.) Letter of Vespucci—Edit. of Canovai.

‡ Preguntado como lo sabe; dijo—que lo sabe porque vió este testigo la figura que el dicho Almirante al dicho tiempo embió á Castilla al Key e Reyna, nuestros Senores, de lo que habia descubierto, y porque este testigo luego vino á descubrir y halló que era verdad lo que dicho tiene que el dicho Almirante descubrió. MS. Process of D. Diego Colon, pregunta 2.

courses and steerings and winds by which he had arrived at Paria; and that this witness had heard that from this chart others had been made, and that Pedro Alonzo Niño and Ojeda, and others, who had since visited these countries, had been guided by the same.*

Francisco de Molares, one of the best and most credible of all the pilots, testified that he saw a sea-chart which Columbus had made of the coast of Paria, *and he believed that all governed themselves by it.*†

Numerous witnesses in this process, testify to the fact that Paria was first discovered by Columbus. Las Casas, who has been at the pains of counting them, says that the fact was established by twenty-five eye-witnesses and sixty ear-witnesses. Many of them testify also that the coast south of Paria, and that extending west of the island of Margarita, away to Venezuela, which Vespucci states to have been discovered by himself in 1497, was now first discovered by Ojeda, and had never before been visited either by the admiral "or any other Christian whatever."

Alonzo Sanchez de Carvajal says that all the voyages of discovery which were made to the Terra Firma, were made by persons who had sailed with the admiral, or been benefited by his instructions and directions, following the course he had laid down;‡ and the same is testified by many other pilots and mariners of reputation and experience.

It would be a singular circumstance, if none of these witnesses, many of whom must have sailed in the same squadron with Vespucci along this coast in 1499, should have known that he had discovered and explored it two years previously. If that had really been the case, what motive could he have for concealing the fact? and why, if they knew it, should they not proclaim it? Vespucci states his voyage in 1497 to have been made with four caravels; that they returned in October, 1498, and that he sailed again with two caravels in May, 1499, (the date of Ojeda's departure.) Many of the mariners would, therefore, have been present in both voyages. Why, too, should Ojeda and the other pilots guide themselves by the charts of Columbus, when they had a man on board so learned in nautical science, and who, from his own recent observations, was practically acquainted with the coast? Not a word, however, is mentioned of the voyage and discovery of Vespucci by any of the pilots, though every other voyage and discovery is cited; nor does there even a seaman appear who has accompanied him in his asserted voyage.

Another strong circumstance against the reality of this voyage is, that it was not brought forward in this trial to defeat the claims of the heirs of Columbus. Vespucci states the voyage to have been under-

* Este testigo escrivió úna carta que el Almirante escriviera al Rey a Reyna, N.N.S.S. haciendo les saber las perlas e cosas que habia hallado, y le embió senalado con la dicha carta, en una carta de marear, los rumbos y vientos por donde habia llegado á la Paria, e que este testigo oyó decir como pr. aquella carte se habian hecho otras e por ellas habian venido Pedro Alonzo Merino [Niño] e Ojeda e otros que despues han ido á aquellas partes. Idem, pregunta 9.

† Process of D. Diego Colon, pregunta 10.

‡ Que en todos los viages que algunos hicieron descubriendo en la dicha tierra, ivan personas que ovieron navegado con el dicho Almirante, y a ellos mostró muchas cosas de marear, y ellos por imitacion é industria del dicho Almirante las aprendian y aprendieron, e seguendo ago, que el dicho Almirante les habia mostrado, hicieron los viages que descubrieron en la Tierra Firma. Process, pregunta 10.

taken with the knowledge and countenance of King Ferdinand; it must, therefore, have been avowed and notorious. Vespucci was living at Seville in 1508, at the time of the commencement of this suit, and for four years afterward, a salaried servant of the crown. Many of the pilots and mariners must have been at hand, who sailed with him in his pretended enterprise. If this voyage had once been proved, it would completely have settled the question, as far as concerned the coast of Paria, in favour of the crown. Yet no testimony appears ever to have been taken from Vespucci while living; and when the interrogatories were made in the fiscal court in 1512–13, not one of his seamen is brought up to give evidence. A voyage so important in its nature, and so essential to the question in dispute, is not even alluded to, while useless pains are taken to wrest evidence from the voyage of Ojeda, undertaken at a subsequent period.

It is a circumstance worthy of notice, that Vespucci commences his first letter to Lorenzo de Medici in 1500, within a month after his return from the voyage he had actually made to Paria, and apologizes for his long silence, by saying that nothing had occurred worthy of mention, ("e gran tempo che non ho scritto á vostra magnifizensa, e non lo ha causato altra cosa ne nessuna salvo non mi essere occorso cosa degna di memoria,") and proceeds eagerly to tell him the wonders he had witnessed in the expedition from which he had but just returned. It would be a singular forgetfulness to say that nothing had occurred of importance, if he had made a previous voyage of eighteen months in 1497–8 to this newly-discovered world; and it would be almost equally strange that he should not make the slightest allusion to it in this letter.

It has been the endeavour of the author to examine this question dispassionately; and after considering the statements and arguments advanced on either side, he cannot resist a conviction, that the voyage stated to have been made in 1497 did not take place, and that Vespucci has no title to the first discovery of the coast of Paria.

The question is extremely perplexing from the difficulty of assigning sufficient motives for so gross a deception. When Vespucci wrote his letters, there was no doubt entertained but that Columbus had discovered the main-land in his first voyage; Cuba being always considered the extremity of Asia, until circumnavigated in 1508. Vespucci may have supposed Brazil, Paria, and the rest of that coast, part of a distinct continent, and have been anxious to arrogate to himself the fame of its discovery. It has been asserted, that, on his return from his voyage to the Brazils, he prepared a maritime chart, in which he gave his name to that part of the main-land; but this assertion does not appear to be well substantiated. It would rather seem that his name was given to that part of the continent by others, as a tribute paid to his supposed merit, in consequence of having read his own account of his voyages.*

* The first suggestion of the name appears to have been in the Latin work already cited, published in St. Diez, in Lorraine, in 1507, in which was inserted the letter of Vespucci to King René. The author, after speaking of the other three parts of the world, Asia, Africa, and Europe, recommends that the fourth shall be called Amerigo, or America, after Vespucci, whom he imagined its discoverer.

Note to the Revised Edition, 1848.—Humboldt, in his "Examen Critique," published in Paris in 1837, says:—"I have been so happy as to discover, very recently, the name

It is singular that Fernando, the son of Columbus, in his biography of his father, should bring no charge against Vespucci of endeavouring to supplant the admiral in his discovery. Herrera has been cited as the first to bring the accusation, in his history of the Indies, first published in 1601, and has been much criticised in consequence, by the advocates of Vespucci, as making the charge on his mere assertion. But, in fact, Herrera did but copy what he found written by Las Casas, who had the proceedings of the fiscal court lying before him, and was moved to indignation against Vespucci, by what he considered proofs of great imposture.

It has been suggested that Vespucci was instigated to this deception at the time when he was seeking employment in the colonial service of Spain; and that he did it to conciliate the Bishop Fonseca, who was desirous of anything that might injure the interests of Columbus. In corroboration of this opinion, the patronage is cited which was ever shown by Fonseca to Vespucci and his family. This is not, however, a satisfactory reason, since it does not appear that the bishop ever made any use of the fabrication. Perhaps some other means might be found of accounting for this spurious narration, without implicating the veracity of Vespucci. It may have been the blunder of some editor, or the interpolation of some book-maker, eager, as in the case of Trivigiani with the manuscripts of Peter Martyr, to gather together disjointed materials, and fabricate a work to gratify the prevalent passion of the day.

In the various editions of the letters of Vespucci, the grossest variations and inconsistencies in dates will be found, evidently the errors of hasty and careless publishers. Several of these have been corrected by the modern authors who have inserted these letters in their works.* The same disregard to exactness which led to these blunders, may have produced the interpolation of this voyage, garbled out of the letters of Vespucci and the accounts of other voyagers. This is merely suggested as a possible mode of accounting for what appears so decidedly to be a fabrication, yet which we are loth to attribute to a man of the good sense, the character, and the reputed merit of Vespucci.

and the literary relations of the mysterious personage who (in 1507) was the first to propose the name of America to designate the new continent, and who concealed himself under the Grecianized name of Hylacomylas." He then, by a long and ingenious investigation, shows that the real name of this personage was Martin Waldseemüller, of Fribourg, an eminent cosmographer, patronized by René, duke of Lorraine; who no doubt put in his hands the letter received by him from Amerigo Vespucci. The geographical works of Waldseemüller, under the assumed name of Hylacomylas, had a wide circulation, went through repeated editions, and propagated the use of the name America throughout the world. There is no reason to suppose that this application of the name was in any wise suggested by Amerigo Vespucci. It appears to have been entirely gratuitous on the part of Waldseemüller.

* An instance of these errors may be cited in the edition of the letter of Amerigo Vespucci to King René, inserted by Grinæus in his Novus Orbis, in 1532. In this Vespucci is made to state that he sailed from Cadiz May 20, MCCCCXCVII. (1497.) that he was eighteen months absent, and returned to Cadiz October 15, MCCCCXCIX. (1499,) which would constitute an absence of 29 months. He states his departure from Cadiz, on his second voyage, Sunday, May 11th, MCCCCLXXXIX. (1489,) which would have made his second voyage precede his first by eight years. If we substitute 1499 for 1489, the departure on his second voyage would still precede his return from his first by five months. Canovai, in his edition, has altered the date of the first return to 1498. to limit the voyage to eighteen months.

After all, this is a question more of curiosity than of real moment, although it is one of those perplexing points about which grave men will continue to write weary volumes, until the subject acquires a fictitious importance from the mountain of controversy heaped upon it. It has become a question of local pride with the literati of Florence; and they emulate each other with patriotic zeal, to vindicate the fame of their distinguished countryman. This zeal is laudable when kept within proper limits; but it is to be regretted that some of them have so far been heated by controversy as to become irascible against the very memory of Columbus, and to seek to disparage his general fame, as if the ruin of it would add anything to the reputation of Vespucci. This is discreditable to their discernment and their liberality; it injures their cause, and shocks the feelings of mankind, who will not willingly see a name like that of Columbus, lightly or petulantly assailed in the course of these literary contests. It is a name consecrated in history, and is no longer the property of a city, or a state, or a nation, but of the whole world.

Neither should those who have a proper sense of the merit of Columbus put any part of his great renown at issue upon this minor dispute. Whether or not he was the discoverer of Paria, was a question of interest to his heirs, as a share of the government and revenues of that country depended upon it; but it is of no importance to his fame. In fact, the European who first reached the main-land of the New World was most probably Sebastian Cabot, a native of Venice, sailing in the employ of England. In 1497 he coasted its shores from Labrador to Florida; yet the English have never set up any pretensions on his account.

The glory of Columbus does not depend upon the parts of the country he visited, or the extent of coast along which he sailed, it embraces the discovery of the whole western world. With respect to him, Vespucci is as Yañez Pinzon, Bastides, Ojeda, Cabot, and the crowd of secondary discoverers, who followed in his track, and explored the realms to which he had led the way. When Columbus first touched a shore of the New World, even though a frontier island, he had achieved his enterprises; he had accomplished all that was necesary to his fame: the great problem of the ocean was solved; the world which lay beyond its western waters was discovered.

No. XI.—Martin Alonzo Pinzon.

In the course of the trial in the fiscal court, between Don Diego and the crown, an attempt was made to depreciate the merit of Columbus, and to ascribe the success of the great enterprise of discovery to the intelligence and spirit of Martin Alonzo Pinzon. It was the interest of the crown to do so, to justify itself in withholding from the heirs of Columbus the extent of his stipulated reward. The examinations of witnesses in this trial were made at various times and places, and upon a set of interrogatories formally drawn up by order of the fiscal. They took place upwards of twenty years after the first voyage of Columbus, and the witnesses testified from recollection.

In reply to one of the interrogatories, Arias Perez Pinzon, son of Martin Alonzo, declared, that, being once in Rome with his father on

commercial affairs, before the time of the discovery, they had frequent conversations with a person learned in cosmography who was in the service of Pope Innocent VIII., and that being in the library of the pope, this person showed them many manuscripts, from one of which his father gathered intimation of these new lands; for there was a passage by an historian as old as the time of Solomon, which said "Navigate the Mediterranean Sea to the end of Spain, and thence towards the setting sun, in a direction between north and south, until ninety-five degrees of longitude, and you will find the land of Cipango, fertile and abundant, and equal in greatness to Africa and Europe." A copy of this writing, he added, his father brought from Rome with an intention of going in search of that land, and frequently expressed such determination; and that, when Columbus came to Palos with his project of discovery, Martin Alonzo Pinzon showed him the manuscript, and ultimately gave it to him just before they sailed.

It is extremely probable that this manuscript, of which Arias Perez gives so vague an account from recollection, but which he appears to think the main thing that prompted Columbus to his undertaking, was no other than the work of Marco Polo, which, at that time, existed in manuscript in most of the Italian libraries. Martin Alonzo was evidently acquainted with the work of the Venetian, and it would appear, from various circumstances, that Columbus had a copy of it with him in his voyages, which may have been the manuscript above-mentioned. Columbus had long before, however, had a knowledge of the work, if not by actual inspection, at least through his correspondence with Toscanelli in 1474, and had derived from it all the light it was capable of furnishing, before he ever came to Palos. It is questionable, also, whether the visit of Martin Alonzo to Rome was not after his mind had been heated by conversations with Columbus in the convent of La Rabida. The testimony of Arias Perez is so worded, as to leave it in doubt whether the visit was not in the very year prior to the discovery: "fue el dicho su padre á Roma aquel dicho año antes que fuese a descubrir." Arias Perez always mentions the manuscript as having been imparted to Columbus, after he had come to Palos with an intention of proceeding on the discovery.

Certain witnesses who were examined on behalf of the crown, and to whom specific interrogatories were put, asserted, as has already been mentioned in a note to this work, that had it not been for Martin Alonzo Pinzon and his brothers, Columbus would have turned back for Spain, after having run seven or eight hundred leagues; being disheartened at not finding land, and dismayed by the mutiny and menaces of his crew. This is stated by two or three as from personal knowledge, and by others from hearsay. It is said especially to have occurred on the 6th of October. On this day, according to the journal of Columbus, he had some conversation with Martin Alonzo, who was anxious that they should stand more to the south-west. The admiral refused to do so, and it is very probable that some angry words may have passed between them. Various disputes appear to have taken place between Columbus and his colleagues respecting their route, previous to the discovery of land; in one or two instances he acceded to their wishes, and altered his course, but in general he was inflexible

in standing to the west. The Pinzons also, in all probability, exerted their influence in quelling the murmurs of their townsmen, and encouraging them to proceed, when ready to rebel against Columbus. These circumstances may have become mixed up in the vague recollections of the seamen who gave the foregoing extravagant testimony, and who were evidently disposed to exalt the merits of the Pinzons at the expense of Columbus. They were in some measure prompted also in their replies by the written interrogatories put by order of the fiscal, which specified the conversations said to have passed between Columbus and the Pinzons, and notwithstanding these guides, they differed widely in their statements, and ran into many absurdities. In a manuscript record in possession of the Pinzon family, I have even read the assertion of an old seaman, that Columbus, in his eagerness to compel the Pinzons to turn back to Spain, *fired upon their ships*, but, they continuing on, he was obliged to follow, and within two days afterwards, discovered the island of Hispaniola.

It is evident the old sailor, if he really spoke conscientiously, mingled in his cloudy remembrance the disputes in the early part of the voyage, about altering their course to the south-west, and the desertion of Martin Alonzo, subsequent to the discovery of the Lucayos and Cuba, when after parting company with the admiral, he made the island of Hispaniola.

The witness most to be depended upon as to these points of inquiry, is the physician of Palos, Garcia Fernandez, a man of education, who sailed with Martin Alonzo Pinzon as steward of his ship, and of course was present at all the conversations which passed between the commanders. He testifies that Martin Alonzo urged Columbus to stand more to the south-west, and that the admiral at length complied, but, finding no land in that direction, they turned again to the west; a statement which completely coincides with the journal of Columbus. He adds that the admiral continually comforted and animated Martin Alonzo, and all others in his company. (Siempre los consoloba el dicho Almirante esforzandolos al dicho Martin Alonzo e á todos los que en su compania iban.) When the physician was specifically questioned as to the conversations pretended to have passed between the commanders, in which Columbus expressed a desire to turn back to Spain, he referred to the preceding statement, as the only answer he had to make to these interrogatories.

The extravagant testimony before mentioned appears never to have had any weight with the fiscal; and the accurate historian, Muñoz, who extracted all these points of evidence from the papers of the lawsuit, has not deemed them worthy of mention in his work. As these matters, however, remain on record in the archives of the Indies, and in the archives of the Pinzon family, in both of which I have had a full opportunity of inspecting them, I have thought it advisable to make these few observations on the subject; lest, in the rage for research, they might hereafter be drawn forth as a new discovery, on the strength of which to impugn the merits of Columbus.

No. XII.—Rumour of the Pilot said to have Died in the House of Columbus.

Among the various attempts to injure Columbus by those who were envious of his fame, was one intended to destroy all his merit as an original discoverer. It was said that he had received information of the existence of land in the western parts of the ocean from a tempest-tossed pilot, who had been driven there by violent easterly winds, and who, on his return to Europe, had died in the house of Columbus, leaving in his possession the chart and journal of his voyage, by which he was guided to his discovery.

This story was first noticed by Oviedo, a contemporary of Columbus, in his History of the Indies, published in 1535. He mentions it as a rumour circulating among the vulgar, without foundation in truth.

Fernando Lopez de Gomara first brought it forward against Columbus. In his History of the Indies, published in 1552, he repeats the rumour in the vaguest terms, manifestly from Oviedo, but without the contradiction given to it by that author. He says that the name and country of the pilot were unknown, some terming him an Andalusian, sailing between the Canaries and Madeira, others a Biscayan, trading to England and France, and others a Portuguese, voyaging between Lisbon and Mina, on the coast of Guinea. He expresses equal uncertainty whether the pilot brought the caravel to Portugal, to Madeira, or to one of the Azores. The only point on which the circulators of the rumour agreed was, that he died in the house of Columbus. Gomara adds that by this event Columbus was led to undertake his voyage to the new countries.*

The other early historians who mention Columbus and his voyages, and were his contemporaries, viz., Sabellicus, Peter Martyr, Giustiniani, Bernaldez, commonly called the curate of Los Palacios, Las Casas, Fernando, the son of the admiral, and the anonymous author of a voyage of Columbus, translated from the Italian into Latin by Madrignano,† are all silent in regard to this report.

Benzoni, whose History of the New World was published in 1565, repeats the story from Gomara, with whom he was contemporary; but decidedly expresses his opinion, that Gomara had mingled up much falsehood with some truth, for the purpose of detracting from the fame of Columbus, through jealousy that any one but a Spaniard should enjoy the honour of the discovery.‡

Acosta notices the circumstance slightly in his Natural and Moral History of the Indies, published in 1591, and takes it evidently from Gomara.§

Mariana, in his History of Spain, published in 1592, also mentions it, but expresses a doubt of its truth, and derives his information manifestly from Gomara.‖

* Gomara, Hist Ind., cap. 14.

† Navigatio Christophori Columbi, Madrignano Interprete. It is contained in a collection of voyages called Novus Orbis Regionum, edition of 1555, but was originally published in Italian as written by Montalbodo Francanzano (or Francapano de Montaldo) in a collection of voyages entitled Nuovo Mundo, in Vicenza, 1507.

‡ Girolamo Benzoni, Hist. del Nuevo Mundo, lib. i. fol. 12. In Venetia, 1572.

§ Padre Joseph de Acosta, Hist. Ind., lib. i. cap. 19.

‖ Juan de Mariana, Hist. Espana, lib. xxvi. cap. 3.

Herrera, who published his History of the Indies in 1601, takes no notice of the story. In not noticing it, he may be considered as rejecting it; for he is distinguished for his minuteness, and was well acquainted with Gomara's History, which he expressly contradicts on a point of considerable interest.*

Garcilaso de la Vega, a native of Cusco in Peru, revived the tale with very minute particulars, in his Commentaries of the Incas, published in 1609. He tells it smoothly and circumstantially; fixes the date of the occurrence 1484, "one year more or less;" states the name of the unfortunate pilot, Alonzo Sanchez de Huelva; the destination of his vessel, from the Canaries to Madeira; and the unknown land to which they were driven, the island of Hispaniola. The pilot, he says, landed, took an altitude, and wrote an account of all he saw, and all that had occurred in the voyage. He then took in wood and water, and set out to seek his way home. He succeeded in returning, but the voyage was long and tempestuous, and twelve died of hunger and fatigue, out of seventeen, the original number of the crew. The five survivors arrived at Terceira, where they were hospitably entertained by Columbus, but all died in his house in consequence of the hardships they had sustained; the pilot was the last that died, leaving his host heir to his papers. Columbus kept them profoundly secret, and by pursuing the route therein prescribed, obtained the credit of discovering the New World.†

Such are the material points of the circumstantial relation furnished by Garcilaso de la Vega, one hundred and twenty years after the event. In regard to authority, he recollects to have heard the story when he was a child, as a subject of conversation between his father and the neighbours, and he refers to the Histories of the Indies, by Acosta and Gomara, for confirmation. As the conversations to which he listened, must have taken place sixty or seventy years after the date of the report, there had been sufficient time for the vague rumours to become arranged into a regular narrative, and thus we have not only the name, country, and destination of the pilot, but also the name of the unknown land to which his vessel was driven.

This account given by Garcilaso de la Vega, has been adopted by many old historians, who have felt a confidence in the peremptory manner in which he relates it, and in the authorities to whom he refers.‡ These have been echoed by others of more recent date; and thus a weighty charge of fraud and imposture has been accumulated against

* Herrera, Hist. Ind., decad. ii. lib. iii. cap. i.

† Commentarios de los Incas, lib. i. cap. 3.

‡ Names of historians who either adopted this story in detail, or the charge against Columbus, drawn from it:—

Bernardo Aldrete, Antiguedad de Espana, lib. iv. cap. 17, p. 567.
Roderigo Caro, Antiguedad, lib. iii. cap. 76.
Juan de Solorzano, Ind. Jure, tom. i. lib. i. cap. 5.
Fernando Pizarro, Varones Illust. del Nuevo Mundo, cap. 2.
Agostino Torniel, Annal. Sacr., tom. i. ann. Mund., 1931, No. 48.
Pet. Damarez or De Mariz, Dial. iv. de Var. Hist., cap. 4.
Gregorio Garcia, Orig. de los Indios, lib. i. cap. 4, § 1.
Juan de Torquemanda, Monarch. Ind., lib. xviii. cap. 1.
John Baptiste Riccioli, Geograf. Reform. lib. iii.
To this list of old authors may be added many others of more recent date.

Columbus, apparently supported by a crowd of respectable accusers. The whole charge is to be traced to Gomara, who loosely repeated a vague rumour, without noticing the pointed contradiction given to it seventeen years before, by Oviedo, an ear-witness, from whose book he appears to have actually gathered the report.

It is to be remarked that Gomara bears the character, among historians, of inaccuracy, and of great credulity in adopting unfounded stories.*

It is unnecessary to give further refutation to this charge, especially as it is clear that Columbus communicated his idea of discovery to Paulo Toscanelli of Florence, in 1474, ten years previous to the date assigned by Garcilaso de la Vega for this occurrence.

No. XIII.—Martin Behem.

This able geographer was born in Nuremburg, in Germany, about the commencement of the year 1430. His ancestors were from the circle of Pilsner, in Bohemia, hence he is called by some writers Martin of Bohemia, and the resemblance of his own name to that of the country of his ancestors frequently occasions a confusion in the appellation.

It has been said by some that he studied under Philip Bervalde the elder, and by others under John Muller, otherwise called Regiomontanus, though De Murr, who has made diligent inquiry into his history, discredits both assertions. According to a correspondence between Behem and his uncle, discovered of late years by De Murr, it appears that the early part of his life was devoted to commerce. Some have given him the credit of discovering the island of Fayal, but this is an error, arising probably from the circumstance that Job de Huertar, father-in-law of Behem, colonized that island in 1466.

He is supposed to have arrived at Portugal in 1481, while Alphonso V. was still on the throne; it is certain that shortly afterwards he was in high repute for his science in the court of Lisbon, insomuch that he was one of the council appointed by King John II. to improve the art of navigation, and by some he has received the whole credit of the memorable service rendered to commerce by that council, in the introduction of the astrolabe into nautical use.

In 1484 King John sent an expedition under Diego Cam, as Barros calls him, Cano according to others, to prosecute discoveries, along the coast of Africa. In this expedition Behem sailed as cosmographer. They crossed the equinoctial line, discovered the coast of Congo, advanced to twenty-two degrees forty-five minutes of south latitude,† and erected two columns, on which were engraved the arms of Portugal,

* "Francisco Lopez de Gomara, Presbitero, Sevillano, escribio con elegante estilo acerca de las cosas de las Indies, pero dexandose llevar de falsas narraciones." Hijos de Sevilla, Numero ii. p. 42, Let. F. The same is stated in Bibliotheca Hispana Nova, lib. i. p. 437.

"El Francisco Lopez de Gomara escrivio tantos borrones é cosas que no son verdaderas, de que ha hecho mucho dano e muchos escritores e coronistas, que despues del Gomara han escrito en las cosas de la Nueva Espana * * * es porque les ha hecho errar el Gomara." Bernal Diaz del Castillo, Hist. de la Conquest de la Nueva Espana, Fin de cap. 18.

"Tenia Gomara doctrina y estilo * * * pero empleose en ordinar sin discernimiento lo que halló escrito por sus antecesores, y dió credito á petranas no solo falsas sino inverisimiles." Juan Bautista Munoz Hist. N. Mundo, Prologo, p. 18.

† Vasconcelos, Lib. 4.

m the mouth of the river Zagra, in Africa, which thence, for some time, took the name of the River of Columns.*

For the services rendered on this and on previous occasions, it is said that Behem was knighted by King John in 1485, though no mention is made of such a circumstance in any of the contemporary historians. The principal proof of his having received this mark of distinction, is his having given himself the title on his own globe of *Eques Lusitanus*.

In 1486 he married at Fayal the daughter of Job de Huertar, and is supposed to have remained there for some few years, where he had a son named Martin, born in 1489. During his residence at Lisbon and Fayal, it is probable the acquaintance took place between him and Columbus, to which Herrera and others allude; and the admiral may have heard from him some of the rumours circulating in the islands, of indications of western lands floating to their shores.

In 1491 he returned to Nuremburg to see his family, and while there, in 1492, he finished a terrestrial globe, considered a masterpiece in those days, which he had undertaken at the request of the principal magistrates of his native city.

In 1493 he returned to Portugal, and from thence proceeded to Fayal.

In 1494 King John II., who had a high opinion of him, sent him to Flanders, to his natural son, Prince George, the intended heir of his crown. In the course of his voyage, Behem was captured and carried to England, where he remained for three months detained by illness. Having recovered, he again put to sea, but was captured by a corsair and carried to France. Having ransomed himself, he proceeded to Antwerp and Bruges, but returned almost immediately to Portugal. Nothing more is known of him for several years, during which time it is supposed he remained with his family in Fayal, too old to make further voyages. In 1506 he went from Fayal to Lisbon, where he died.

The assertion that Behem had discovered the western world previous to Columbus, in the course of the voyage with Cam, was founded on a misinterpretation of a passage interpolated in the chronicle of Hartmann Schedel, a contemporary writer. This passage mentions that when the voyagers were in the Southern Ocean not far from the coast, and had passed the line, they came into another hemisphere, where, when they looked towards the east, their shadows fell towards the south, on their right hand; that here they discovered a new world, unknown until then, and which for many years had never been sought except by the Genoese, and by them unsuccessfully.

"Hii duo, bono deorum auspicio, mare, meridionale sulcantes, a littore non longe evagantes, superato circulo equinoctiali, in alterum orbem excepti sunt. Ubi ipsis stantibus orientem versus, umbra ad meridiem et dextram projiciebatur. Aperuêre igitur sua industria, alium orbem hactenus nobis incognitum et multis annis, a nullis quam Januensibus, licet frustra temptatum."

These lines are part of a passage which it is said is interpolated by a different hand, in the original manuscript of the chronicle of Schedel. De Murr assures us that they are not to be found in the German trans-

* Murr Notice sur M. Behaim

lation of the book by George Alt, which was finished the 5th October, 1493. But even if they were, they relate merely to the discovery which Diego Cam made of the southern hemisphere, previously unknown, and of the coast of Africa beyond the equator, all which appeared like a new world, and as such was talked of at the time.

The Genoese alluded to, who had made an unsuccessful attempt, were Antonio de Nolle, with Bartholomew his brother, and Raphael de Nolle, his nephew. Antonio was of a noble family, and, for some disgust, left his country and went to Lisbon with his before-mentioned relatives in two caravels; sailing whence in the employ of Portugal, they discovered the island of St. Jago, &c.*

This interpolated passage of Schedel was likewise inserted into the work De Europâ sub Frederico III. of Æneas Silvius, afterwards Pope Pius II., who died in 1464, long before the voyage in question. The misinterpretation of the passage first gave rise to the incorrect assertion that Behem had discovered the New World prior to Columbus; as if it were possible such a circumstance could have happened without Behem's laying claim to the glory of the discovery, and without the world immediately resounding with so important an event. This error had been adopted by various authors without due examination; some of whom had likewise taken from Magellan the credit of having discovered the strait which goes by his name, and had given it to Behem. The error was too palpable to be generally prevalent, but was suddenly revived in the year 1786 by a French gentleman of highly respectable character of the name of Otto, then resident in New York, who addressed a letter to Dr. Franklin to be submitted to the Philosophical Society of Philadelphia, in which he undertook to establish the title of Behem to the discovery of the New World. His memoir was published in the Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, vol. ii., for 1786, article No. 35, and has been copied into the journals of most of the nations of Europe.

The authorities cited by M. Otto in support of his assertion are generally fallacious, and for the most part given without particular specification. His assertion has been diligently and satisfactorily refuted by Don Christoval Cladera.†

The grand proof of M. Otto is a globe which Behem made during his residence in Nuremberg, in 1492, the very year that Columbus set out on his first voyage of discovery. This globe, according to M. Otto, is still preserved in the library of Nuremberg, and on it are painted all the discoveries of Behem, which are so situated that they can be no other than the coast of Brazil, and the straits of Magellan. This authority staggered many, and, if supported, would demolish the claims of Columbus.

Unluckily for M. Otto, in his description of the globe, he depended on the inspection of a correspondent. The globe in the library of Nuremberg was made in 1520, by John Schoener, professor of mathematics,‡ long after the discoveries and death of Columbus and Behem. The real globe of Behem, made in 1492, does not contain any of the islands or shores of the New World, and thus proves that he was totally unac-

* Barros, decad. i. lib. ii. cap. 1. Lisbon. 1552.

† Investigaciones Historicas. Madrid, 1794. ‡ Cladera, Investig. Hist. p. 115.

in the mouth of the river Zagra, in Africa, which thence, for some time, took the name of the River of Columns.*

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† Investigaciones Historicas. Madrid, 1794. ‡ Cladera, Investig. Hist. p. 115.

quainted with them. A copy, or planisphere, of Behem's globe is given by Cladera in his Investigations.

No. XIV.—Voyages of the Scandinavians.

Many elaborate dissertations have been written to prove that discoveries were made by the Scandinavians on the northern coast of America long before the era of Columbus, but the subject appears still to be wrapped in much doubt and obscurity.

It has been asserted that the Norwegians, as early as the ninth century, discovered a great tract of land to the west of Iceland, which they called Grand Iceland, but this has been pronounced a fabulous tradition. The most plausible account is one given by Snorro Sturleson, in his Saga, or Chronicle of King Olaus. According to this writer, one Biorn of Iceland, sailing to Greenland in search of his father, from whom he had been separated by a storm, was driven by tempestuous weather far to the south-west, until he came in sight of a low country, covered with wood, with an island in its vicinity. The weather becoming favourable, he turned to the north-east without landing, and arrived safe at Greenland. His account of the country he had beheld, it is said, excited the enterprise of Leif, son of Eric Rauda (or Redhead), the first settler of Greenland. A vessel was fitted out, and Leif and Biorn departed alone in quest of this unknown land. They found a rocky and sterile island, to which they gave the name of Helleland; also a low sandy country covered with wood, to which they gave the name of Markland; and, two days afterwards, they observed a continuance of the coast, with an island to the north of it. This last they described as fertile, well wooded, producing agreeable fruits, and particularly grapes, a fruit with which they were unacquainted. On being informed by one of their companions, a German, of its qualities and name, they called the country, from it, Vinland. They ascended a river, well stored with fish, particularly salmon, and came to a lake from which the river took its origin, where they passed the winter. The climate appeared to them mild and pleasant, being accustomed to the rigorous climates of the north. On the shortest day, the sun was eight hours above the horizon. Hence it has been concluded that the country was about the 49th degree of north latitude, and was either Newfoundland or some part of the coast of North America, about the Gulf of St. Lawrence.* It is added that the relatives of Leif made several voyages to Vinland, that they traded with the natives for furs, and that, in 1121, a bishop named Eric went from Greenland to Vinland to convert the inhabitants to Christianity. From this time, says Forster, we know nothing of Vinland, and there is every appearance that the tribe which still exists in the interior of Newfoundland, and which is so different from the other savages of North America both in their appearance and mode of living, and always in a state of warfare with the Esquimaux of the northern coast, are descendants of the ancient Normans.

The author of the present work has not had the means of tracing this story to its original sources. He gives it on the authority of M. Malte-Brun, and Mr. Forster. The latter extracts it from the Saga or Chronicle of Snorro, who was born in 1179, and wrote in 1215; so that

* Forster's Northern Voyages, book ii. chap. 2.

his account was formed long after the event is said to have taken place. Forster says, "the facts which we report have been collected from a great number of Icelandic manuscripts, and transmitted to us by Torfæus in his two works entitled Veteris Grœlandiæ Descriptio, Hafnia, 1706, and Historia Winlandiæ Antiquæ, Hafnia, 1705." Forster appears to have no doubt of the authenticity of the facts. As far as the author of the present work has had experience in tracing these stories of early discoveries of portions of the New World, he has generally found them very confident deductions drawn from very vague and questionable facts. Learned men are too prone to give substance to mere shadows when they assist some preconceived theory. Most of these accounts, when divested of the erudite comments of their editors, have proved little better than the traditionary fables, noticed in another part of this work, respecting the imaginary islands of St. Borondon, and of the Seven Cities.

There is no great improbability, however, that such enterprising and roving voyagers as the Scandinavians may have wandered to the northern shores of America, about the coast of Labrador, or the shores of Newfoundland, and if the Icelandic manuscripts said to be of the thirteenth century can be relied upon as genuine, free from modern interpolation, and correctly quoted, they would appear to prove the fact. But granting the truth of the alleged discoveries, they led to no more result than would the interchange of communication between the natives of Greenland and the Esquimaux. The knowledge of them appears not to have extended beyond their own nation, and to have been soon neglected and forgotten by themselves.

Another pretension to an early discovery of the American continent has been set up, founded on an alleged map and narrative of two brothers of the name of Zeno, of Venice; but it seems more invalid than those just mentioned. The following is the substance of this claim.

Nicolo Zeno, a noble Venetian, is said to have made a voyage to the north in 1380, in a vessel fitted out at his own cost, intending to visit England and Flanders; but meeting with a terrible tempest, was driven for many days he knew not whither, until he was cast away upon Friseland, an island much in dispute among geographers, but supposed to be the archipelago of the Ferroe islands. The shipwrecked voyagers were assailed by the natives; but rescued by Zichmni, a prince of the islands lying on the south side of Friseland, and duke of another district lying over against Scotland. Zeno entered into the service of this prince, and aided him in conquering Friseland, and other northern islands. He was soon joined by his brother Antonio Zeno, who remained fourteen years in those countries.

During his residence in Friseland, Antonio Zeno wrote to his brother Carlo, in Venice, giving an account of a report brought by a certain fisherman, about a land to the westward. According to the tale of this mariner, he had been one of a party who had sailed from Friseland about twenty-six years before in four fishing-boats. Being overtaken by a mighty tempest, they were driven about the sea for many days, until the boat containing himself and six companions was cast upon an island called Estotiland, about one thousand miles from Friseland. They were taken by the inhabitants, and carried to a fair and populous city, where

the king sent for many interpreters to converse with them, but none that they could understand, until a man was found who had likewise been cast away upon the coast, and who spoke Latin. They remained several days upon the island, which was rich and fruitful, abounding with all kinds of metals, and especially gold.* There was a high mountain in the centre, from which flowed four rivers, which watered the whole country. The inhabitants were intelligent, and acquainted with the mechanical arts of Europe. They cultivated grain, made beer, and lived in houses built of stone. There were Latin books in the king's library, though the inhabitants had no knowledge of that language. They had many cities and castles, and carried on a trade with Greenland for pitch, sulphur, and peltry. Though much given to navigation, they were ignorant of the use of the compass, and finding the Friselanders acquainted with it, held them in great esteem; and the king sent them with twelve barks to visit a country to the south, called Drogeo. They had nearly perished in a storm, but were cast away upon the coast of Drogeo. They found the people to be cannibals, and were on the point of being killed and devoured, but were spared on account of their great skill in fishing.

The fisherman described this Drogeo as being a country of vast extent, or rather a new world; that the inhabitants were naked and barbarous; but that far to the south-west there was a more civilized region and temperate climate, where the inhabitants had a knowledge of gold and silver, lived in cities, erected splendid temples to idols, and sacrificed human victims to them, which they afterwards devoured.

After the fisherman had resided many years on this continent, during which time he had passed from the service of one chieftain to another, and traversed various parts of it, certain boats of Estotiland arrived on the coast of Drogeo. The fisherman went on board of them, acted as interpreter, and followed the trade between the mainland and Estotiland for some time, until he became very rich: then he fitted out a bark of his own, and with the assistance of some of the people of the island, made his way back, across the thousand intervening miles of ocean, and aarived safe at Friseland. The account he gave of these countries determined Zichmni, the Prince of Friseland, to send an expedition thither, and Antonio Zeno was to command it. Just before sailing, the fisherman, who was to have acted as guide, died; but certain mariners, who had accompanied him from Estotiland, were taken in his place. The expedition sailed under the command of Zihmni; the Venetian, Zeno, merely accompanied it. It was unsuccessful. After having discovered an island called Icaria, where they met with a rough reception from the inhabitants, and were obliged to withdraw, the ships were driven by a storm to Greenland. No record remains of any further prosecution of the enterprise.

The countries mentioned in the account of Zeno were laid down on a map originally engraved on wood. The island of Estotiland has been supposed by M. Malte-Brun to be Newfoundland; its partially civilized inhabitants the descendants of the Scandinavian colonists of Vinland;

* This account is taken from Hackluyt, vol. iii. p. 123. The passage about gold and other metals is not to be found in the original Italian of Ramusio (tom. ii. p. 23,) and is probably an interpolation.

and the Latin books in the king's library to be the remains of the library of the Greenland bishop, who emigrated thither in 1121. Drogeo, according to the same conjecture, was Nova Scotia and New England. The civilized people to the south-west, who sacrificed human victims in rich temples, he surmises to have been the Mexicans, or some ancient nation of Florida or Louisiana.

The premises do not appear to warrant this deduction. The whole story abounds with improbabilities, not the least of which is the civilization prevalent among the inhabitants, their houses of stone, their European arts, the library of their king,—no traces of which were to be found on their subsequent discovery. Not to mention the information about Mexico penetrating through the numerous savage tribes of a vast continent. It is proper to observe that this account was not published until 1558, long after the discovery of Mexico. It was given to the world by Francisco Marcolini, a descendant of the Zeni, from the fragments of letters said to have been written by Antonio Zeno to Carlo, his brother. "It grieves me," says the editor, "that the book and divers other writings concerning these matters, are miserably lost; for being but a child when they came to my hands, and not knowing what they were, I tore them and rent them in pieces, which now I cannot call to remembrance but to my exceeding great grief."*

This garbled statement by Marcolini derived considerable authority by being introduced by Abraham Ortelius, an able geographer, in his Theatrum Orbis; but the whole story has been condemned by able commentators as a gross fabrication. Mr. Forster resents this as an instance of obstinate incredulity, saying that it is impossible to doubt the existence of the country of which Carlo, Nicolo, and Antonio Zeno talk; as original acts in the archives of Venice prove that the chevalier undertook a voyage to the north; that his brother Antonio followed him; that Antonio traced a map, which he brought back and hung up in his house, where it remained subject to public examination until the time of Marcolini, as an incontestible proof of the truth of what he advanced. Granting all this, it merely proves that Antonio and his brother were at Friseland and Greenland. Their letters never assert that Zeno made the voyage to Estotiland. The fleet was carried by a tempest to Greenland, after which we hear no more of him; and his account of Estotiland and Drogeo rests simply on the tale of the fisherman, after whose descriptions his map must have been conjecturally projected. The whole story resembles much the fables circulated shortly after the discovery of Columbus, to arrogate to other nations and individuals the credit of the achievement.

M. Malte-Brun intimates that the alleged discovery of Vinland may have been known to Columbus when he made a voyage in the North Sea in 1477,† and that the map of Zeno, being in the national library at London, in a Danish work, at the time when Bartholomew Columbus was in that city, employed in making maps, he may have known something of it, and have communicated it to his brother.‡ Had M. Malte-Brun examined the history of Columbus with his usual accuracy, he would have perceived that, in his correspondence with Paulo Toscanelli

* Hackluyt. Collect. vol. iii. p. 127.
† Malte-Brun, Hist. de Géog. tom. i. lib. xvii.
‡ Idem, Géog. Universelle, tom. xv. Note sur la découverte de l'Amérique.

in 1474, he had expressed his intention of seeking India by a route directly to the west. His voyage to the north did not take place until three years afterwards. As to the residence of Bartholomew in London, it was not until after Columbus had made his propositions of discovery to Portugal, if not to the courts of other powers. Granting, therefore, that he had subsequently heard the dubious stories of Vinland, and of the fisherman's adventures, as related by Zeno, or at least by Marcolini, they evidently could not have influenced him in his great enterprise. His route had no reference to them, but was a direct western course, not toward Vinland, and Estotiland, and Drogeo, but in search of Cipango, and Cathay, and the other countries described by Marco Polo, as lying at the extremity of India.

No. XV.—Circumnavigation of Africa by the Ancients.

The knowledge of the ancients with respect to the Atlantic coast of Africa is considered by modern investigators much less extensive than had been imagined; and it is doubted whether they had any practical authority for the belief that Africa was circumnavigable. The alleged voyage of Eudoxus of Cyzicus, from the Red Sea to Gibraltar, though recorded by Pliny, Pomponius Mela, and others, is given entirely on the assertion of Cornelius Nepos, who does not tell from whence he derived his information. Posidonius (cited by Strabo) gives an entirely different account of this voyage, and rejects it with contempt.*

The famous voyage of Hanno, the Carthaginian, is supposed to have taken place about a thousand years before the Christian era. The Periplus Hannonis remains, a brief and obscure record of this expedition, and a subject of great comment and controversy. By some it has been pronounced a fictitious work, fabricated among the Greeks, but its authenticity has been ably vindicated. It appears to be satisfactorily proved, however, that the voyage of this navigator has been greatly exaggerated, and that he never circumnavigated the extreme end of Africa. Mons. de Bougainville† traces his route to a promontory which he named the West Horn, supposed to be Cape Palmas, about five or six degrees north of the equinoctial line, whence he proceeded to another promontory, under the same parallel, which he called the South Horn, supposed to be Cape de Tres Puntas. Mons. Gosselin, however, in his Researches into the Geography of the Ancients, (Tome 1, p. 162, &c.) after a rigid examination of the Periplus of Hanno, determines that he had not sailed farther south than Cape Non. Pliny, who makes Hanno range the whole coast of Africa, from the straits to the confines of Arabia, had never seen his Periplus, but took his idea from the works of Xenophon of Lampsaco. The Greeks surcharged the narration of the voyager with all kinds of fables, and on their unfaithful copies Strabo founded many of his assertions. According to M. Gosselin, the itineraries of Hanno, of Scylax, Polybius, Statius, Sebosus, and Juba; the recitals of Plato, of Aristotle, of Pliny, of Plutarch, and the tables of Ptolemy, all bring us to the same results, and, notwithstanding their apparent contradictions, fix the limit of southern navigation about the neighbourhood of Cape Non, or Cape Bojador.

* Gosselin, Récherches sur la Géographie des Anciens, tom. i. p. 162, &c.
† Mémoires de l'Acad. des Inscript. tom. xxvi.

The opinion that Africa was a peninsula, which existed among the Persians, the Egyptians, and perhaps the Greeks, several centuries prior to the Christian era, was not, in his opinion, founded upon any known facts; but merely on conjecture, from considering the immensity and unity of the ocean; or perhaps on more ancient traditions, or on ideas produced by the Carthaginian discoveries, beyond the Straits of Gibraltar, and those of the Egyptians beyond the Gulf of Arabia. He thinks that there was a very remote period, when geography was much more perfect than in the time of the Phœnicians and the Greeks, whose knowledge was but confused traces of what had previously been better known.

The opinion that the Indian Sea joined the ocean was admitted among the Greeks, and in the school of Alexandria, until the time of Hipparchus. It seemed authorized by the direction which the coast of Africa took after Cape Aromata, always tending westward, as far as it had been explored by navigators.

It was supposed that the western coast of Africa rounded off to meet the eastern, and that the whole was bounded by the ocean, much to the northward of the equator. Such was the opinion of Crates, who lived in the time of Alexander; of Aratus, of Cleanthes, of Cleomedes, of Strabo, of Pomponius Mela, of Macrobius, and many others.

Hipparchus proposed a different system, and led the world into an error, which for a long time retarded the maritime communication of Europe and India. He supposed that the seas were separated into distinct basins, and that the eastern shores of Africa made a circuit round the Indian Sea, so as to join those of Asia beyond the mouth of the Ganges. Subsequent discoveries, instead of refuting this error, only placed the junction of the continents at a greater distance. Marinus of Tyre, and Ptolemy, adopted this opinion in their works, and illustrated it in their maps, which for centuries controlled the general belief of mankind, and perpetuated the idea that Africa extended onward to the South Pole, and that it was impossible to arrive by sea at the coasts of India. Still there were geographers who leaned to the more ancient idea of a communication between the Indian Sea and the Atlantic Ocean. It had its advocates in Spain, and was maintained by Pomponius Mela and by Isidore of Seville. It was believed also by some of the learned in Italy in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, and thus was kept alive until it was acted upon so vigorously by Prince Henry of Portugal, and at length triumphantly demonstrated by Vasco de Gama, in his circumnavigation of the Cape of Good Hope.

No. XVI.—Of the Ships of Columbus.

In remarking on the smallness of the vessels with which Columbus made his first voyage, Dr. Robertson observes that "in the fifteenth century, the bulk and construction of vessels were accommodated to the short and easy voyages along the coast which they were accustomed to perform." We have many proofs, however, that even anterior to the fifteenth century there were large ships employed by the Spaniards, as well as by other nations. In an edict published in Barcelona, in 1354, by Pedro IV, enforcing various regulations for the security of commerce,

mention is made of Catalonian merchant ships of two and three decks and from 8,000 to 12,000 quintals burden.

In 1419 Alonzo of Aragon hired several merchant ships to transport artillery, horses, &c., from Barcelona, to Italy, among which were two each carrying one hundred and twenty horse, which it is computed would require a vessel of at least 600 tons.

In 1463, mention is made of a Venetian ship of 700 tons which arrived at Barcelona from England, laden with wheat.

In 1497, a Castilian vessel arrived there, being of 12,000 quintals burden. These arrivals incidentally mentioned among others of similar size, as happening at one port, show that large ships were in use in those days.* Indeed, at the time of fitting out the second expedition of Columbus there were prepared in the port of Bermeo a Caracca of 1250 tons, and four ships of from 150 to 450 tons burden. Their destination, however, was altered, and they were sent to convoy Muley Boabdil, the last Moorish king of Granada, from the coast of his conquered territory to Africa.†

It was not for want of large vessels in the Spanish ports, therefore, that those of Columbus were of so small a size. He considered them best adapted to voyages of discovery, as they required but little depth of water, and therefore could more easily and safely coast unknown shores, and explore bays and rivers. He had some purposely constructed of a very small size for this service; such was the caravel, which in his third voyage he dispatched to look out for an opening to the sea at the upper part of the Gulf of Paria, when the water grew too shallow for his vessel of one hundred tons burden.

The most singular circumstance with respect to the ships of Columbus is that they should be open vessels; for it seems difficult to believe that a voyage of such extent and peril should be attempted in barks of so frail a construction. This, however, is expressly mentioned by Peter Martyr, in his Decades written at the time; and mention is made occasionally, in the memoirs relative to the voyages written by Columbus and his son, of certain of his vessels being without decks. He sometimes speaks of the same vessel as a ship and a caravel. There has been some discussion of late as to the precise meaning of the term caravel. The Chevalier Bossi, in his dissertations on Columbus, observes, that in the Mediterranean, caravel designates the largest class of ships of war among the Mussulmans, and that in Portugal it means a small vessel of from 120 to 140 tons burden; but Columbus sometimes applies it to a vessel of forty tons.

Du Cange, in his glossary, considers it a word of Italian origin. Bossi thinks it either Turkish or Arabic, and probably introduced into the European languages by the Moors. Mr. Edward Everett, in a note to his Plymouth oration, considers that the true origin of the word is given in "Ferrarii Origines Linguæ Italicæ," as follows: "Caravela, navigii minoris genus. Lat. Carabus: Græcé, Karabon."

That the word caravel was intended to signify a vessel of a small size, is evident from a naval classification made by King Alonzo in the middle of the thirteenth century. In the first class he enumerates *Naos*, or large ships which go only with sails, some of which have two masts, and

* Capmany, Quest'ones Criticas. Quest. 6. † Archives de Ind. en Sevilla.

others but one. In the second class, smaller vessels, as Carracas, Fustas, Ballenares, Pinazas, *Carabelas*, &c. In the third class, vessels with sails and oars, as galleys, Galeots, Tardantes, and Saetias.*

Bossi gives a copy of a letter written by Columbus to Don Raphael Xansis, treasurer of the king of Spain, an edition of which exists in the public library at Milan. With this letter he gives several wood-cuts of sketches made with a pen, which accompanied this letter, and which he supposes to have been from the hand of Columbus. In these are represented vessels which are probably caravels. They have high bows and sterns, with castles on the latter. They have short masts with large square sails. One of them, besides sails, has benches of oars, and is probably intended to represent a galley. They are all evidently vessels of small size, and slight construction.

In a work called "Récherches sur le Commerce," published in Amsterdam, 1779, is a plate representing a vessel of the latter part of the fifteenth century. It is taken from a picture in the church of St. Giovanni e Paolo, in Venice. The vessel bears much resemblance to those said to have been sketched by Columbus; it has two masts, one of which is extremely small, with a latine sail. The mainmast has a large square sail. The vessel has a high poop and prow, is decked at each end, and is open in the centre.

It appears to be the fact, therefore, that most of the vessels with which Columbus undertook his long and perilous voyages were of this light and frail construction, and little superior to the small craft which ply on rivers and along coasts in modern days.

No. XVII.—Route of Columbus in his First Voyage.†

It has hitherto been supposed that one of the Bahama Islands, at present bearing the name of San Salvador, and which is also known as Cat Island, was the first point where Columbus came in contact with the New World. Navarrete, however, in his introduction to the "Collection of Spanish Voyages and Discoveries," recently published at Madrid, has endeavoured to show that it must have been Turk's Island, one of the same group, situated about 100 leagues (of 20 to the degree) S E. of San Salvador. Great care has been taken to examine candidly the opinion of Navarrete, comparing it with the journal of Columbus, as published in the above-mentioned work, and with the personal observations of the writer of this article, who has been much among these islands.

Columbus describes Guanahani, on which he landed, and to which he gave the name of San Salvador, as being a beautiful island, and very large; as being level, and covered with forests, many of the trees of which bore fruit; as having abundance of fresh water, and a large lake in the centre; that it was inhabited by a numerous population; that he proceeded for a considerable distance in his boats along the shore, which trended to the N.N.E., and as he passed, was visited by the

* Capmany, Quest. Crit.

† The author of this work is indebted for this able examination of the route of Columbus to an officer of the navy of the United States, whose name he regrets the not being at liberty to mention. He has been greatly benefited, in various parts of this history, by nautical information from the same intelligent source.

inhabitants of several villages. Turk's Island does not answer to this description.

Turk's Island is a low key composed of sand and rocks, and lying north and south, less than two leagues in extent. It is utterly destitute of wood, and has not a single tree of native growth. It has no fresh water, the inhabitants depending entirely on cisterns and casks in which they preserve the rain; neither has it any lake, but several salt ponds, which furnish the sole production of the island. Turk's Island cannot be approached on the east or north-east side, in consequence of the reef that surrounds it. It has no harbour, but has an open road on the west side, which vessels at anchor there have to leave and put to sea whenever the wind comes from any other quarter than that of the usual trade breeze of N.E. which blows over the island, for the shore is so bold that there is no anchorage except close to it; and when the wind ceases to blow from the land, vessels remaining at their anchors would be swung against the rocks, or forced high upon the shore, by the terrible surf that then prevails. The unfrequented road of the Hawk's Nest, at the south end of the island, is even more dangerous. This island, which is not susceptible of the slightest cultivation, furnishes a scanty subsistence to a few sheep and horses. The inhabitants draw all their consumption from abroad, with the exception of fish and turtle, which are taken in abundance, and supply the principal food of the slaves employed in the salt-works. The whole wealth of the island consists in the produce of the salt-ponds, and in the salvage and plunder of the many wrecks which take place in the neighbourhood. Turk's Island, therefore, would never be inhabited in a savage state of society, where commerce does not exist, and where men are obliged to draw their subsistence from the spot which they people.

Again: when about to leave Guanahani, Columbus was at a loss to choose which to visit of a great number of islands in sight. Now there is no land visible from Turk's Island, excepting the two salt keys which lie south of it, and with it form the group known as Turk's Islands. The journal of Columbus does not tell us what course he steered in going from Guanahani to Conception, but he states that it was five leagues distant from the former, and that the current was against him in sailing to it; whereas the distance from Turk's Island to the Gran Caico, supposed by Navarrete to be the Conception of Columbus, is nearly double, and the current sets constantly to the W.N.W. among these islands, which would be favourable in going from Turk's Island to the Caicos.

From Conception, Columbus went next to an island which he saw nine leagues off in a westerly direction, to which he gave the name of Fernandina. This Navarrete takes to be Little Inagua, distant no less than twenty-two leagues from Gran Caico. Besides, in going to Little Inagua, it would be necessary to pass quite close to three islands, each larger than Turk's Island, none of which are mentioned in the journal. Columbus describes Fernandina as stretching twenty-eight leagues S.E. and N.W.: whereas Little Inagua has its greatest length of four leagues in a S.W. direction. In a word, the description of Fernandina has nothing in common with Little Inagua. From Fernandina Columbus sailed S E. to Isabella, which Navarrete takes to be Great Inagua·

whereas this latter bears S.W. from Little Inagua, a course differing 90° from the one followed by Columbus. Again; Columbus, on the 20th of November, takes occasion to say that Guanahani was distant eight leagues from Isabella, whereas Turk's Island is thirty-five leagues from Great Inagua.

Leaving Isabella, Columbus stood W.S.W. for the island of Cuba, and fell in with the Islas Arenas. This course, drawn from Great Inagua, would meet the coast of Cuba about Port Nipe: whereas Navarrete supposes that Columbus next fell in with the keys south of the Jumentos, and which bear W.N.W. from Inagua; a course differing 45° from the one steered by the ships. After sailing for some time in the neighbourhood of Cuba, Columbus finds himself, on the 14th of November, in the sea of Nuestra Señora, surrounded by so many islands that it was impossible to count them; whereas, on the same day, Navarrete places him off Cape Moa, where there is but one small island, and more than fifty leagues distant from any group that can possibly answer the description.

Columbus informs us that San Salvador was distant from Port Principe forty-five leagues; whereas Turk's Island is distant from the point supposed by Navarrete to be the same, eighty leagues.

On taking leave of Cuba, Columbus remarks that he had followed its coast for an extent of 120 leagues. Deducting 20 leagues for his having followed its windings, there still remain 100. Now, Navarrete only supposes him to have coasted this island an extent of 70 leagues.

Such are the most important difficulties which the theory of Navarrete offers, and which appear insurmountable. Let us now take up the route of Columbus as recorded in his journal, and, with the best charts before us, examine how it agrees with the popular and traditional opinion, that he first landed on the island of San Salvador.

We learn from the journal of Columbus that, on the 11th of October, 1492, he continued steering W.S.W. until sunset, when he returned to his old course of west, the vessels running at the rate of three leagues an hour. At ten o'clock he and several of his crew saw a light, which seemed like a torch carried about on land. He continued running on four hours longer, and had made a distance of twelve leagues farther west, when at two in the morning land was discovered ahead, distant two leagues. The twelve leagues which they ran since ten o'clock, with the two leagues distance from the land, form a total corresponding essentially with the distance and situation of Watling's Island from San Salvador; and it is thence presumed, that the light seen at that hour was on Watling's Island, which they were then passing. Had the light been seen on land ahead, and they had kept running on four hours, at the rate of three leagues an hour, they must have run high and dry on shore. As the admiral himself received the royal reward for having seen this light, as the first discovery of land, Watling's Island is believed to be the point for which this premium was granted.

On making land, the vessels were hove-to until daylight of the same 12th of October; they then anchored off an island of great beauty, covered with forests, and extremely populous.

It was called Guanahani by the natives, but Columbus gave it the name of San Salvador. Exploring its coast, where it ran to the N.N.E.

he found a harbour capable of sheltering any number of ships. This description corresponds minutely with the S.E. part of the island, known as San Salvador, or Cat Island, which lies east and west, bending at its eastern extremity to the N.N.E., and has the same verdant and fertile appearance. The vessels had probably drifted into this bay at the S.E. side of San Salvador, on the morning of the 12th, while lying-to for daylight; nor did Columbus, while remaining at the island, or when sailing from it, open the land so as to discover that what he had taken for its whole length was but a bend at one end of it, and that the main body of the island lay behind, stretching far to the N.W. From Guanahani, Columbus saw so many other islands that he was at a loss which next to visit. The Indians signified that they were innumerable, and mentioned the names of above a hundred. He determined to go to the largest in sight, which appeared to be about five leagues distant; some of the others were nearer, and some further off. The island thus selected, it is presumed, was the present island of Concepcion; and that the others were that singular belt of small islands, known as La Cadena (or the chain), stretching past the island of San Salvador in a S.E. and N.W. direction: the nearest of the group being nearer than Concepcion, while the rest are more distant.

Leaving San Salvador in the afternoon of the 14th for the island thus selected, the ships lay by during the night, and did not reach it until late in the following day, being retarded by adverse currents. Columbus gave this island the name of Santa Maria de la Conception: he does not mention either its bearings from San Salvador, or the course which he steered in going to it. We know that in all this neighbourhood the current sets strongly and constantly to the W.N.W.; and since Columbus had the current against him, he must have been sailing in an opposite direction, or the E.S.E. Besides, when near Concepcion. Columbus sees another island to the westward, the largest he had yet seen; but he tells us that he anchored off Concepcion, and did not stand for this larger island, because he could not have sailed to the west. Hence it is rendered certain that Columbus did not sail westward in going from San Salvador to Concepcion; for, from the opposition of the wind, as there could be no other cause, he could not sail towards that quarter. Now, on reference to the chart, we find the island at present known as Concepcion situated E.S.E. from San Salvador, and at a corresponding distance of five leagues.

Leaving Concepcion on the 16th October, Columbus steered for a very large island seen to the westward nine leagues off, and which extended itself twenty-eight leagues in a S.E. and N.W. direction. He was becalmed the whole day, and did not reach the island until the following morning, 17th October. He named it Fernandina. At noon he made sail again, with a view to run round it, and reach another island called Samoet; but the wind being at S.E. by S., the course he wished to steer, the natives signified that it would be easier to sail round this island by running to the N.W. with a fair wind. He therefore bore up to the N.W., and having run two leagues found a marvellous port, with a narrow entrance, or rather with two entrances, for there was an island which shut it in completely, forming a noble basin within. Sailing out of this harbour by the opposite entrance at the N.W., he discovered that

part of the island which runs east and west. The natives signified to him that this island was smaller than Samoet, and that it would be better to return towards the latter. It had now become calm, but shortly after there sprung up a breeze from W.N.W., which was ahead for the course they had been steering; so they bore up and stood to the E.S.E. in order to get an offing; for the weather threatened a storm, which however dissipated itself in rain. The next day, being the 18th October, they anchored opposite the extremity of Fernandina.

The whole of this description answers most accurately to the island of Exuma, which lies south from San Salvador, and S.W. by S. from Concepcion. The only inconsistency is, that Columbus states that Fernandina bore nearly west from Concepcion, and was twenty-eight leagues in extent. This mistake must have proceeded from his having taken the long chain of keys called La Cadena for part of the same Exuma; which continuous appearance they naturally assume when seen from Concepcion, for they run in the same S.E. and N.W. direction. Their bearings, when seen from the same point, are likewise westerly as well as south-westerly. As a proof that such was the case, it may be observed, that, after having approached these islands, instead of the extent of Fernandina being increased to his eye, he now remarks that it was twenty leagues long, whereas before it was estimated by him at twenty-eight; he now discovers that instead of one island there were many, and alters his course southerly to reach the one that was most conspicuous.

The identity of the island here described with Exuma is irresistibly forced upon the mind. The distance from Concepcion, the remarkable port with an island in front of it, and farther on its coast turning off to the westward, are all so accurately delineated, that it would seem as though the chart had been drawn from the description of Columbus.

On the 19th October, the ships left Fernandina, steering S.E. with the wind at north. Sailing three hours on this course, they discovered Samoet to the east, and steered for it, arriving at its north point before noon. Here they found a little island surrounded by rocks, with another reef of rocks lying between it and Samoet. To Samoet Columbus gave the name of Isabella, and to the point of it opposite the little island, that of Cabo del Isleo; the cape at the S.W. point of Samoet Columbus called Cabo de Laguna, and off this last his ships were brought to anchor. The little island lay in the direction from Fernandina to Isabella, east and west. The coast from the small island lay westerly twelve leagues to a cape, which Columbus called Fermosa from its beauty; this he believed to be an island apart from Samoet or Isabella, with another one between them. Leaving Cabo Laguna, where he remained until the 20th October, Columbus steered to the N.E. towards Cabo del Isleo, but meeting with shoals inside the small island, he did not come to anchor until the day following. Near this extremity of Isabella they found a lake, from which the ships were supplied with water.

This island of Isabella, or Samoet, agrees so accurately in its description with Isla Larga, which lies east of Exuma, that it is only necessary to read it with the chart unfolded to become convinced of the identity.

Having resolved to visit the island which the natives called Cuba, and described as bearing W.S.W. from Isabella, Columbus left Cabo del Isleo at midnight, the commencement of the 24th October, and

shaped his course accordingly to the W.S.W. The wind continued light with rain, until noon, when it freshened up, and in the evening Cape Verde, the S.W. point of Fernandina, bore N.W. distant seven leagues. As the night became tempestuous, he lay-to until morning, drifting according to the reckoning two leagues.

On the morning of the 25th he made sail again to W.S.W., until nine o'clock, when he had run five leagues; he then steered west until three, when he had run eleven leagues, at which hour land was discovered, consisting of seven or eight keys lying north and south, and distant five leagues from the ships. Here he anchored the next day, south of these islands, which he called Islas de Arena; they were low, and five or six leagues in extent.

The distances run by Columbus, added to the departure taken from Fernandina, and the distance from these islands of Arena at the time of discovering, give a sum of thirty leagues. This sum of thirty leagues is about three less than the distance from the S.W. point of Fernandina or Exuma, whence Columbus took his departure, to the group of Mucaras, which lie east of Cayo Lobo on the grand bank of Bahama, and which correspond to the description of Columbus. If it were necessary to account for the difference of three leagues in a reckoning, where so much is given on conjecture, it would readily occur to a seaman, that an allowance of two leagues for drift, during a long night of blowy weather, is but a small one. The course from Exuma to the Mucaras is about S.W. by W. The course followed by Columbus differs a little from this, but as it was his intention, on setting sail from Isabella, to steer W.S.W., and since he afterwards altered it to west, we may conclude that he did so in consequence of having been run out of his course to the southward, while lying-to the night previous.

Oct. 27.—At sunrise Columbus set sail from the isles Arenas or Mucaras, for an island called Cuba, steering S.S.W. At dark, having made seventeen leagues on that course, he saw the land, and hove his ships to until morning. On the 28th he made sail again at S.S.W., and entered a beautiful river with a fine harbour, which he named San Salvador. The journal in this part does not describe the localities with the minuteness with which everything has hitherto been noted; the text also is in several places obscure.

This port of San Salvador we take to be the one now known as Caravelas Grandes, situated eight leagues west of Nuevitas del Principe. Its bearings and distance from the Mucaras coincide exactly with those run by Columbus; and its description agrees, as far as can be ascertained by charts, with the port which he visited.

Oct. 29.—Leaving this port, Columbus stood to the west, and having sailed six leagues, he came to a point of the island running N.W., which we take to be the Punta Gorda; and, ten leagues farther, another stretching easterly, which will be Punta Curiana. One league farther he discovered a small river, and beyond this another very large one, to which he gave the name of Rio de Mares. This river emptied into a fine basin resembling a lake, and having a bold entrance: it had for landmarks two round mountains at the S.W., and to the W.N.W. a bold promontory, suitable for a fortification, which projected far into the sea. This we take to be the fine harbour and river situated west

of Point Curiana; its distance corresponds with that run by Columbus from Caravelas Grandes, which we have supposed identical with Port San Salvador. Leaving Rio de Mares the 30th of October, Columbus stood to the N.W. for fifteen leagues, when he saw a cape, to which he gave the name of Cabo de Palmas. This, we believe, is the one which forms the eastern entrance to Laguna de Moron. Beyond this cape was a river, distant, according to the natives, four days' journey from the town of Cuba; Columbus determined, therefore, to make for it.

Having lain-to all night, he reached the river on the 31st of October, but found that it was too shallow to admit his ships. This is supposed to be what is now known as Laguna de Moron. Beyond this was a cape surrounded by shoals, and another projected still farther out. Between these two capes was a bay capable of receiving small vessels. The identity here of the description with the coast near Laguna de Moron seems very clear. The cape east of Laguna de Moron coincides with Cape Palmas, the Laguna de Moron with the shoal river described by Columbus; and in the western point of entrance, with the island of Cabrion opposite it, we recognize the two projecting capes he speaks of, with what appeared to be a bay between them. This all is a remarkable combination, difficult to be found any where but in the same spot which Columbus visited and described. Further, the coast from the port of San Salvador had run west to Rio de Mares, a distance of seventeen leagues, and from Rio de Mares it had extended N.W. fifteen leagues to Cabo de Palmos; all of which agrees fully with what has been here supposed. The wind having shifted to north, which was contrary to the course they had been steering, the vessels bore up and returned to Rio de Mares.

On the 12th of November the ships sailed out of Rio de Mares to go in quest of Babeque, an island believed to abound in gold, and to lie E. by S. from that port. Having sailed eight leagues with a fair wind, they came to a river, in which may be recognized the one which lies just west of Punta Gorda. Four leagues farther they saw another, which they called Rio del Sol. It appeared very large, but they did not stop to examine it, as the wind was fair to advance. This we take to be the river now known as Sabana. Columbus was now retracing his steps, and had made twelve leagues from Rio de Mares, but in going west from Port San Salvador to Rio de Mares, he had run seventeen leagues. San Salvador, therefore, remains five leagues east of Rio del Sol; and, accordingly, on reference to the chart, we find Caravelas Grandes situated a corresponding distance from Sabana.

Having run six leagues from Rio del Sol, which makes in all eighteen leagues from Rio de Mares, Columbus came to a cape which he called Cabo de Cuba, probably from supposing it to be the extremity of that island. This corresponds precisely in distance from Punta Curiana with the lesser island of Guajava, situated near Cuba, and between which and the greater Guajava Columbus must have passed in running in for Port San Salvador. Either he did not notice it, from his attention being engrossed by the magnificent island before him, or, as is also possible, his vessels may have been drifted through the passage, which is two leagues wide, while lying-to the night previous to their arrival at Port San Salvador.

On the 13th of November, having hove-to all night, in the morning the ships passed a point two leagues in extent, and then entered into a gulf that made into the S.S.W., and which Columbus thought separated Cuba from Bohio. At the bottom of the gulf was a large basin between two mountains. He could not determine whether or not this was an arm of the sea; for not finding shelter from the north wind, he put to sea again. Hence it would appear that Columbus must have partly sailed round the smaller Guajava, which he took to be the extremity of Cuba, without being aware that a few hours' sail would have taken him, by this channel, to Port San Salvador, his first discovery in Cuba, and so back to the same Rio del Sol which he had passed the day previous. Of the two mountains seen on both sides of this entrance, the principal one corresponds with the peak called Alto de Juan Daune, which lies seven leagues west of Punta de Maternillos. The wind continuing north, he stood east fourteen leagues from Cape Cuba, which we have supposed the lesser island of Guajava. It is here rendered sure that the point of Little Guajava was believed by him to be the extremity of Cuba; for he speaks of the land mentioned as lying to leeward of the above-mentioned gulf as being the island of Bohio, and says that he discovered twenty leagues of it running E.S.E. and W.N.W.

On the 14th November, having lain-to all night with a N.E. wind, he determined to seek a port, and if he found none, to return to those which he had left in the island of Cuba; for it will be remembered that all east of Little Guajava he supposed to be Bohio. He steered E. by S. therefore six leagues, and then stood in for the land. Here he saw many ports and islands; but as it blew fresh, with a heavy sea, he dared not enter, but ran the coast down N.W. by W. for a distance of eighteen leagues, where he saw a clear entrance and a port, in which he stood S.S.W. and afterwards S.E., the navigation being all clear and open. Here Columbus beheld so many islands, that it was impossible to count them. They were very lofty, and covered with trees. Columbus called the neighbouring sea Mar de Nuestra Señora, and to the harbour near the entrance to these islands, he gave the name of Puerto del Principe. This harbour he says he did not enter until the Sunday following, which was four days after. This part of the text of Columbus's journal is confused, and there are also anticipations, as if it had been written subsequently, or mixed together in copying. It appears evident, that while lying-to the night previous, with the wind at N.E., the ships had drifted to the N.W., and been carried by the powerful current of the Bahama channel far in the same direction. Whey they bore up, therefore, to return to the ports which they had left in the island of Cuba, they fell in to leeward of them, and now first discovered the numerous group of islands of which Cayo Romano is the principal. The current of this channel is of itself sufficient to have carried the vessels to the westward a distance of twenty leagues, which is what they had run easterly since leaving Cape Cuba, or Guajava, for it had acted upon them during a period of thirty hours. There can be no doubt as to the identity of these keys with those about Cayo Romano; for they are the only ones in the neighbourhood of Cuba that are not of a low and swampy nature, but large and lofty. They inclose a free, open navigation, and abundance of fine harbours, in late years the resort of

pirates, who found security and concealment for themselves and their prizes in the recesses of these lofty keys. From the description of Columbus, the vessels must have entered between the islands of Baril and Pacedon, and sailing along Cayo Romano on a S.E. course, have reached in another day their old cruising ground in the neighbourhood of Lesser Guajava. Not only Columbus does not tell us here of his having changed his anchorage amongst these keys, but his journal does not even mention his having anchored at all, until the return from the ineffectual search after Babeque. It is clear, from what has been said, that it was not in Port Principe that the vessels anchored on this occasion; but it could not have been very distant, since Columbus went from the ships in his boats on the 18th November, to place a cross at its entrance. He had probably seen the entrance from without, when sailing east from Guajava on the 13th of November. The identity of this port with the one now known as Neuvitas el Principe, seems certain, from the description of its entrance. Columbus, it appears, did not visit its interior.

On the 19th November, the ships sailed again in qnest of Babeque. At sunset Port Principe bore S.S.W. distant seven leagues, and having sailed all night at N.E. by N. and until ten o'clock of the next day (20th November), they had run a distance of fifteen leagues on that course. The wind blowing from E.S.E., which was the direction in which Babeque was supposed to lie, and the weather being foul, Columbus determined to return to Port Principe, which was then distant twenty-five leagues. He did not wish to go to Isabella, distant only twelve leagues, lest the Indians whom he had brought from San Salvador, which lay eight leagues from Isabella, should make their escape. Thus, in sailing N.E. by N. from near Port Principe, Columbus had approached within a short distance of Isabella. That island was then, according to his calculations, thirty-seven leagues from Port Principe; and San Salvador was forty-five leagues from the same point. The first differs but eight leagues from the truth, the latter nine; or from the actual distance of Nuevitas el Principe from Isla Larga and San Salvador. Again, let us now call to mind the course made by Columbus in going from Isabella to Cuba; it was first W.S.W., then west, and afterwards S.S.W. Having consideration for the different distances run on each, these yield a medium course not materially different from S.W. Sailing then S.W. from Isabella, Columbus had reached Port San Salvador, on the coast of Cuba. Making afterwards a course of N.E. by N. from off Port Principe, he was going in the direction of Isabella. Hence we deduce that Port San Salvador, on the coast of Cuba, lay west of Port Principe, and the whole combination is thus bound together and established. The two islands seen by Columbus at ten o'clock of the same 20th November, must have been some of the keys which lie west of the Jumentos. Running back towards Port Principe, Columbus made it at dark, but found that he had been carried to the westward by the currents. This furnishes a sufficient proof of the strength of the current in the Bahama channel: for it will be remembered that he ran over to Cuba with a fair wind, After contending for four days, until the 24th November, with light winds against the force of these currents, he arrived at length opposite

the level island whence he had set out the week before when going to Babeque.

We are thus accidentally informed that the point from which Columbus started in search of Babeque was the same island of Guajava the lesser, which lies west of Nuevitas el Principe. Further: at first he dared not enter into the opening between the two mountains, for it seemed as though the sea broke upon them; but having sent the boat ahead, the vessels followed in at S.W. and then W. into a fine harbour. The level island lay north of it, and with another island formed a secure basin capable of sheltering all the navy of Spain. This level island resolves itself then into our late Cape Cuba, which we have supposed to be Little Guajava, and the entrance east of it becomes identical with the gulf above-mentioned which lay between two mountains, one of which we have supposed the Alto de Juan Daune, and which gulf appeared to divide Cuba from Bohio. Our course now becomes a plain one. On the 26th of November, Columbus sailed from Santa Catalina (the name given by him to the port last described) at sunrise, and stood for the cape at the S.E., which he called Cabo de Pico. In this it is easy to recognise the high peak already spoken of as the Alto de Juan Daune. Arrived off this he saw another cape, distant fifteen leagues, and still farther another five leagues beyond it, which he called Cabo de Campana. The first must be that now known as Point Padre, the second Point Mulas: their distances from Alto de Juan Daune are underrated; but it requires no little experience to estimate correctly the distances of the bold headlands of Cuba, as seen through the pure atmosphere that surrounds the island.

Having passed Point Mulas in the night, on the 27th Columbus looked into the deep bay that lies S.E. of it, and seeing the bold projecting headland that makes out between Port Nipe and Port Banes, with those deep bays on each side of it, he supposed it to be an arm of the sea dividing one land from another, with an island between them.

Having landed at Taco for a short time, Columbus arrived in the evening of the 27th at Baracoa, to which he gave the name of Puerto Santo. From Cabo del Pico to Puerto Santo, a distance of sixty leagues, he had passed no fewer than nine good ports and five rivers to Cape Campana, and thence to Puerto Santo eight more rivers, each with a good port; all of which may be found on the chart between Alto de Juan Daune and Baracoa. By keeping near the coast he had been assisted to the S.E. by the eddy current of the Bahama channel. Sailing from Puerto Santo or Baracoa on the 4th of December, he reached the extremity of Cuba the following day, and striking off upon a wind to the S.E. in search of Babeque, which lay to the N.E., he came in sight of Bohio, to which he gave the name of Hispaniola.

On taking leave of Cuba, Columbus tells us that he had coasted it a distance of 120 leagues. Allowing twenty leagues of this distance for his having followed the undulations of the coast, the remaining 100 measured from Point Maysi fall exactly upon Cabrion Key, which we have supposed the western boundary of his discoveries.

The astronomical observations of Columbus form no objection to what has been here advanced; for he tells us that the instrument which he made use of to measure the meridian altitudes of the heavenly

bodies was out of order and not to be depended upon. He places his first discovery, Guanahani, in the latitude of Ferro, which is about 27° 30′ north. San Salvador we find in 24° 30′ and Turk's Island in 21° 30′: both are very wide of the truth, but it is certainly easier to conceive an error of three than one of six degrees.

Laying aside geographical demonstration, let us now examine how historical records agree with the opinion here supported, that the island of San Salvador was the first point where Columbus came in contact with the New World. Herrera, who is considered the most faithful and authentic of Spanish historians, wrote his History of the Indies towards the year 1600. In describing the voyage of Juan Ponce de Leon, made to Florida in 1512, he makes the following remarks:* "Leaving Aguada in Porto Rico, they steered to the N.W. by N., and in five days arrived at an island called El Viejo, in latitude 22° 30′ north. The next day they arrived at a small island of the Lucayos, called Caycos. On the eighth day they anchored at another island called Yaguna in 24°, on the eighth day out from Porto Rico. Thence they passed to the island of Manuega, in 24° 30′, and on the eleventh day they reached Guanahani, which is in 25° 40′ north. This island of Guanahani was the first discovered by Columbus on his first voyage, and which he called San Salvador." This is the substance of the remarks of Herrera, and is entirely conclusive as to the location of San Salvador. The latitudes, it is true, are all placed higher than we now know them to be; that of San Salvador being such as to correspond with no other land than that now known as the Berry Islands, which are seventy leagues distant from the nearest coast of Cuba: whereas Columbus tells us that San Salvador was only forty-five leagues from Port Principe. But in those infant days of navigation, the instruments for measuring the altitudes of the heavenly bodies, and the tables of declinations for deducing the latitude, must have been so imperfect as to place the most scientific navigator of the time below the most mechanical one of the present.

The second island arrived at by Ponce de Leon, in his north-western course, was one of the Caycos; the first one, then, called El Viejo, must have been Turk's Island, which lies S.E. of the Caycos. The third island they came to was probably Mariguana; the fourth, Crooked Island; and the fifth, Isla Larga. Lastly, they came to Guanahani, the San Salvador of Columbus. If this be supposed identical with Turk's Island, where do we find the succession of islands touched at by Ponce de Leon on his way from Porto Rico to San Salvador?† No stress has been laid, in these remarks, on the identity of name which has been preserved to San Salvador, Concepcion, and Port Principe, with those given by Columbus, though traditional usage is of vast weight in such matters. Geographical proof, of a conclusive kind it is thought, has been advanced, to enable the world to remain in its old hereditary belief that the present island of San Salvador is the spot where Colum-

* Herrera, Hist. Ind., decad. i. lib. ix. cap. 10.

† In the first chapter of Herrera's description of the Indies, appended to his History, is another scale of the Bahama Islands, which corroborates the above. It begins at the opposite end, at the N.W., and runs down to the S.E. It is thought unnecessary to cite it particularly.

bus first set foot upon the New World. Established opinions of the kind should not be lightly molested. It is a good old rule, that ought to be kept in mind in curious research as well as territorial dealings, "Do not disturb the ancient landmarks."

Note to the Revised Edition of 1848.—The Baron de Humboldt, in his "Examen critique de l'Histoire de la Géographie du Nouveau Continent," published in 1837, speaks repeatedly in high terms of the ability displayed in the above examination of the route of Columbus, and argues at great length and quite conclusively in support of the opinion contained in it. Above all, he produces a document hitherto unknown, and the great importance of which had been discovered by M. Valcknaer and himself in 1832. This is a map made in 1500 by that able mariner Juan de la Cosa, who accompanied Columbus in his second voyage, and sailed with other of the discoverers. In this map, of which the Baron de Humboldt gives an engraving, the islands as laid down agree completely with the bearings and distances given in the journal of Columbus, and establishes the identity of San Salvador, or Cat Island, and Guanahani.

"I feel happy," says M. de Humboldt, "to be enabled to destroy the incertitudes (which rested on this subject) by a document as ancient as it is unknown; a document which confirms irrevocably the arguments which Mr. Washington Irving has given in his work against the hypotheses of the Turk's Island."

In the present revised edition the author feels at liberty to give the merit of the very masterly paper on the route of Columbus, where it is justly due. It was furnished him at Madrid by the late Commander Alexander Slidell Mackenzie, of the United States navy, whose modesty shrunk from affixing his name to an article so calculated to do him credit, and which has since challenged the high eulogiums of men of nautical science.

No. XVIII.—Principles upon which the Sums mentioned in this Work have been Reduced into Modern Currency.

In the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella the mark of silver, which was equal to 8 ounces or to 50 castillanos, was divided into 65 reals, and each real into 34 maravedis; so that there were 2210 maravedis in the mark of silver. Among other silver coins there was the real of 8, which consisting of 8 reals, was, within a small fraction, the eighth part of a mark of silver, or one ounce. Of the gold coins then in circulation, the castillano or *dobla de la vanda*, was worth 490 maravedis, and the ducado 383 maravedis.

If the value of the maravedi had remained unchanged in Spain down to the present day, it would be easy to reduce a sum of the time of Ferdinand and Isabella into a correspondent sum of current money; but by the successive depreciations of the coin of Vellon, or mixed metals, issued since that period, the *real* and maravedi of Vellon, which had replaced the ancient currency, were reduced towards the year 1700, to about a third of the old *real* and maravedi, now known as the *real* and maravedi of silver. As, however, the ancient piece of 8 reals was equal approximately to the ounce of silver, and the duro, or dollar of the present day, is likewise equal to an ounce, they may be considered identical. Indeed, in Spanish America, the dollar, instead of being divided into 20 reals, as in Spain, is divided into only 8 parts called reals, which evidently represent the real of the time of Ferdinand and Isabella, as the dollar does the real of 8. But the ounce of silver was anciently worth 276¼ maravedis; the dollar, therefore, is likewise equal to 276¼ maravedis. By converting then the sums mentioned in this work into maravedis, they have been afterwards reduced into dollars by dividing by 276¼.

There is still, however, another calculation to be made, before we can arrive at the actual value of any sum of gold and silver mentioned in

former times. It is necessary to notice the variation which has taken place in the value of the metals themselves. In Europe, previous to the discovery of the New World, an ounce of gold commanded an amount of food or labour which would cost three ounces at the present day; hence an ounce of gold was then estimated at three times its present value. At the same time an ounce of silver commanded an amount which at present costs 4 ounces of silver. It appears from this, that the value of gold and silver varied with respect to each other, as well as with respect to all other commodities. This is owing to there having been much more silver brought from the New World, with respect to the quantity previously in circulation, than there has been of gold. In the 15th century one ounce of gold was equal to about 12 of silver; and now, in the year 1827, it is exchanged against 16.

Hence giving an idea of the relative value of the sums mentioned in this work, it has been found necessary to multiply them by three when in gold, and by four when expressed in silver.*

It is expedient to add that the dollar is reckoned in this work at 100 cents of the United States of North America, and four shillings and sixpence of England.

No. XIX.—Prester John.

Said to be derived from the Persian *Prestegani* or *Persstigani*, which signifies apostolique; or *Preschtak-Geham*, angel of the world. It is the name of a potent Christian monarch of shadowy renown, whose dominions were placed by writers of the middle ages sometimes in the remote parts of Asia and sometimes in Africa, and of whom such contradictory accounts were given by the travellers of those days that the very existence either of him or his kingdom came to be considered doubtful. It now appears to be admitted, that there really was such a potentate in a remote part of Asia. He was of the Nestorian Christians, a sect spread throughout Asia, and taking its name and origin from Nestorius, a Christian patriarch of Constantinople.

The first vague reports of a Christian potentate in the interior of Asia, or, as it was then called, India, were brought to Europe by the Crusaders, who it is supposed gathered them from the Syrian merchants who traded to the very confines of China.

In subsequent ages, when the Portuguese in their travels and voyages discovered a Christian king among the Abyssinians, called Baleel-Gian, they confounded him with the potentate already spoken of. Nor was the blunder extraordinary, since the original Prester John was said to reign over a remote part of India; and the ancients included in that name Ethiopia and all the regions of Africa and Asia bordering on the Red Sea and on the commercial route from Egypt to India.

Of the Prester John of India we have reports furnished by William Ruysbrook, commonly called Rubruquis, a Franciscan friar sent by Louis IX., about the middle of the thirteenth century, to convert the Grand Khan. According to him, Prester John was originally a Nestorian priest, who on the death of the sovereign made himself King of the Naymans, all Nestorian Christians. Carpini, a Franciscan friar, sent

* See Caballero Pesos y Medidas. J. B. Say, Economie Politique.

by Pope Innocent in 1245 to convert the Mongols of Persia, says, that Ocoday, one of the sons of Ghengis Khan of Tartary, marched with an army against the Christians of Grand India. The king of that country, who was called Prester John, came to their succour. Having had figures of men made of bronze, he had them fastened on the saddles of horses, and put fire within, with a man behind with a bellows. When they came to battle, these horses were put in the advance, and the men who were seated behind the figures, threw something into the fire, and blowing with their bellows, made such a smoke that the Tartars were quite covered with it. They then fell on them, dispatched many with their arrows, and put the rest to flight.

Marco Polo (1271) places Prester John near the great wall of China, to the north of Chan-si, in Teudich, a populous region full of cities and castles.

Mandeville (1332) makes Prester sovereign of Upper India (Asia) with four thousand islands tributary to him.

When John II., of Portugal, was pushing his discoveries along the African coast, he was informed that 350 leagues to the east of the kingdom of Benin in the profound depths of Africa, there was a puissant monarch called Ogave, who had spiritual and temporal jurisdiction over all the surrounding kings.

An African prince assured him, also, that to the east of Timbuctoo there was a sovereign who professed a religion similar to that of the Christians, and was king of a Mosaic people.

King John now supposed he had found traces of the real Prester John, with whom he was eager to form an alliance religious as well as commercial. In 1487 he sent envoys by land in quest of him. One was a gentleman of his household, Pedro de Covilham; the other, Alphonso de Paiva. They went by Naples to Rhodes, thence to Cairo, thence to Aden on the Arabian Gulf above the mouth of the Red Sea.

Here they separated with an agreement to rendezvous at Cairo. Alphonso de Paiva sailed direct for Ethiopia; Pedro de Covilham for the Indies. The latter passed to Calicut and Goa, where he embarked for Sofala on the eastern coast of Africa, thence returned to Aden, and made his way back to Cairo. Here he learned that his coadjutor, Alphonso de Paiva, had died in that city. He found two Portuguese Jews waiting for him with fresh orders from King John not to give up his researches after Prester John until he found him. One of the Jews he sent back with a journal and verbal accounts of his travels. With the other he set off again for Aden; thence to Ormus, at the entrance of the Gulf of Persia, where all the rich merchandise of the East was brought to be transported thence by Syria and Egypt into Europe.

Having taken note of everything here, he embarked on the Red Sea, and arrived at the court of an Abyssinian prince named Escander, (the Arabic version of Alexander,) whom he considered the real Prester John. The prince received him graciously, and manifested a disposition to favour the object of his embassy, but died suddenly, and his successor Naut refused to let Covilham depart, but kept him for many years about his person, as his prime councillor, lavishing on him wealth and honours. After all, this was not the real Prester John; who, as has been observed, was an Asiatic potentate.

No. XX.—Marco Polo.*

The travels of Marco Polo, or Paolo, furnish a key to many parts of the voyages and speculations of Columbus, which without it would hardly be comprehensible.

Marco Polo was a native of Venice, who, in the thirteenth century, made a journey into the remote, and, at that time, unknown regions of the East, and filled all Christendom with curiosity by his account of the countries he had visited. He was preceded in his travels by his father Nicholas and his uncle Maffeo Polo. These two brothers were of an illustrious family in Venice, and embarked about the year 1255, on a commercial voyage to the East. Having traversed the Mediterranean and through the Bosphorus, they stopped for a short time at Constantinople, which city had recently been wrested from the Greeks by the joint arms of France and Venice. Here they disposed of their Italian merchandise, and, having purchased a stock of jewellery, departed on an adventurous expedition to trade with the western Tartars, who, having overrun many parts of Asia and Europe, were settling and forming cities in the vicinity of the Wolga. After traversing the Euxine to Soldaia, (at present Sudak,) a port in the Crimea, they continued on, by land and water, until they reached the military court, or rather camp of a Tartar prince, named Barkah, a descendant of Ghengis Khan, into whose hands they confided all their merchandise. The barbaric chieftain, while he was dazzled by their precious commodities, was flattered by the entire confidence in his justice manifested by these strangers. He repaid them with princely munificence, and loaded them with favours during a year that they remained at his court. A war breaking out between their patron and his cousin Hulagu, chief of the eastern Tartars, and Barkah being defeated, the Polos were embarrassed how to extricate themselves from the country and return home in safety. The road to Constantinople being cut off by the enemy, they took a circuitous route, round the head of the Caspian Sea, and through the deserts of Transoxiana, until they arrived in the city of Bokhara, where they resided for three years.

While here there arrived a Tartar nobleman who was on an embassy from the victorious Hulagu to his brother the Grand Khan. The ambassador became acquainted with the Venetians, and finding them to be versed in the Tartar tongue and possessed of curious and valuable knowledge, he prevailed upon them to accompany him to the court of the emperor, situated as they supposed, at the very extremity of the East.

After a march of several months, being delayed by snow-storms and inundations, they arrived at the court of Cublai, otherwise called the Great Khan, which signifies King of Kings, being the sovereign potentate of the Tartars. This magnificent prince received them with great distinction; he made inquiries about the countries and princes of the West, their civil and military government, and the manners and customs of

* In preparing the first edition of this work for the press the author had not the benefit of the English translation of Marco Polo, published a few years since, with admirable commentaries, by William Marsden, F.R.S. He availed himself, principally, of an Italian version in the Venetian edition of Ramusio (1606), the French translation by Bergeron, and an old and very incorrect Spanish translation. Having since procured the work of Mr. Marsden, he has made considerable alterations in these notices of Marco Polo.

the Latin nation. Above all, he was curious on the subject of the Christian religion. He was so much struck by their replies, that, after holding a council with the chief persons of his kingdom, he entreated the two brothers to go on his part as ambassadors to the pope, to entreat him to send a hundred learned men well instructed in the Christian faith, to impart a knowledge of it to the sages of his empire. He also entreated them to bring him a little oil from the lamp of our Saviour, in Jerusalem, which he concluded must have marvellous virtues. It has been supposed, and with great reason, that under this covert of religion, the shrewd Tartar sovereign veiled motives of a political nature. The influence of the pope in promoting the crusades had caused his power to be known and respected throughout the East; it was of some moment, therefore, to conciliate his good will. Cublai Khan had no bigotry nor devotion to any particular faith, and probably hoped, by adopting Christianity to make it a common cause between himself and the warlike princes of Christendom, against his and their inveterate enemies, the soldan of Egypt and the Saracens.

Having written letters to the pope in the Tartar language, he delivered them to the Polos, and appointed one of the principal noblemen of his court to accompany them in their mission. On their taking leave he furnished them with a tablet of gold on which was engraved the royal arms; this was to serve as a passport, at sight of which the governors of the various provinces were to entertain them, to furnish them with escorts through dangerous places, and render them all other necessary services at the expense of the Great Khan.

They had scarce proceeded twenty miles, when the nobleman who accompanied them fell ill, and they were obliged to leave him, and continue on their route. Their golden passport procured them every attention and facility throughout the dominions of the Great Khan. They arrived safely at Acre, in April, 1269. Here they received news of the recent death of pope Clement IV., at which they were much grieved, fearing it would cause delay in their mission. There was at that time in Acre a legate of the holy chair, Tebaldo di Vesconti, of Placentia, to whom they gave an account of their embassy. He heard them with great attention and interest, and advised them to await the election of a new pope, which must soon take place, before they proceeded to Rome on their mission. They determined in the interim to make a visit to their families, and accordingly departed for Negropont, and thence to Venice, where great changes had taken place in their domestic concerns, during their long absence. The wife of Nicholas, whom he had left pregnant, had died, in giving birth to a son, who had been named Marco

As the contested election for the new pontiff remained pending for two years, they were uneasy, lest the emperor of Tartary should grow impatient at so long a postponement of the conversion of himself and his people; they determined, therefore, not to await the election of a pope, but to proceed to Acre, and get such dispatches and such ghostly ministry for the Grand Khan, as the legate could furnish. On the second journey, Nicholas Polo took with him his son Marco, who afterwards wrote an account of these travels.

They were again received with great favour by the legate Tebaldo, who, anxious for the success of their mission, furnished them with letters

to the Grand Khan, in which the doctrines of the Christian faith were fully expounded. With these, and with a supply of the holy oil from the sepulchre, they once more set out in September, 1271, for the remote parts of Tartary. They had not long departed, when missives arrived from Rome, informing the legate of his own election to the holy chair. He took the name of Gregory X., and decreed that in future, on the death of a pope, the cardinals should be shut up in conclave until they elected a successor; a wise regulation, which has since continued, enforcing a prompt decision, and preventing intrigue.

Immediately on receiving intelligence of his election, he dispatched a courier to the king of Armenia, requesting that the two Venetians might be sent back to him, if they had not departed. They joyfully returned, and were furnished with new letters to the Khan. Two eloquent friars, also, Nicholas Vincenti and Gilbert de Tripoli, were sent with them, with powers to ordain priests and bishops and to grant absolution. They had presents of crystal vases, and other costly articles, to deliver to the Grand Khan; and thus well provided, they once more set forth on their journey.*

Arriving in Armenia, they ran great risk of their lives from the war which was raging, the soldan of Babylon having invaded the country. They took refuge for some time with the superior of a monastery. Here the two reverend fathers, losing all courage to prosecute so perilous an enterprise, determined to remain, and the Venetians continued their journey. They were a long time on the way, and exposed to great hardships and sufferings from floods and snow storms, it being the winter season. At length they reached a town in the dominions of the Khan. That potentate sent officers to meet them at forty days' distance from the court, and to provide quarters for them during their journey.† He received them with great kindness, was highly gratified with the result of their mission and with the letters of the pope, and having received from them some oil from the lamp of the holy sepulchre, he had it locked up, and guarded it as a precious treasure.

The three Venetians, father, brother and son, were treated with such distinction by the Khan, that the courtiers were filled with jealousy. Marco soon, however, made himself popular, and was particularly esteemed by the emperor. He acquired the four principal languages of the country, and was of such remarkable capacity, that, notwithstanding his youth, the Khan employed him in missions and services of importance, in various parts of his dominions, some to the distance of even six months' journey. On these expeditions he was industrious in gathering all kinds of information respecting that vast empire; and from notes and minutes made for the satisfaction of the Grand Khan, he afterwards composed the history of his travels.

After about seventeen years' residence in the Tartar court the Venetians felt a longing to return to their native country. Their patron was advanced in age and could not survive much longer, and after his death, their return might be difficult, if not impossible. They applied to the

* Ramusio, tom. iii.

† Bergeron, by blunder in the translation from the original Latin, has stated that the Khan sent 40,000 men to escort them. This has drawn the ire of the critics upon Marco Polo, who have cited it as one of his monstrous exaggerations.

Grand Khan for permission to depart, but for a time met with a refusal, accompanied by friendly upbraidings. At length a singular train of events operated in their favour; an embassy arrived from a Mogul Tartar prince, who ruled in Persia, and who was grand nephew to the emperor. The object was to entreat, as a spouse, a princess of the imperial lineage. A granddaughter of Cublai Khan, seventeen years of age, and of great beauty and accomplishments, was granted to the prayer of the prince, and departed for Persia with the ambassadors, and with a splendid retinue, but after travelling for some months, was obliged to return on account of the distracted state of the country.

The ambassadors despaired of conveying the beautiful bride to the arms of her expecting bridegroom, when Marco Polo returned from a voyage to certain of the Indian islands. His representations of the safety of a voyage in those seas, and his private instigations, induced the ambassadors to urge the Grand Khan for permission to convey the princess by sea to the gulf of Persia, and that the Christians might accompany them, as being best experienced in maritime affairs. Cublai Khan consented with great reluctance, and a splendid fleet was fitted out and victualled for two years, consisting of fourteen ships of four masts, some of which had crews of two hundred and fifty men.

On parting with the Venetians the munificent Khan gave them rich presents of jewels, and made them promise to return to him after they had visited their families. He authorized them to act as his ambassadors to the principal courts of Europe, and, as on a former occasion, furnished them with tablets of gold, to serve, not merely as passports, but as orders upon all commanders in his territories for accommodations and supplies.

They set sail therefore in the fleet with the oriental princess and her attendants, and the Persian ambassadors. The ships swept along the coast of Cochin China, stopped for three months at a port of the island of Sumatra near the western entrance of the straits of Malacca, waiting for the change of the monsoon to pass the Bay of Bengal. Traversing this vast expanse, they touched at the island of Ceylon, and then crossed the strait to the southern part of the great peninsula of India. Thence sailing up the Pirate coast, as it is called, the fleet entered the Persian gulf and arrived at the famous port of Ormuz, where it is presumed the voyage terminated, after eighteen months spent in traversing the Indian seas.

Unfortunately for the royal bride who was the object of this splendid naval expedition, her bridegroom, the Mogul king, had died some time before her arrival, leaving a son named Ghazan, during whose minority the government was administered by his uncle Kai-Khatu. According to the directions of the regent, the princess was delivered to the youthful prince, son of her intended spouse. He was at that time at the head of an army on the borders of Persia. He was of a diminutive stature but of a great soul, and, on afterwards ascending the throne, acquired renown for his talents and virtues. What became of the Eastern bride, who had travelled so far in quest of a husband, is not known; but every thing favourable is to be inferred from the character of Ghazan.

The Polos remained some time in the court of the regent, and then departed, with fresh tablets of gold given by that prince, to carry them

in safety and honour through his dominions. As they had to traverse many countries where the traveller is exposed to extreme peril, they appeared on their journeys as Tartars of low condition, having converted all their wealth into precious stones and sewn them up in the folds and linings of their coarse garments. They had a long, difficult, and perilous journey to Trebizond, whence they proceeded to Constantinople, thence to Negropont, and finally, to Venice, where they arrived in 1295, in good health, and literally laden with riches. Having heard during their journey of the death of their old benefactor Cublai Khan, they considered their diplomatic functions at an end, and also that they were absolved from their promise to return to his dominions.

Ramusio, in his preface to the narrative of Marco Polo, gives a variety of particulars concerning their arrival, which he compares to that of Ulysses. When they arrived at Venice, they were known by nobody. So many years had elapsed since their departure without any tidings of them, that they were either forgotten or considered dead. Besides, their foreign garb, the influence of southern suns, and the similitude which men acquire to those among whom they reside for any length of time, had given them the look of Tartars rather than Italians.

They repaired to their own house, which was a noble palace, situated in the street of St. Giovane Chrisostomo, and was afterwards known by the name of la Corte de la Milione. They found several of their relatives still inhabiting it; but they were slow in recollecting the travellers, not knowing of their wealth, and probably considering them, from their coarse and foreign attire, poor adventurers returned to be a charge upon their families. The Polos, however, took an effectual mode of quickening the memories of their friends, and insuring themselves a loving reception. They invited them all to a grand banquet. When their guests arrived, they received them richly dressed in garments of crimson satin of oriental fashion. When water had been served for the washing of hands and the company were summoned to table, the travellers, who had retired, appeared again in still richer robes of crimson damask. The first dresses were cut up and distributed among the servants, being of such length that they swept the ground, which, says Ramusio, was the mode in those days with dresses worn within doors. After the first course, they again retired and came in dressed in crimson velvet; the damask dresses being likewise given to the domestics, and the same was done at the end of the feast with their velvet robes, when they appeared in the Venetian dress of the day. The guests were lost in astonishment, and could not comprehend the meaning of this masquerade. Having dismissed all the attendants, Marco Polo brought forth the coarse Tartar dresses in which they had arrived. Slashing them in several places with a knife, and ripping open the seams and lining, there tumbled forth rubies, sapphires, emeralds, diamonds, and other precious stones, until the whole table glittered with inestimable wealth, acquired from the munificence of the Grand Khan, and conveyed in this portable form through the perils of their long journey.

The company, observes Ramusio, were out of their wits with amazement, and now clearly perceived what they had at first doubted, that these in very truth were those honoured and valiant gentlemen, the Polos, and, accordingly, paid them great respect and reverence.

The account of this curious feast is given by Ramusio, on traditional authority, having heard it many times related by the illustrious Gasparo Malipiero, a very ancient gentleman, and a senator of unquestionable veracity, who had it from his father, who had it from his grandfather, and so on up to the fountain-head.

When the fame of this banquet and of the wealth of the travellers came to be divulged throughout Venice, all the city, noble and simple, crowded to do honour to the extraordinary merit of the Polos. Maffeo, who was the eldest, was admitted to the dignity of the magistracy. The youth of the city came every day to visit and converse with Marco Polo, who was extremely amiable and communicative. They were insatiable in their inquiries about Cathay and the Grand Khan, which he answered with great courtesy, giving details with which they were vastly delighted, and, as he always spoke of the wealth of the Grand Khan in round numbers, they gave him the name of Messer Marco Milioni.

Some months after their return, Lampa Doria, commander of the Genoese navy, appeared in the vicinity of the island of Curzola with seventy galleys. Andrea Dandolo, the Venetian admiral, was sent against him. Marco Polo commanded a galley of the fleet. His usual good fortune deserted him. Advancing the first in the line with his galley, and not being properly seconded, he was taken prisoner, thrown in irons, and carried to Genoa. Here he was detained for a long time in prison, and all offers of ransom rejected. His imprisonment gave great uneasiness to his father and uncle, fearing that he might never return. Seeing themselves in this unhappy state, with so much treasure and no heirs, they consulted together. They were both very old men: but Nicolo, observes Ramusio, was of a galliard complexion: it was determined he should take a wife. He did so; and, to the wonder of his friends, in four years had three children.

In the meanwhile, the fame of Marco Polo's travels had circulated in Genoa. His prison was daily crowded with nobility, and he was supplied with every thing that could cheer him in his confinement. A Genoese gentleman, who visited him every day, at length prevailed upon him to write an account of what he had seen. He had his papers and journals sent to him from Venice, and with the assistance of his friend, or, as some will have it, his fellow prisoner, produced the work which afterwards made such noise throughout the world.

The merit of Marco Polo at length procured him his liberty. He returned to Venice, where he found his father with a house full of children. He took it in good part, followed the old man's example, married, and had two daughters, Moretta and Fantina. The date of the death of Marco Polo is unknown; he is supposed to have been, at the time, about seventy years of age. On his death-bed he is said to have been exhorted by his friends to retract what he had published, or, at least, to disavow those parts commonly regarded as fictions. He replied indignantly that so far from having exaggerated, he had not told one-half of the extraordinary things of which he had been an eye-witness.

Marco Polo died without male issue. Of the three sons of his father by the second marriage, one only had children, viz., five sons and one daughter. The sons died without leaving issue; the daughter inherited all her father's wealth and married into the noble and distinguished

house of Trevesino. Thus the male line of the Polos ceased in 1417, and the family name was extinguished.

Such are the principal particulars known of Marco Polo; a man whose travels for a long time made a great noise in Europe, and will be found to have had a great effect on modern discovery. His splendid account of the extent, wealth, and population of the Tartar territories filled every one with admiration. The possibility of bringing all those regions under the dominion of the church, and rendering the Grand Khan an obedient vassal to the holy chair, was for a long time a favourite topic among the enthusiastic missionaries of Christendom, and there were many saints-errant who undertook to effect the conversion of this magnificent infidel.

Even at the distance of two centuries, when the enterprises for the discovery of the new route to India had set all the warm heads of Europe madding about these remote regions of the East, the conversion of the Grand Khan became a popular theme; and it was too speculative and romantic an enterprise not to catch the vivid imagination of Columbus. In all his voyages, he will be found continually to be seeking after the territories of the Grand Khan, and even after his last expedition, when nearly worn out by age, hardships, and infirmities, he offered, in a letter to the Spanish monarchs, written from a bed of sickness, to conduct any missionary to the territories of the Tartar emperor, who would undertake his conversion.

No. XXI.—The Work of Marco Polo.

The work of Marco Polo is stated by some to have been originally written in Latin,* though the most probable opinion is that it was written in the Venetian dialect of the Italian. Copies of it in manuscript were multiplied and rapidly circulated; translations were made into various languages, until the invention of printing enabled it to be widely diffused throughout Europe. In the course of these translations and successive editions, the original text, according to Purchas, has been much vitiated, and it is probable many extravagances in numbers and measurements with which Marco Polo is charged may be the errors of translators and printers.

When the work first appeared, it was considered by some as made up of fictions and extravagances, and Vossius assures us that even after the death of Marco Polo he continued to be a subject of ridicule among the light and unthinking, insomuch that he was frequently personated at masquerades by some wit or droll, who, in his feigned character, related all kinds of extravagant fables and adventures. His work, however, excited great attention among thinking men, containing evidently a fund of information concerning vast and splendid countries, before unknown to the European world. Vossius assures us that it was at one time highly esteemed by the learned. Francis Pepin, author of the Brandenburgh version, styles Polo a man commendable for his piety, prudence, and fidelity. Athanasius Kircher, in his account of China, says that none of the ancients have described the kingdoms of the remote East with more exactness. Various other learned men of past times, have borne testimony to his character, and most of the substantial

* Hist. des Voyages, tom. xxvii. lib. iv. cap. 3. Paris, 1549.

parts of his work have been authenticated by subsequent travellers. The most able and ample vindication of Marco Polo, however, is to be found in the English translation of his work, with copious notes and commentaries, by William Marsden, F.R.S. He has diligently discriminated between what Marco Polo relates from his own observation, and what he relates as gathered from others; he points out the errors that have arisen from misinterpretations, omissions, or interpretations of translators, and he claims all proper allowance for the superstitious colouring of parts of the narrative from the belief, prevalent among the most wise and learned of his day, in miracles and magic. After perusing the work of Mr. Marsden, the character of Marco Polo rises in the estimation of the reader. It is evident that this narration, as far as related from his own observations, is correct, and that he had really traversed a great part of Tartary and China, and navigated in the Indian seas. Some of the countries and many of the islands, however, are evidently described from accounts given by others, and in these accounts are generally found the fables which have excited incredulity and ridicule. As he composed his work after his return home, partly from memory and partly from memorandums, he was liable to confuse what he had heard with what he had seen, and thus to give undue weight to many fables and exaggerations which he had received from others.

Much has been said of a map brought from Cathay by Marco Polo, which was conserved in the convent of San Michale de Murano in the vicinity of Venice, and in which the Cape of Good Hope, and the island of Madagascar were indicated; countries which the Portuguese claim the merit of having discovered two centuries afterwards. It has been suggested also that Columbus had visited the convent and examined this map, whence he derived some of his ideas concerning the coast of India. According to Ramusio, however, who had been at the convent, and was well acquainted with the prior, the map preserved there was one copied by a friar from the original one of Marco Polo, and many alterations and additions had since been made by other hands, so that for a long time it lost all credit with judicious people, until on comparing it with the work of Marco Polo it was found in the main to agree with his descriptions.* The Cape of Good Hope was doubtless among the additions made subsequent to the discoveries of the Portuguese.† Columbus makes no mention of this map, which he most probably would have done had he seen it. He seems to have been entirely guided by the one furnished by Paulo Toscanelli, and which was apparently projected after the original map, or after the descriptions of Marco Polo, and the maps of Ptolemy.

When the attention of the world was turned towards the remote parts of Asia in the 15th century, and the Portuguese were making their attempts to circumnavigate Africa, the narration of Marco Polo again rose to notice. This, with the travels of Nicolo le Comte, the Venetian, and of Hieronimo da San Stefano, a Genoese, are said to have been the

* Ramusio, vol. ii. p. 17.

† Mr. Marsden, who has inspected a splendid fac-simile of this map preserved in the British Museum, objects even to the fundamental part of it; "where," he observes, "situations are given to places that seem quite inconsistent with the descriptions in the travels, and cannot be attributed to their author, although inserted on the supposed authority of his writings." Marsden's M. Polo. Introd. p. xlii.

principal lights by which the Portuguese guided themselves in their voyages.*

Above all, the influence which the work of Marco Polo had over the mind of Columbus, gives it particular interest and importance. It was evidently an oracular work with him. He frequently quotes it, and on his voyages, supposing himself to be on the Asiatic coast, he is continually endeavouring to discover the islands and main-lands described in it, and to find the famous Cipango.

It is proper, therefore, to specify some of those places, and the manner in which they are described by a Venetian traveller, that the reader may more fully understand the anticipations which were haunting the mind of Columbus in his voyages among the West Indian islands, and along the coast of Terra Firma.

The winter residence of the Great Khan, according to Marco Polo, was in the city of Cambalu, or Kanbalu, (since ascertained to be Pekin,) in the province of Cathay. This city, he says, was twenty-four miles square, and admirably built. It was impossible, according to Marco Polo, to describe the vast amount and variety of merchandise and manufactures brought there; it would seem they were enough to furnish the universe. "Here are to be seen in wonderful abundance the precious stones, the pearls, the silks, and the diverse perfumes of the East; scarce a day passes that there does not arrive nearly a thousand cars laden with silk, of which they make admirable stuffs in this city."

The palace of the Great Khan is magnificently built, and four miles in circuit. It is rather a group of palaces. In the interior it is resplendent with gold and silver; and in it are guarded the precious vases and jewels of the sovereign. All the appointments of the Khan for war, for the chase, for various festivities, are described in gorgeous terms. But though Marco Polo is magnificent in his description of the provinces of Cathay, and its imperial city of Cambalu, he outdoes himself when he comes to describe the province of Mangi. This province is supposed to be the southern part of China. It contains, he says, twelve hundred cities. The capital Quinsai (supposed to be the city of Hang-cheu) was twenty-five miles from the sea, but communicated by a river with a port situated on the sea-coast, and had great trade with India.

The name Quinsai, according to Marco Polo, signifies the city of heaven; he says he has been in it and examined it diligently, and affirms it to be the largest in the world; and so undoubtedly it is if the measurement of the traveller is to be taken literally, for he declares that it is one hundred miles in circuit. This seeming exaggeration has been explained by supposing him to mean Chinese miles or *li*, which are to the Italian miles in the proportion of three to eight; and Mr. Marsden observes that the walls even of the modern city, the limits of which have been considerably contracted, are estimated by travellers at sixty *li*. The ancient city has evidently been of immense extent, and as Marco Polo could not be supposed to have measured the walls himself, he has probably taken the loose and incorrect estimates of the inhabitants He describes it also as built upon little islands like Venice,

* Hist. des Voyages, tom. xl. lib. xi. ch. 4.

and has twelve thousand stone bridges,* the arches of which are so high that the largest vessels can pass under them without lowering their masts. It has, he affirms, three thousand baths, and six hundred thousand families, including domestics. It abounds with magnificent houses, and has a lake thirty miles in circuit within its walls, on the banks of which are superb palaces of people of rank.† The inhabitants of Quinsai are very voluptuous, and indulge in all kinds of luxuries and delights, particularly the women, who are extremely beautiful. There are many merchants and artisans, but the masters do not work, they employ servants to do all their labour. The province of Mangi was conquered by the Great Khan, who divided it into nine kingdoms, appointing to each a tributary king. He drew from it an immense revenue, for the country abounded in gold, silver, silks, sugar, spices and perfumes.

ZIPANGU, ZIPANGRI, OR CIPANGO.

Fifteen hundred miles from the shores of Mangi, according to Marco Polo, lay the great island of Zipangu, by some written Zipangri, and by Columbus Cipango.‡ Marco Polo describes it as abounding in gold, which, however, the king seldom permits to be transported out of the island. The king has a magnificent palace covered with plates of gold, as in other countries the palaces are covered with sheets of lead or copper. The halls and chambers are likewise covered with gold, the windows adorned with it, sometimes in plates of the thickness of two fingers. The island also produces vast quantities of the largest and finest pearls, together with a variety of precious stones; so that, in fact, it abounds in riches. The Great Khan made several attempts to conquer this island, but in vain; which is not to be wondered at, if it be true what Marco Polo relates, that the inhabitants had certain stones of a charmed virtue inserted between the skin and the flesh of their right arms, which, through the power of diabolical enchantments, rendered them invulnerable. This island was an object of diligent search to Columbus.

About the island of Zipangu or Cipango, and between it and the coast of Mangi, the sea, according to Marco Polo, is studded with small islands to the number of seven thousand four hundred and forty, of which the greater part are inhabited. There is not one which does not produce odoriferous trees and perfumes in abundance. Columbus thought himself at one time in the midst of these islands.

* Another blunder in translation has drawn upon Marco Polo the indignation of George Hornius, who (in his Origin of America, IV. 3) exclaims, "Who can believe all that he says of the city of Quinsai? as, for example, that it has stone bridges twelve thousand miles high!" &c. It is probable that many of the exaggerations in the accounts of Marco Polo are in fact the errors of his translators.

Mandeville, speaking of this same city, which he calls Causai, says it is built on the sea like Venice, and has twelve hundred bridges.

† Sir George Staunton mentions this lake as being a beautiful sheet of water, about three or four miles in diameter; its margin ornamented with houses and gardens of Mandarins, together with temples, monasteries for the priests of Fo, and an imperial palace.

‡ Supposed to be those islands collectively called Japan. They are named by the Chinese Ge-pen; the terminating syllable *gu* added by Marco Polo, is supposed to be the Chinese word *kue*, signifying kingdom, which is commonly annexed to the names of foreign countries. As the distance of the nearest part of the southern island from the coast of China near Ning-po, is not more than five hundred Italian miles, Mr. Marsden supposes Marco Polo in stating it to be 1500, means Chinese miles, or li, which are in the proportion of somewhat more than one-third of the former.

These are the principal places described by Marco Polo, which occur in the letters and journals of Columbus. The island of Cipango was the first land he expected to make, and he intended to visit afterwards the province of Mangi, and to seek the Great Khan in his city of Cambalu, in the province of Cathay. Unless the reader can bear in mind these sumptuous descriptions of Marco Polo of countries teeming with wealth, and cities where the very domes and palaces flamed with gold, he will have but a faint idea of the splendid anticipations which filled the imagination of Columbus when he discovered, as he supposed, the extremity of Asia. It was his confident expectation of soon arriving at these countries, and realising the accounts of the Venetian, that induced him to hold forth those promises of immediate wealth to the sovereigns, which caused so much disappointment, and brought upon him the frequent reproach of exciting false hopes and indulging in wilful exaggeration.

No. XXII.—Sir John Mandeville.

Next to Marco Polo the travels of Sir John Mandeville, and his account of the territories of the Great Khan along the coast of Asia, seem to have been treasured up in the mind of Columbus.

Mandeville was born in the city of St. Albans. He was devoted to study from his earliest childhood, and after finishing his general education, applied himself to medicine. Having a great desire to see the remotest parts of the earth, then known, that is to say, Asia and Africa, and above all, to visit the Holy Land, he left England in 1332, and passing through France embarked at Marseilles. According to his own account, he visited Turkey, Armenia, Egypt, Upper and Lower Lybia, Syria, Persia, Chaldea, Ethiopia, Tartary, Amazonia and the Indies, residing in their principal cities. But most he says he delighted in the Holy Land, where he remained for a long time, examining it with the greatest minuteness and endeavouring to follow all the traces of our Saviour. After an absence of thirty-four years he returned to England, but found himself forgotten and unknown by the greater part of his countrymen, and a stranger in his native place. He wrote a history of his travels in three languages, English, French and Latin, for he was master of many tongues. He addressed his work to Edward III. His wanderings do not seem to have made him either pleased with the world at large, or contented with his home. He railed at the age, saying that there was no more virtue extant; that the church was ruined; error prevalent among the clergy; simony upon the throne; and, in a word, that the devil reigned triumphant. He soon returned to the continent, and died at Liege in 1372. He was buried in the abbey of the Gulielmites, in the suburbs of that city, where Ortelius, in his Itinerarium Belgiæ, says that he saw his monument, on which was the effigy, in stone, of a man with forked beard and his hands raised towards his head (probably folded as in prayer, according to the manner of old tombs), and a lion at his feet. There was an inscription stating his name, quality, and calling, (viz., professor of medicine), that he was very pious, very learned, and very charitable to the poor, and that after having travelled over the whole world, he had died at Liege. The people of the convent showed also his spurs, and the housings of the horses which he had ridden in his travels.

The descriptions given by Mandeville, of the Grand Khan, of the province of Cathay, and the city of Cambalu, are no less splendid than those of Marco Polo. The royal palace was more than two leagues in circumference. The grand hall had twenty-four columns of copper and gold. There were more than three hundred thousand men occupied and living in and about the palace, of which more than one hundred thousand were employed in taking care of ten thousand elephants, and of a vast variety of other animals, birds of prey, falcons, parrots and paroquets. On days of festival there were even twice the number of men employed. The title of this potentate in his letters was "Khan, the son of God, exalted possessor of all the earth, master of those who are masters of others." On his seal was engraved, "God reigns in heaven, Khan upon earth."

Mandeville has become proverbial for indulging in a traveller's exaggerations; yet his accounts of the countries which he visited have been found far more veracious than had been imagined. His descriptions of Cathay, and the wealthy province of Mangi, agreeing with those of Marco Polo, had great authority with Columbus.

No. XXIII.—The Zones.

The zones were imaginary bands or circles in the heavens, producing an effect of climate on corresponding belts on the globe of the earth. The polar circles and the tropics mark these divisions.

The central region, lying beneath the track of the sun, was termed the torrid zone; the two regions between the tropics and the polar circles, were termed the temperate zones, and the remaining parts, between the polar circles and the poles, the frigid zones.

The frozen regions near the poles were considered uninhabitable and unnavigable on account of the extreme cold. The burning zone, or rather the central part of it, immediately about the equator, was considered uninhabitable, unproductive, and impassable in consequence of the excessive heat. The temperate zones, lying between them, were supposed to be fertile and salubrious, and suited to the purposes of life.

The globe was divided into two hemispheres by the equator, an imaginary line encircling it at equal distance from the poles. The whole of the world known to the ancients was contained in the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere.

It was imagined that if there should be inhabitants in the temperate zone of the southern hemisphere, there could still be no communication with them on account of the burning zone which intervened.

Parmenides, according to Strabo, was the inventor of this theory of the five zones, but he made the torrid zone extend on each side of the equator beyond the tropics. Aristotle supported this doctrine of the zones. In his time nothing was known of the extreme northern parts of Europe and Asia, nor of interior Ethiopia and the southern part of Africa, extending beyond the tropic of Capricorn to the Cape of Good Hope. Aristotle believed that there was habitable earth in the southern hemisphere, but that it was for ever divided from the part of the world already known, by the impassable zone of scorching heat at the equator.*

* Aristot., 2 Met. cap. 5.

Pliny supported the opinion of Aristotle concerning the burning zones. "The temperature of the central region of the earth" he observes. "where the sun runs his course, is burnt up as with fire. The temperate zones which lie on each side can have no communication with each other in consequence of the fervent heat of this region."*

Strabo (lib. xi.), in mentioning this theory, gives it likewise his support; and others of the ancient philosophers, as well as the poets, might be cited to show the general prevalence of the belief.

It must be observed that, at the time when Columbus defended his proposition before the learned board at Salamanca, the ancient theory of the burning zone had not yet been totally disproved by modern discovery. The Portuguese, it is true, had penetrated within the tropics; but, though the whole of the space between the tropic of Cancer and that of Capricorn, in common parlance, was termed the torrid zone, the uninhabitable and impassable part, strictly speaking, according to the doctrine of the ancients, only extended a limited number of degrees on each side of the equator; forming about a third, or at most, the half of the zone. The proofs which Columbus endeavoured to draw therefore from the voyages made to St. George la Mina, were not conclusive with those who were bigoted to the ancient theory, and who placed this scorching region still further southward, and immediately about the equator.

No. XXIV.—Of the Atalantis of Plato.

The island Atalantis is mentioned by Plato in his dialogue of Timæus. Solon, the Athenian lawgiver is supposed to have travelled into Egypt. He is in an ancient city on the Delta, the fertile island formed by the Nile, and is holding converse with certain learned priests on the antiquities of remote ages, when one of them gives him a description of the island of Atalantis, and of its destruction, which he describes as having taken place before the conflagration of the world by Phaëton.

This island, he was told, had been situated in the Western Ocean, opposite to the Straits of Gibraltar. There was an easy passage from it to other islands, which lay adjacent to a large continent, exceding in size all Europe and Asia. Neptune settled in this island, from whose son Atlas its name was derived, and he divided it among his ten sons. His descendants reigned here in regular succession for many ages. They made irruptions into Europe and Africa, subduing all Lybia as far as Egypt, and Europe to Asia Minor. They were resisted, however, by the Athenians, and driven back to their Atlantic territories. Shortly after this there was a tremendous earthquake, and an overflowing of the sea, which continued for a day and a night. In the course of this the vast island of Atalantis, and all its splendid cities and warlike nations, were swallowed up, and sunk to the bottom of the sea, which, spreading its waters over the chasm, formed the Atlantic Ocean. For a long time, however, the sea was not navigable, on account of rocks and shelves, of mud and slime, and of the ruins of that drowned country.

Many, in modern times, have considered this a mere fable; others suppose that Plato, while in Egypt, had received some vague accounts

* Pliny, lib. i. cap. 61.

of the Canary Islands, and, on his return to Greece, finding those islands so entirely unknown to his countrymen, had made them the seat of his political and moral speculations. Some, however, have been disposed to give greater weight to this story of Plato. They imagine that such an island may really have existed, filling up a great part of the Atlantic, and that the continent beyond it was America, which, in such case, was not unknown to the ancients. Kircher supposes it to have been an island extending from the Canaries to the Azores; that it was really ingulfed in one of the convulsions of the globe, and that those small Islands are mere shattered fragments of it.

As a farther proof that the New World was not unknown to the ancients, many have cited the singular passage in the Medea of Seneca, which is wonderfully apposite, and shows, at least, how nearly the warm imagination of a poet may approach to prophecy. The predictions of the ancient oracles were rarely so unequivocal.

Venient annis
Sæcula seris, quibus Oceanus
Vincula rerum laxet, et ingens
Pateat tellus, Typhisque novos
Detegat orbes, nec sit terris
Ultima Thule.

Gosselin, in his able research into the voyages of the ancients, supposes the Atalantis of Plato to have been nothing more nor less than one of the nearest of the Canaries, viz. Fortaventura or Lancerote.

No. XXV.—The imaginary Island of St. Brandan.

One of the most singular geographical illusions on record is that which for a long while haunted the imaginations of the inhabitants of the Canaries. They fancied they beheld a mountainous island about ninety leagues in length, lying far to the westward. It was only seen at intervals, but in perfectly clear and serene weather. To some it seemed one hundred leagues distant, to others forty, to others only fifteen or eighteen.* On attempting to reach it, however, it somehow or other eluded the search, and was nowhere to be found. Still there were so many eye-witnesses of credibility who concurred in testifying to their having seen it, and the testimony of the inhabitants of different islands agreed so well as to its form and position, that its existence was generally believed, and geographers inserted it in their maps It is laid down on the globe of Martin Behem, projected in 1492, as delineated by M. de Murr, and it will be found in most of the maps of the time of Columbus, placed commonly about two hundred leagues west of the Canaries. During the time that Columbus was making his proposition to the court of Portugal, an inhabitant of the Canaries applied to King John II. for a vessel to go in search of this island. In the archives of the Torre de Tombo† also, there is a record of a contract made by the crown of Portugal with Fernando de Ulmo, cavalier of the royal household, and captain of the island of Tercera, wherein he undertakes to go at his own expense, in quest of an island or islands, or Terra Firma, supposed to be the island of the Seven Cities, on con-

* Feyjoo, Theatro Critico, tom. iv. d. 10, § 29.
† Lit. ⁄. de la Chancelaria del Rey Dn. Juan II., fol. 101.

dition of having jurisdiction over the same for himself and his heirs, allowing one-tenth of the revenues to the king. This Ulmo, finding the expedition above his capacity, associated one Juan Alfonso del Estreito in the enterprise. They were bound to be ready to sail with two caravels in the month of March, 1487.* The fate of their enterprise is unknown.

The name of St. Brandan, or Borondon, given to this imaginary island from time immemorial, is said to be derived from a Scotch abbot, who flourished in the sixth century, and who is called sometimes by the foregoing appellations, sometimes St. Blandano, or St. Blandanus. In the Martyrology of the order of St. Au- Augustine, he is said to have been the patriarch of three thousand monks. About the middle of the sixth century, he accompanied his disciple, St. Maclovio, or St. Malo, in search of certain islands possessing the delights of paradise, which they were told existed in the midst of the ocean, and were inhabited by infidels. These most adventurous saints-errant wandered for a long time upon the ocean, and at length landed upon an island called Ima. Here St. Malo found the body of a giant lying in a sepulchre. He resuscitated him, and had much interesting conversation with him, the giant informed him that the inhabitants of that island had some notions of the Trinity, and moreover, giving him a gratifying account of the torments which Jews and Pagans suffered in the infernal regions. Finding the giant so docile and reasonable, St. Malo expounded to him the doctrines of the Christian religion, converted him, and baptized him by the name of Mildum. The giant, however, either through weariness of life, or eagerness to enjoy the benefits of his conversion, begged permission, at the end of fifteen days, to die again, which was granted him.

According to another account, the giant told them he knew of an island in the ocean, defended by walls of burnished gold, so resplendent that they shone like crystal, but to which there was no entrance. At their request, he undertook to guide them to it, and taking the cable of their ship, threw himself into the sea. He had not proceeded far, however, when a tempest rose, and obliged them all to return, and shortly after the giant died.† A third legend makes the saint pray to heaven on Easter day, that they may be permitted to find land where they may celebrate the offices of religion with becoming state. An island immediately appears, on which they land, perform a solemn mass, and the sacrament of the Eucharist; after which re-embarking and making sail, they behold to their astonishment the supposed island suddenly plunge to the bottom of the sea, being nothing else than a monstrous whale.‡ When the rumour circulated of an island seen from the Canaries, which always eluded the search, the legends of St. Brandan were revived, and applied to this unapproachable land. We are told, also, that there was an ancient Latin manuscript in the archives of the cathedral church of the Grand Canary, in which the adventures of these saints were recorded. Through carelessness, however, this manuscript has disappeared.§ Some have maintained that this island was known to the ancients, and was the same mentioned by Ptolemy among the

* Torre de Tombo. Lib. das Ylhas, f.119.
† F. Gregorio Garcia, Origen de los Indios, lib. i. cap. 9.
‡ Sigeberto, Epist. ad Tiemar. Abbat.
§ Nunez de la Pena, Conquista de la Gran Canaria.

Fortunate or Canary islands, by the names of Aprositus,* or the Inaccessible, and which, according to Friar Diego Philipo, in his book on the Incarnation of Christ, shows that it possessed the same quality in ancient times of deluding the eye and being unattainable to the feet of mortals.† But whatever belief the ancients may have had on this subject, it is certain that it took a strong hold on the faith of the moderns during the prevalent rage for discovery; nor did it lack abundant testimonials. Don Joseph de Viera y Clavijo says, there never was a more difficult paradox nor problem in the science of geography; since, to affirm the existence of this island, is to trample upon sound criticism, judgment, and reason; and to deny it, one must abandon tradition and experience, and suppose that many persons of credit had not the proper use of their senses.‡

The belief in this island has continued long since the time of Columbus. It was repeatedly seen, and by various persons at a time, always in the same place and of the same form. In 1526 an expedition set off for the Canaries in quest of it, commanded by Fernando de Troya and Fernando Alvarez. They cruised in the wonted direction, but in vain, and their failure ought to have undeceived the public. "The phantasm of the island, however," says Viera, "had such a secret enchantment for all who beheld it, that the public preferred doubting the good conduct of the explorers, than their own senses." In 1570 the appearances were so repeated and clear, that there was a universal fever of curiosity awakened among the people of the Canaries, and it was determined to send forth another expedition.

That they might not appear to act upon light grounds, an exact investigation was previously made of all the persons of talent and credibility who had seen these apparitions of land, or who had other proofs of its existence.

Alonzo de Espinosa, governor of the island of Ferro, accordingly made a report, in which more than one hundred witnesses, several of them persons of the highest respectability, deposed that they had beheld the unknown island about forty leagues to the north-west of Ferro, that they had contemplated it with calmness and certainty, and had seen the sun set behind one of its points.

Testimonials of still greater force came from the islands of Palma and Teneriffe. There were certain Portuguese who affirmed, that, being driven about by a tempest, they had come upon the island of St. Borondon. Pedro Vello, who was the pilot of the vessel, affirmed, that, having anchored in a bay, he landed with several of the crew. They drank fresh water in a brook, and beheld in the sand the print of footsteps, double the size of those of an ordinary man, and the distance between them was in proportion. They found a cross nailed to a neighbouring tree, near to which were three stones placed in form of a triangle, with signs of fire having been made among them, probably to cook shell-fish. Having seen much cattle and sheep grazing in the neighbourhood, two of their party armed with lances went into the woods in pursuit of them. The night was approaching, the heavens began to lower, and a harsh wind arose. The people on board the ship

* Ptolemy, lib. iv. tom. iv. § Fr. D. Philipo, lib. viii. fol. 25.
‡ Hist. Isl. Can., lib. i. cap. 28.

cried out that she was dragging her anchor, whereupon Vello entered the boat and hurried on board. In an instant they lost sight of land, being as it were swept away in the hurricane. When the storm had passed away, and the sea and sky were again serene, they searched in vain for the island : not a trace of it was to be seen, and they had to pursue their voyage, lamenting the loss of their two companions who had been abandoned in the wood.*

A learned licentiate, Pedro Ortiz de Funez, inquisitor of the Grand Canary, while on a visit at Teneriffe, summoned several persons before him, who testified having seen the island. Among them was one Marcos Verde, a man well known in those parts. He stated, that in returning from Barbary and arriving in the neighbourhood of the Canaries, he beheld land, which, according to his maps and calculations, could not be any of the known islands. He concluded it to be the far-famed St. Borondon. Overjoyed at having discovered this land of mystery, he coasted along its spell-bound shores, until he anchored in a beautiful harbour formed by the mouth of a mountain ravine. Here he landed with several of his crew. It was now, he said, the hour of the Ave Maria, or of vespers. The sun being set, the shadows began to spread over the land. The voyagers having separated, wandered about in different directions, until out of hearing of each other's shouts. Those on board, seeing the night approaching, made signal to summon back the wanderers to the ship. They re-embarked, intending to resume their investigations on the following day. Scarcely were they on board, however, when a whirlwind came rushing down the ravine, with such violence as to drag the vessel from her anchor, and hurry her out to sea ; and they never saw any thing more of this hidden and inhospitable island.

Another testimony remains on record in manuscript of one Abreu Galindo ; but whether taken at this time does not appear. It was that of a French adventurer, who, many years before, making a voyage among the Canaries, was overtaken by a violent storm which carried away his masts. At length the furious winds drove him to the shores of an unknown island covered with stately trees. Here he landed with part of his crew, and choosing a tree proper for a mast, cut it down, and began to shape it for his purpose. The guardian power of the island, however, resented as usual this invasion of his forbidden shores. The heavens assumed a dark and threatening aspect; the night was approaching, and the mariners, fearing some impending evil, abandoned their labour and returned on board. They were borne away as usual from the coast, and the next day arrived at the island of Palma.*

The mass of testimony collected by official authority in 1570 seemed so satisfactory, that another expedition was fitted out in the same year in the island of Palma. It was commanded by Fernando de Villabolos, regidor of the island, but was equally fruitless with the preceding. St. Borondon seemed disposed only to tantalize the world with distant and serene glimpses of his ideal paradise, or to reveal it amidst storms to tempest-tossed mariners, but to hide it completely from the view of all who diligently sought it. Still the people of Palma adhered to their

* Nunez de la Pena, lib. i. cap. 1. Viera, Hist. Isl. Can., tom. i. cap. 28.
† Nunez, Conquista de la Gran Canaria. Viera, Hist., &c

favourite chimera. Thirty-four years afterwards, in 1605, they sent another ship on the quest, commanded by Gaspar Perez de Acosta, an accomplished pilot, accompanied by the Padre Lorenzo Pinedo, a holy Franciscan friar, skilled in natural science. St. Borondon, however, refused to reveal his island to either monk or mariner. After cruizing about in every direction, sounding, observing the skies, the clouds, the winds, every thing that could furnish indications; they returned without having seen any thing to authorise a hope.

Upwards of a century now elapsed without any new attempt to seek this fairy island. Every now and then, it is true, the public mind was agitated by fresh reports of its having been seen. Lemons and other fruits, and the green branches of trees which floated to the shores of Gomera and Ferro, were pronounced to be from the enchanted groves of St. Borondon. At length, in 1721, the public infatuation again rose to such a height that a fourth expedition was sent, commanded by Don Gaspar Dominguez, a man of probity and talent. As this was an expedition of solemn and mysterious import, he had two holy friars as apostolical chaplains. They made sail from the island of Teneriffe towards the end of October, leaving the populace in an indescribable state of anxious curiosity mingled with superstition. The ship, however, returned from its cruise as unsuccessful as all its predecessors.

We have no account of any expedition being since undertaken, though the island still continued to be a subject of speculation, and occasionally to reveal its shadowy mountains to the eyes of favoured individuals. In a letter written from the island of Gomera, 1759, by a Franciscan monk, to one of his friends, he relates having seen it from the village of Alaxero at six in the morning of the 3rd of May. It appeared to consist of two lofty mountains, with a deep valley between; and on contemplating it with a telescope, the valley or ravine appeared to be filled with trees. He summoned the curate, Antonio Joseph Manrique, and upwards of forty other persons, all of whom beheld it plainly.*

Nor is this island delineated merely in ancient maps of the time of Columbus. It is laid down as one of the Canary islands in a French map published in 1704; and Mons. Gautier, in a geographical chart, annexed to his Observations on Natural History, published in 1755, places it five degrees to the west of the island of Ferro, in the 29th deg. of N. latitude.†

Such are the principal facts existing relative to the island of St. Brandan. Its reality was for a long time a matter of firm belief. It was in vain that repeated voyages and investigations proved its non-existence; the public, after trying all kinds of sophistry, took refuge in the supernatural, to defend their favourite chimera. They maintained that it was rendered inaccessible to mortals by Divine Providence, or by diabolical magic. Most inclined to the former. All kinds of extravagant fancies were indulged concerning it,‡ some confounded it with the fabled island of the Seven Cities situated somewhere in the bosom of the ocean, where in old times seven bishops and their followers had taken refuge from the Moors. Some of the Portuguese imagined it to be the abode of their lost King Sebastian. The Spaniards pretended that Roderick, the last of their Gothic kings, had fled thither from the Moors after the disastrous

* Vera, Hist. Isl. Can. tom. i. cap. 28. † Idem. ‡ Idem.

battle of the Guadalete. Others suggested that it might be the seat of the terrestrial paradise, the place where Enoch and Elijah remained in a state of blessedness until the final day, and that it was made at times apparent to the eyes, but invisible to the search of mortals. Poetry, it is said, has owed to this popular belief one of its beautiful fictions, and the garden of Armida, where Rinaldo was detained enchanted, and which Tasso places in one of the Canary islands, has been identified with the imaginary St. Borondon.*

The learned father Feyjoo†, has given a philosophical solution to this geographical problem. He attributes all these appearances, which have been so numerous and so well authenticated as not to admit of doubt, to certain atmospherical deceptions, like that of the Fata Morgana, seen at times, in the straits of Messina, where the city of Reggio and its surrounding country is reflected in the air above the neighbouring sea: a phenomenon which has likewise been witnessed in front of the city of Marseilles. As to the tales of the mariners who had landed on these forbidden shores, and been hurried thence in whirlwinds and tempests, he considers them as mere fabrications.

As the populace, however, reluctantly give up any thing that partakes of the marvellous and mysterious, and as the same atmospherical phenomena, which first gave birth to the illusion, may still continue, it is not improbable that a belief in the island of St. Brandan may still exist among the ignorant and credulous of the Canaries, and that they at times behold its fairy mountains rising above the distant horizon of the Atlantic.

No. XXVI.—The Island of the Seven Cities.

One of the popular traditions concerning the ocean, which were current during the time of Columbus, was that of the Island of the Seven Cities. It was recorded in an ancient legend, that at the time of the conquest of Spain and Portugal by the Moors, when the inhabitants fled in every direction to escape from slavery, seven bishops, followed by a great number of their people, took shipping and abandoned themselves to their fate, on the high seas. After tossing about for some time, they landed on an unknown island in the midst of the ocean. Here the bishops burnt the ships, to prevent the desertion of their followers, and founded seven cities. Various pilots of Portugal, it was said, had reached that island at different times, but had never returned to give any information concerning it, having been detained, according to subsequent accounts, by the successors of the bishops to prevent pursuit. At length, according to common report, at the time that Prince Henry of Portugal was prosecuting his discoveries, several seafaring men presented themselves one day before him, and stated that they had just returned from a voyage, in the course of which they had landed upon this island. The inhabitants, they said, spoke their language, and carried them immediately to church, to ascertain whether they were Catholics, and were rejoiced at finding them of the true faith. They then made earnest inquiries to know whether the Moors still retained possession of Spain and Portugal. While part of the crew were at church, the rest gathered sand on the shore for the use of the kitchen, and found to their surprise

* Viera, Hist. Isl. Can., tom. i. cap. 28. † Theatro Critico, tom. iv. d. x.

that one-third of it was gold. The islanders were anxious that the crew should remain with them a few days until the return of their governor, who was absent; but the mariners, afraid of being detained, embarked and made sail. Such was the story they told to Prince Henry, hoping to receive reward for their intelligence. The prince expressed displeasure at their hasty departure from the island, and ordered them to return and procure further information; but the men, apprehensive, no doubt, of having the falsehood of their tale discovered, made their escape, and nothing more was heard of them.*

This story had much currency. The island of the Seven Cities was identified with the island mentioned by Aristotle as having been discovered by the Carthaginians, and was put down in the early maps about the time of Columbus, under the name of Antilla.

At the time of the discovery of New Spain, reports were brought to Hispaniola of the civilization of the country; that the people wore clothing; that their houses and temples were solid, spacious, and often magnificent; and that crosses were occasionally found among them. Juan de Grivalja, being dispatched to explore the coast of Yucatan, reported that in sailing along it he beheld, with great wonder, stately and beautiful edifices of lime and stone, and many high towers that shone at a distance.† For a time the old tradition of the Seven Cities was revived, and many thought that they were to be found in the same part of New Spain.

No. XXVII.—Discovery of the Island of Madeira.

The discovery of Madeira by Macham rests principally upon the authority of Francisco Alcaforado, an esquire of Prince Henry of Portugal, who composed an account of it for that prince. It does not appear to have obtained much faith among Portuguese historians. No mention is made of it in Barros; he attributes the first discovery of the island to Juan Gonzalez and Tristram Vaz, who he said descried it from Porto Santo, resembling a cloud on the horizon.‡

The Abbé Provost, however, in his General History of Voyages, vol. 6, seems inclined to give credit to the account of Alcaforado. "It was composed," he observes, "at a time when the attention of the public would have exposed the least falsities; and no one was more capable than Alcaforado of giving an exact detail of this event, since he was of the number of those who assisted at the second discovery." The narrative, as originally written, was overcharged with ornaments and digressions. It was translated into French and published in Paris, in 1671. The French translator had retrenched the ornaments but scrupulously retained the facts. The story, however, is cherished in the island of Madeira, where a painting in illustration of it is still to be seen. The following is the purport of the French translation: I have not been able to procure the original of Alcaforado.

During the reign of Edward the Third of England, a young man of great courage and talent, named Robert Macham, fell in love with a young lady of rare beauty, of the name of Anne Dorset. She was his

* Hist. del Almirante, cap. 10.

† Torquemada, Monarquia Indiana, lib. iv. cap. 4. Origen de los Indios por Fr Gregorio Garcia, lib. iv. cap. 20.

‡ Barros, Asia, decad. i. lib. i. cap. 3.

superior in birth, and of a proud and aristocratic family; but one merit of Macham gained him the preference over all his rivals. The family of the young lady, to prevent her making an inferior alliance, obtained an order from the king to have Macham arrested and confined, until by arbitrary means they married his mistress to a man of quality. As soon as the nuptials were celebrated, the nobleman conducted his beautiful and afflicted bride to his seat near Bristol. Macham was now restored to liberty. Imdignant at the wrongs he had suffered, and certain of the affections of his mistress, he prevailed upon several friends to assist him in a project for the gratification of his love and revenge. They followed hard on the traces of the new-married couple to Bristol. One of the friends obtained an introduction into the family of the nobleman in quality of a groom. He found the young bride full of tender recollections of her lover, and of dislike to the husband thus forced upon her. Through the means of this friend, Macham had several communications with her, and concerted means for their escape to France, where they might enjoy their mutual love unmolested.

When all things were prepared, the young lady rode out one day accompanied only by the fictitious groom, under pretence of taking the air. No sooner were they out of the sight of the house, than they galloped to an appointed place on the shore of the channel, where a boat awaited them. They were conveyed on board a vessel which lay with anchor a-trip, and sails unfurled, ready to put to sea. Here the lovers were once more united. Fearful of pursuit, the ship immediately weighed anchor; they made their way rapidly along the coast of Cornwall, and Macham anticipated the triumph of soon landing with his beautiful prize on the shores of gay and gallant France. Unfortunately an adverse and stormy wind arose in the night; at daybreak they found themselves out of sight of land. The mariners were ignorant and inexperienced; they knew nothing of the compass, and it was a time when men were unaccustomed to traverse the high seas. For thirteen days the lovers were driven about on a tempestuous ocean, at the mercy of wind and wave. The fugitive bride was filled with terror and remorse, and looked upon this uproar of the elements as the anger of heaven directed against her. All the efforts of her lover could not remove from her mind a dismal presage of some approaching catastrophe.

At length the tempest subsided. On the fourteenth day at dawn, the mariners perceived what appeared to be a tuft of wood rising out of the sea. They joyfully steered for it, supposing it to be an island. They were not mistaken. As they drew near, the rising sun shone upon noble forests, the trees of which were of a kind unknown to them. Flights of birds also came hovering about the ship, and perched upon the yards and rigging without any signs or fear. The boat was sent on shore to reconnoitre, and soon returned with such accounts of the beauty of the country, that Macham determined to take his drooping companion to the land, in hopes her health and spirits might be restored by refreshment and repose. They were accompanied on shore by the faithful friends who had assisted in their flight. The mariners remained on board to guard the ship.

The country was indeed delightful. The forests were stately and

magnificent; there were trees laden with excellent fruits others with aromatic flowers: the waters were cool and limpid, the sky was serene, and there was a balmy sweetness in the air. The animals they met with showed no signs of alarm or ferocity, from which they concluded that the island was uninhabited. On penetrating a little distance they found a sheltered meadow, the green bosom of which was bordered by laurels and refreshed by a mountain brook which ran sparkling over pebbles. In the centre was a majestic tree, the wide branches of which afforded shade from the rays of the sun. Here Macham had bowers constructed, and determined to pass a few days, hoping that the sweetness of the country, and the serene tranquillity of this delightful solitude, would recruit the drooping health and spirits of his companion. Three days, however, had scarcely passed, when a violent storm arose from the north-east, and raged all night over the island. On the succeeding morning, Macham repaired to the sea-side, but nothing of his ship was to be seen, and he concluded that it had foundered in the tempest.

Consternation fell upon the little band, thus left in an uninhabited island in the midst of the ocean. The blow fell most severely on the timid and repentant bride. She reproached herself with being the cause of all their misfortunes, and, from the first, had been haunted by dismal forebodings. She now considered them about to be accomplished, and her horror was so great as to deprive her of speech; she expired in three days without uttering a word.

Macham was struck with despair at beholding the tragical end of this tender and beautiful being. He upbraided himself, in the transports of his grief, with tearing her from her home, her country, and her friends, to perish upon a savage coast. All the efforts of his companions to console him were in vain. He died within five days, broken-hearted; begging, as a last request, that his body might be interred beside that of his mistress, at the foot of a rustic altar which they had erected under the great tree. They set up a large wooden cross on the spot, on which was placed an inscription written by Macham himself, relating in a few words his piteous adventure, and praying any Christians who might arrive there, to build a chapel in a place dedicated to Jesus the Saviour.

After the death of their commander, his followers consulted about means to escape from the island. The ship's boat remained on the shore. They repaired it and put it into a state to bear a voyage, and then made sail, intending to return to England. Ignorant of their situation, and carried about by the winds, they were cast upon the coast of Morocco, where, their boat being shattered upon the rocks, they were captured by the Moors and thrown into prison. Here they understood that their ship had shared the same fate, having been driven from her anchorage in the tempest, and carried to the same inhospitable coast, where all her crew were made prisoners.

The prisons of Morocco were in those days filled with captives of all nations, taken by their cruisers. Here the English prisoners met with an experienced pilot, a Spaniard of Seville, named Juan de Morales. He listened to their story with great interest; inquired into the situation and description of the island they had discovered; and, subse

quently, on his redemption from prison, communicated the circumstances, it is said, to Prince Henry of Portugal.

There is a difficulty in the above narrative of Alcaforado in reconciling dates. The voyage is said to have taken place during the reign of Edward III, which commenced in 1327 and ended in 1377. Morales, to whom the English communicated their voyage, is said to have been in the service of the Portuguese, in the second discovery of Madeira, in 1418 and 1420. Even if the voyage and imprisonment had taken place in the last year of King Edward's reign, this leaves a space of forty years.

Hakluyt gives an account of the same voyage, taken from Antonio Galvano. He varies in certain particulars. It happened, he says, in the year 1344, in the time of Peter IV. of Aragon. Macham cast anchor in a bay since called after him Machio.

The lady being ill, he took her on shore, accompanied by some of his friends, and the ships sailed without them. After the death of the lady, Macham made a canoe out of a tree, and ventured to sea in it with his companions. Tbey were cast upon the coast of Africa, where the Moors, considering it a kind of miracle, carried him to the king of their country, who sent him to the king of Castile. In consequence of the traditional accounts remaining of this voyage, Henry II. of Castile sent people, in 1395, to re-discover the island.

No. XXVIII.—Las Casas.

Bartholomew Las Casas, bishop of Chiapa, so often cited in all histories of the New World, was born at Seville, in 1474, and was of French extraction. The family name was Casaus. The first of the name who appeared in Spain, served under the standard of Ferdinand III. surnamed the Saint, in his wars with the Moors of Andalusia. He was at the taking of Seville from the Moors, when he was rewarded by the king, and received permission to establish himself there. His descendants enjoyed the prerogatives of nobility, and suppressed the letter *u* in their name, to accommodate it to the Spanish tongue.

Antonio, the father of Bartholomew, went to Hispaniola with Columbus in 1493, and returned rich to Seville in 1498.* It has been stated by one of the biographers of Bartholomew Las Casas, that he accompanied Columbus in his third voyage in 1498, and returned with him in 1500.† This, however, is incorrect. He was during that time, completing his education at Salamanca, where he was instructed in Latin, dialectics, logic, metaphysics, ethics, and physics, after the supposed method and system of Aristotle. While at the university, he had, as a servant, an Indian slave given him by his father, who had received him from Columbus. When Isabella, in her transport of virtuous indignation, ordered the Indian slaves to be sent back to their country, this one was taken from Las Casas. The young man was aroused by the circumstance, and, on considering the nature of the case, became inflamed with a zeal in favour of the unhappy Indians, which never cooled throughout a long and active life. It was excited to tenfold fervour, when, at about

* Navarrete, Colec. Viag. tom. i. Introd. p. lxx.

† T. A. Llorente, Œuvres de Las Casas, p. xi. Paris, 1822.

the age of twenty-eight years, he accompanied the commander Ovando to Hispaniola in 1502, and was an eye-witness to many of the cruel scenes which took place under his administration. The whole of his future life, a space exceeding sixty years, was devoted to vindicating the cause, and endeavouring to ameliorate the sufferings of the natives. As a missionary, he traversed the wilderness of the New World in various directions, seeking to convert and civilize them; as a protector and champion, he made several voyages to Spain, vindicating their wrongs before courts and monarchs, wrote volumes in their behalf, and exhibited a zeal, and constancy, and intrepidity worthy of an apostle. He died at the advanced age of ninety-two years, and was buried at Madrid, in the church of the Dominican convent of Atocha of which fraternity he was a member.

Attempts have been made to decry the consistency, and question the real philanthropy of Las Casas, in consequence of one of the expedients to which he resorted to relieve the Indians from the cruel bondage imposed upon them. This occurred in 1517, when he arrived in Spain, on one of his missions, to obtain measures in their favour from the government. On his arrival in Spain, he found Cardinal Ximenes, who had been left regent on the death of King Ferdinand, too ill to attend to his affairs. He repaired, therefore, to Valladolid, where he awaited the coming of the new monarch, Charles, archduke of Austria, afterwards the Emperor Charles V. He had strong opponents to encounter in various persons high in authority, who, holding estates and repartimientos in the colonies, were interested in the slavery of the Indians. Among these, and not the least animated, was the bishop Fonseca, president of the Council of the Indies.

At length the youthful sovereign arrived, accompanied by various Flemings of his court, particularly his grand chancellor, Doctor Juan de Selvagio, a learned and upright man, whom he consulted on all affairs of administration and justice. Las Casas soon became intimate with the chancellor, and stood high in his esteem; but so much opposition arose on every side that he found his various propositions for the relief of the natives but little attended to. In his doubt and anxiety he had now recourse to an expedient which he considered as justified by the circumstances of the case.* The chancellor Selvagio and other Flemings who had accompanied the youthful sovereign, had obtained from him, before quiting Flanders, licenses to import slaves from Africa to the colonies; a measure which had recently in 1516 been prohibited by a decree of Cardinal Ximenes while acting as regent. The chancellor, who was a humane man, reconciled it to his conscience by a popular opinion that one negro could perform, without detriment to his health, the labour of several Indians, and that therefore it was a great saving of human suffering. So easy is it for interest to wrap itself up in plausible argument! He might, moreover, have thought the welfare of the Africans but little affected by the change. They were accustomed

* Herrera clearly states this as an expedient adopted when others failed. "Bartolomé de las Casas, viendo que sus conceptos hallaban en todas partes dificultad, i que las opiniones que tenia, por mucha familiaridad que havia seguido i gran credito con el gran Canciller, no podian haber efecto, *se volvia a otros expedientes*," &c.—Decad. ii. lib. ii. cap. 2.

to slavery in their own country, and they were said to thrive in the New World. "The Africans," observes Herrera, "prospered so much in the island of Hispaniola, that it was the opinion unless a negro should happen to be hanged, he would never die; for as yet none had been known to perish from infirmity. Like oranges, they found their proper soil in Hispaniola, and it seemed ever more natural to them than their native Guinea."*

Las Casas finding all other means ineffectual, endeavoured to turn these interested views of the grand chancellor to the benefit of the Indians. He proposed that the Spaniards resident in the colonies, might be permitted to procure negroes for the labour of the farms and the mines, and other severe toils, which were above the strength, and destructive of the lives of the natives.† He evidently considered the poor Africans as little better than mere animals; and he acted like others, on an arithmetical calculation of diminishing human misery, by substituting one strong man for three or four of feebler nature. He moreover, esteemed the Indians as a nobler and more intellectual race of beings, and their preservation and welfare of higher importance to the general interests of humanity.

It is this expedient of Las Casas which has drawn down severe censure upon his memory. He has been charged with gross inconsistency, and even with having originated this inhuman traffic in the New World. This last is a grievous charge; but historical facts and dates remove the original sin from his door, and prove that the practice existed in the colonies, and was authorized by royal decree, long before he took a part in the question.

Las Casas did not go to the New World until 1502. By a royal ordinance passed in 1501, negro slaves were permitted to be taken there, provided they had been born among Christians.‡ By a letter written by Ovando, dated 1503, it appears that there were numbers in the island of Hispaniola at that time, and he entreats that none more might be permitted to be brought.

In 1506 the Spanish government forbade the introduction of negro slaves from the Levant, or those brought up with the Moors; and stipulated that none should be taken to the colonies but those from Seville, who had been instructed in the Christian faith, that they might contribute to the conversion of the Indians.§ In 1510, King Ferdinand, being informed of the physical weakness of the Indians, ordered fifty Africans to be sent from Seville to labour in the mines.‖ In 1511, he ordered that a great number should be procured from Guinea, and transported to Hispaniola, understanding that one negro could perform the work of four Indians.¶ In 1512 and '13 he signed further orders relative to the same subject. In 1516, Charles V. granted licenses to the Flemings to import negroes to the colonies. It was not until the year 1517 that Las Casas gave his sanction of the traffic. It already existed, and he countenanced it solely with a view to having the hardy Africans substituted for the feeble Indians. It was advocated at the same time, and for the same reasons, by the Jeronimite friars, who were missionaries in the

* Herrera, Hist. Ind., lib. ii. decad. iii. cap. 4.
‡ Idem, decad. ii. lib. iii. cap. 8.
‖ Idem, d. i. lib. viii. cap. 9.
† Idem, decad. ii. lib. ii. cap. 20.
§ Idem, d. i. lib. vi. cap. 20.
¶ Idem, d. i. lib. ix. cap. 5.

colonies. The motives of Las Casas were purely benevolent, though founded on erroneous notions of justice. He thought to permit evil that good might spring out of it; to choose between two existing abuses, and to eradicate the greater by resorting to the lesser. His reasoning, however fallacious it may be, was considered satisfactory and humane by some of the most learned and benevolent men of the age, among whom was the Cardinal Adrian, afterwards elevated to the papal chair, and characterized by gentleness and humanity. The traffic was permitted; inquiries were made as to the number of slaves required, which was limited to 4000, and the Flemings obtained a monopoly of the trade, which they afterwards farmed out to the Genoese.

Dr. Robertson, in noticing this affair, draws a contrast between the conduct of the Cardinal Ximenes and that of Las Casas, strongly to the disadvantage of the latter. "The cardinal," he observes, "when solicited to encourage this commerce, peremptorily rejected the proposition, because he perceived the iniquity of reducing one race of men to slavery, when he was consulting about the means of restoring liberty to another; but Las Casas, from the inconsistency natural to men who hurry with headlong impetuosity towards a favourite point, was incapable of making this distinction. In the warmth of his zeal to save the Americans from the yoke, he pronounced it to be lawful and expedient to impose one still heavier on the Africans."*

This distribution of praise and censure is not perfectly correct. Las Casas had no idea that he was imposing a heavier, nor so heavy, a yoke upon the Africans. The latter were considered more capable of labour and less impatient of slavery. While the Indians sunk under their tasks, and perished by thousands in Hispaniola, the negroes, on the contrary, thrived there. Herrera, to whom Dr. Robertson refers as his authority, assigns a different motive, and one of mere finance, for the measures of Cardinal Ximenes. He says that he ordered that no one should take negroes to the Indies, because, as the natives were decreasing, and it was known that one negro did more work than four of them, there would probably be a great demand for African slaves, and a tribute might be imposed upon the trade, from which would result profit to the royal treasury.† This measure was presently after carried into effect though subsequent to the death of the cardinal, and licenses were granted by the sovereign for pecuniary considerations. Flechier, in his life of Ximenes, assigns another but a mere political motive for this prohibition. The cardinal, he says, objected to the importation of negroes into the colonies, as he feared they would corrupt the natives, and by confederacies with them render them formidable to government. De Marsolier, another biographer of Ximenes, gives equally politic reasons for this prohibition. He cites a letter written by the cardinal on the subject, in which he observed that he knew the nature of the negroes; they were a people capable, it was true, of great fatigue, but extremely prolific and enterprising; and that if they had time to multiply in America, they would infallibly revolt, and impose on the

* Robertson, Hist. America, p. 3.

† Porque como iban faltando los Indios i se conocia que un negro trabajaba, mas que quatro, por lo qual habia gran demanda de ellos, parecia que se podia poner algun tributo en la saca, de que resultaria provecho á la Rl. Hacienda.—Herrera, decad. ii. lib. ii. cap. 8.

Spaniards the same chains which they had compelled them to wear.* These facts, while they take from the measure of the cardinal that credit for exclusive philanthropy which has been bestowed upon it, manifest the clear foresight of that able politician, whose predictions with respect to negro revolt have been so strikingly fulfilled in the island of Hispaniola.

Cardinal Ximenes, in fact, though a wise and upright statesman, was not troubled with scruples of conscience on these questions of natural right, nor did he possess more toleration than his contemporaries towards savage and infidel nations. He was grand inquisitor of Spain, and was very efficient during the latter years of Ferdinand in making slaves of the refractory Moors of Granada. He authorized, by express instructions, expeditions to seize and enslave the Indians of the Caribbee islands, whom he termed only suited to labour, enemies of the Christians, and cannibals. Nor will it be considered a proof of gentle or tolerant policy, that he introduced the tribunal of the inquisition into the New World. These circumstances are cited not to cast reproach upon the character of Cardinal Ximenes, but to show how incorrectly he has been extolled at the expense of Las Casas. Both of them must be judged in connexion with the customs and opinions of the age in which they lived.

Las Casas was the author of many works, but few of which have been printed. The most important is a General History of the Indies, from the discovery to the year 1520, in three volumes. It exists only in manuscript, but is the fountain from which Herrera, and most of the other historians of the New World, have drawn large supplies. The work, though prolix, is valuable, as the author was an eye-witness of many of the facts, had others from persons who were concerned in the transactions recorded, and possessed copious documents. It displays great erudition, though somewhat crudely and diffusely introduced. His history was commenced in 1527 ,at fifty-three years of age, and was finished in 1559, when eighty-five. As many things are set down from memory, there is occasional inaccuracy, but the whole bears the stamp of sincerity and truth. The author of the present work, having had access to this valuable manuscript, has made great use of it, drawing forth many curious facts hitherto neglected ; but he has endeavoured to consult it with caution and discrimination, collating it with other authorities, and omitting whatever appeared to be dictated by prejudice or overheated zeal.

Las Casas has been accused of high colouring and extravagant declamation in those passages which relate to the barbarities practised on the natives ; nor is the charge entirely without foundation. The same zeal in the cause of the Indians is expressed in his writings that shone forth in his actions, always pure, often vehement, and occasionally unseasonable. Still, however, when he errs it is on a generous and righteous side. If one-tenth part of what he says he "witnessed with his own eyes" be true, and his veracity is above all doubt, he would have been wanting in the natural feelings of humanity had he not expressed himself in terms of indignation and abhorrence.

In the course of his work, when Las Casas mentions the original

* De Marsolier, Hist. du Ministère Cardinal Ximenes, lib. vi. Toulouse, 1694.

papers lying before him, from which he drew many of his facts, it makes one lament that they should be lost to the world. Besides the journals and letters of Columbus, he says he had numbers of the letters of the Adelantado, Don Bartholomew, who wrote better than his brother, and whose writings must have been full of energy. Above all, he had the map formed from study and conjecture, by which Columbus sailed on his first voyage. What a precious document would this be for the world! These writings may still exist, neglected and forgotten among the rubbish of some convent in Spain. Little hope can be entertained of discovering them in the present state of degeneracy of the cloister. The monks of Atocha, in a recent conversation with one of the royal princes, betrayed an ignorance that this illustrious man was buried in their convent, nor can any of the fraternity point out his place of sepulture to the stranger.*

The publication of this work of Las Casas has not been permitted in Spain, where every book must have the sanction of a censor before it is committed to the press. The horrible picture it exhibits of the cruelties inflicted on the Indians, would, it was imagined, excite an odium against their conquerors. Las Casas himself seems to have doubted the expediency of publishing it; for in 1560 he made a note with his own hand which is preserved in the two first volumes of the original, mentioning that he left them in confidence to the college of the order of Predicators of St. Gregorio, in Valladolid, begging of its prelates that no secular person, nor even the collegians, should be permitted to read his history for the space of forty years; and that after that term it might be printed if consistent with the good of the Indies and of Spain.†

For the foregoing reason the work has been cautiously used by Spanish historians, passing over in silence, or with brief notice, many passages of disgraceful import. This feeling is natural, if not commendable; for the world is not prompt to discriminate between individuals and the nation of whom they are but a part. The laws and regulations for the government of the newly-discovered countries, and the decisions of the Council of the Indies on all contested points, though tinctured in some degree with the bigotry of the age, were distinguished for wisdom, justice, and humanity, and do honour to the Spanish nation. It was only in the abuse of them by individuals to whom the execution of the laws was intrusted that these atrocities were committed. It should be remembered, also, that the same nation which gave birth to the sanguinary and rapacious adventurers who perpetrated these cruelties gave birth likewise to the early missionaries, like Las Casas, who followed the sanguinary course of discovery, binding up the wounds inflicted by their countrymen; men who in a truly evangelical spirit braved all kinds of perils and hardships, and even death itself, not through a prospect of temporal gain or glory, but through a desire to ameliorate the condition and save the souls of barbarous and suffering nations. The dauntless enterprises and fearful peregrinations of many of these virtuous men, if properly appreciated, would be found to vie in romantic

* In this notice the author has occasionally availed himself of the interesting memoir of Mon. J. A. Llorente, prefixed to his collection of the works of Las Casas, collating it with the History of Herrera, from which its facts are principally derived.

† Navarrete, Coleo. de Viag., tom. i. p. lxxv.

daring with the heroic achievements of chivalry, with motives of a purer and far more exalted nature.

No. XXIX.—Peter Martyr.

Peter Martir, or Martyr, of whose writings much use has been made in this history, was born at Anghierra, in the territory of Milan, in Italy, on the second of February, 1455. He is commonly termed Peter Martyr, of *Angleria*, from the Latin name of his native place. He is one of the earliest historians that treat of Columbus, and was his contemporary and intimate acquaintance. Being at Rome in 1487, and having acquired a distinguished reputation for learning, he was invited by the Spanish ambassador, the count de Tendilla, to accompany him to Spain. He willingly accepted the invitation, and was presented to the sovereigns at Saragossa. Isabella, amidst the cares of the war with Granada, was anxious for the intellectual advancement of her kingdom, and wished to employ Martyr to instruct the young nobility of the royal household. With her peculiar delicacy, however, she first made her confessor, Hernando de Talavera, inquire of Martyr in what capacity he desired to serve her. Contrary to her expectation, Martyr replied, "in the profession of arms." The queen complied, and he followed her in her campaigns, as one of her household and military suite, but without distinguishing himself, and perhaps without having any particular employ in a capacity so foreign to his talents. After the surrender of Granada, when the war was ended, the queen, through the medium of the grand cardinal of Spain, prevailed upon him to undertake the instruction of the young nobles of her court.

Martyr was acquainted with Columbus while making his application to the sovereigns, and was present at his triumphant reception by Ferdinand and Isabella in Barcelona, on his return from his first voyage. He was continually in the royal camp during the war with the Moors, of which his letters contain many interesting particulars. He was sent ambassador extraordinary by Ferdinand and Isabella, in 1501, to Venice, and thence to the grand soldan of Egypt. The soldan, in 1490 or 1491, had sent an embassy to the Spanish sovereigns, threatening that, unless they desisted from the war against Granada, he would put all the Christians in Egypt and Syria to death, overturn all their temples, and destroy the holy sepulchre at Jerusalem. Ferdinand and Isabella pressed the war with tenfold energy, and brought it to a triumphant conclusion in the next campaign, while the soldan was still carrying on a similar negotiation with the pope. They afterwards sent Peter Martyr ambassador to the soldan to explain and justify their measure. Martyr discharged the duties of his embassy with great ability; obtained permission from the soldan to repair the holy places at Jerusalem, and an abolition of various extortions to which Christian pilgrims had been subjected. While on this embassy, he wrote his work De Legatione Babylonica, which includes a history of Egypt in those times.

On his return to Spain, he was rewarded with places and pensions, and in 1524 was appointed a minister of the Council of the Indies. His principal work is an account of the discoveries of the New World, in eight decades, each containing ten chapters. They are styled Decades

of the New World, or Decades of the Ocean, and, like all his other works, were originally written in Latin, though since translated into various languages. He had familiar access to letters, papers, journals, and narratives of the early discoverers, and was personally acquainted with many of them, gathering particulars from their conversation. In writing his Decades, he took great pains to obtain information from Columbus himself, and from others, his companions.

In one of his epistles, (No. 153, January, 1494, to Pomponius Lætus), he mentions having just received a letter from Columbus, by which it appears he was in correspondence with him. Las Casas says that great credit is to be given to him in regard to those voyages of Columbus, although his Decades contain some inaccuracies relative to subsequent events in the Indies. Muñoz allows him great credit as an author, contemporary with his subject, grave, well cultivated, instructed in the facts of which he treats, and of entire probity. He observes, however, that his writings being composed on the spur or excitement of the moment, often related circumstances which subsequently proved to be erroneous; that they were written without method or care, often confusing dates and events, so that they must be read with some caution.

Martyr was in the daily habit of writing letters to distinguished persons, relating the passing occurrences of the busy court and age in which he lived. In several of these Columbus is mentioned and also some of the chief events of his voyages, as promulgated at the very moment of his return. These letters not being generally known or circulated, or frequently cited, it may be satisfactory to the reader to have a few of the main passages which relate to Columbus. They have a striking effect in carrying us back to the very time of the discoveries.

In one of his epistles, dated Barcelona, May 1st, 1493, and addressed to C. Borromeo, he says, "Within these few days a certain Christopher Columbus has arrived from the western antipodes; a man of Liguria, whom my sovereigns reluctantly intrusted with three ships, to seek that region, for they thought that what he said was fabulous. He has returned and brought specimens of many precious things, but particularly gold, which those countries naturally produce."*

In another letter dated likewise from Barcelona, in September following, he gives a more particular account. It is addressed to Count Tendilla, governor of Granada, and also to Hernando Talavera, archbishop of that diocese, and the same to whom the propositions of Columbus had been referred by the Spanish sovereigns. "Arouse your attention, ancient sages," says Peter Martyr in his epistle; "listen to a new discovery. You remember Columbus, the Ligurian, appointed in the camp by our sovereigns to search for a new hemisphere of land at the western antipodes. You ought to recollect, for you had some agency in the transaction; nor would the enterprise, as I think, have been undertaken, without your counsel. He has returned in safety, and relates the wonders he has discovered. He exhibits gold as proofs of the mines in those regions; Gossampine cotton, also, and aromatics, and pepper more pungent than that from Caucasus. All these things, together with scarlet dye-woods, the earth produces spontaneously. Pursuing the western sun from Gades five thousand miles,

* Opus Epist. P. Martyris Anglerii, Epist. 131.

of each a thousand paces, as he relates, he fell in with sundry islands and took possession of one of them, of greater circuit, he asserts, than the whole of Spain. Here he found a race of men living contented, in a state of nature, subsisting on fruits and vegetables, and bread formed from roots. * * * * These people have kings, some greater than others, and they war occasionally among themselves, with bows and arrows, or lances sharpened and hardened in the fire. The desire of command prevails among them, though they are naked. They have wives also. What they worship except the divinity of heaven, is not ascertained."*

In another letter, dated likewise in September, 1493, and addressed to the cardinal and vice-chancellor Ascanius Sforza, he says:

"So great is my desire to give you satisfaction, illustrious prince, that I consider it a gratifying occurrence in the great fluctuations of events, when anything takes place among us, in which you may take an interest. The wonders of this terrestrial globe, round which the sun makes a circuit in the space of four-and-twenty hours, have, until our time, as you are well aware, been known only in regard to one hemisphere, merely from the Golden Chersonesus to our Spanish Gades. The rest has been given up as unknown by cosmographers, and if any mention of it has been made, it has been slight and dubious. But now, O blessed enterprise! under the auspices of our sovereigns, what has hitherto lain hidden since the first origin of things, has at length begun to be developed. The thing has thus occurred—attend, illustrious prince! A certain Christopher Columbus, a Ligurian, dispatched to those regions with three vessels by my sovereigns, pursuing the western sun above five thousand miles from Gades, achieved his way to the antipodes. Three and thirty successive days they navigated with nought but sky and water. At length from the mast-head of the largest vessel, in which Columbus himself sailed, those on the look-out proclaimed the sight of land. He coasted along six islands; one of them, as all his followers declare, beguiled perchance by the novelty of the scene, is larger than Spain."

Martyr proceeds to give the usual account of the productions of the islands, and the manners and customs of the natives, particularly the wars which occurred among them; "as if *meum* and *tuum* had been introduced among them as among us, and expensive luxuries, and the desire of accumulating wealth; for what, you will think, can be the wants of naked men?" "What farther may succeed," he adds, "I will hereafter signify. Farewell."†

In another letter, dated Valladolid, February 1, 1494, to Hernando de Talavera, archbishop of Granada, he observes, "The king and queen, on the return of Columbus to Barcelona, from his honourable enterprise, appointed him admiral of the ocean sea, and caused him, on account of his illustrious deeds, to be seated in their presence, an honour and a favour, as you know, the highest with our sovereigns. They have dispatched him again to those regions, furnished with a fleet of eighteen ships. There is prospect of great discoveries at the western antarctic antipodes."‡ * * *

In a subsequent letter to Pomponius Lætus, dated from Alcala de

* Opus Epist. P. Martyris Angleri, Epist. 134. † Idem, Epist. 135. ‡ Idem, Epist. 141.

Henares, December 9th, 1494, he gives the first news of the success of this expedition.

"Spain," says he, "is spreading her wings, augmenting her empire, and extending her name and glory to the antipodes. * * * * Of eighteen vessels dispatched by my sovereigns with the admiral Columbus, in his second voyage to the western hemisphere, twelve have returned and have brought Gossampine cotton, huge trees of dye-wood, and many other articles held with us as precious, the natural productions of that hitherto hidden world; and besides all other things, no small quantity of gold. O wonderful, Pomponius! Upon the surface of that earth are found rude masses of native gold, of a weight that one is afraid to mention. Some weigh two hundred and fifty ounces, and they hope to discover others of a much larger size, from what the naked natives intimate, when they extol their gold to our people. Nor are the Lestrigonians nor Polyphemi, who feed on human flesh, any longer doubtful. Attend—but beware! lest they rise in horror before thee! When he proceeded from the Fortunate islands, now termed the Canaries, to Hispaniola, the island on which he first set foot, turning his prow a little toward the south, he arrived at innumerable islands of savage men, whom they call cannibals, or Caribbees; and these, though naked, are courageous warriors. They fight skilfully with bows and clubs, and have boats hollowed from a single tree, yet very capacious, in which they make fierce descents on neighbouring islands, inhabited by milder people. They attack their villages, from which they carry off the men and devour them," &c.*

Another letter to Pomponius Lætus, on the same subject, has been cited at large in the body of this work. It is true these extracts give nothing that has not been stated more at large in the Decades of the same author, but they are curious, as the very first announcements of the discoveries of Columbus, and as showing the first stamp of these extraordinary events upon the mind of one of the most learned and liberal men of the age.

A collection of the letters of Peter Martyr was published in 1530, under the title of Opus Epistolarum, Petri Martyris Anglerii; it is divided into thirty-eight books, each containing the letters of one year. The same objections have been made to his letters as to his Decades, but they bear the same stamp of candour, probity, and great information. They possess peculiar value from being written at the moment, before the facts they record were distorted or discoloured by prejudice or misrepresentation. His works abound in interesting particulars not to be found in any contemporary historian. They are rich in thought, but still richer in fact, and are full of urbanity, and of the liberal feeling of a scholar who has mingled with the world. He is a fountain from which others draw, and from which, with a little precaution, they may draw securely. He died in Valladolid, in 1526.

No. XXX.—Oviedo.

Gonzalo Fernandez de Oviedo y Valdes, commonly known as Oviedo, was born in Madrid in 1478, and died in Valladolid in 1557, aged seventy-nine years. He was of a noble Asturian family, and in his

* Opus Epist. P. Martyris Anglerii, Epist. 147.

boyhood (in 1490) was appointed one of the pages to Prince Juan, heir-apparent of Spain, the only son of Ferdinand and Isabella. He was in this situation at the time of the siege and surrender of Granada, was consequently at court at the time that Columbus made his agreement with the Catholic sovereigns, and was in the same capacity at Barcelona, and witnessed the triumphant entrance of the discoverer, attended by a number of the natives of the newly-found countries.

In 1513, he was sent out to the New World by Ferdinand, to superintend the gold foundries. For many years he served them in various offices of trust and dignity, both under Ferdinand, and his grandson and successor Charles V. In 1535 he was made alcayde of the fortress of St. Domingo in Hispaniola, and afterwards was appointed historiographer of the Indies. At the time of his death, he had served the crown upwards of forty years, thirty-four of which were passed in the colonies, and he had crossed the ocean eight times, as he mentions in various parts of his writings. He wrote several works; the most important is a Chronicle of the Indies in fifty books, divided into three parts. The first part, containing nineteen books, was printed at Seville in 1535, and reprinted in 1547 at Salamanca, augmented by a twentieth book containing shipwrecks. The remainder of the work exists in manuscript. The printing of it was commenced at Valladolid in 1557, but was discontinued in consequence of his death. It is one of the unpublished treasures of Spanish colonial history.

He was an indefatigable writer, laborious in collecting and recording facts, and composed a multitude of volumes which are scattered through the Spanish libraries. His writings are full of events which happened under his own eye, or were communicated to him by eye-witnesses; but he was deficient in judgment and discrimination. He took his facts without caution, and often from sources unworthy of credit. In his account of the first voyage of Columbus, he falls into several egregious errors, in consequence of taking the verbal information of a pilot named Hernan Perez Matteo, who was in the interest of the Pinzons, and adverse to the admiral. His work is not much to be depended upon in matters relative to Columbus. When he treats of a more advanced period of the New World, from his own actual observation, he is much more satisfactory, though he is accused of listening too readily to popular fables and misrepresentations. His account of the natural productions of the New World, and of the customs of its inhabitants, is full of curious particulars; and the best narratives of some of the minor voyages which succeeded those of Columbus, are to be found in the unpublished part of his work.

No. XXXI.—Cura de Los Palacios.

Andres Bernaldes, or Bernal, generally known by the title of the curate of *Los Palacios*, from having been curate of the town of Los Palacios from about 1488 to 1513, was born in the town of Fuentes, and was for some time chaplain to Diego Deza, Archbishop of Seville, one of the greatest friends to the application of Columbus. Bernaldes was well acquainted with the admiral, who was occasionally his guest, and in 1496 left many of his manuscripts and journals with him, which the curate made use of in a history of the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, in which

he introduced an account of the voyages of Columbus. In his narrative of the admiral's coasting along the southern side of Cuba, the curate is more minute and accurate than any other historian. His work exists only in manuscript, but is well known to historians, who have made frequent use of it. Nothing can be more simple and artless than the account which the honest curate gives of his being first moved to undertake his chronicle. "I who wrote these chapters of memoirs," he says, "being for twelve years in the habit of reading a register of my deceased grandfather, who was notary public of the town of Fuentes, where I was born, I found therein several chapters recording certain events and achievements which had taken place in his time; and my grandmother his widow, who was very old, hearing me read them, said to me, 'And thou, my son, since thou art not slothful in writing, why dost thou not write, in this manner, the good things which are happening at present in thy own day, that those who come hereafter may know them, and marvelling at what they read may render thanks to God.'

"From that time," continues he, "I proposed to do so, and as I considered the matter, I said often to myself, 'If God gives me life and health I will continue to write until I behold the kingdom of Granada gained by the Christians,' and I always entertained a hope of seeing it, and did see it: great thanks and praises be given to our Saviour Jesus Christ! And because it was impossible to write a complete and connected account of all things that happened in Spain, during the matrimonial union of the King Don Ferdinand and the Queen Doña Isabella, I wrote only about certain of the most striking and remarkable events, of which I had correct information, and of those which I saw or which were public and notorious to all men."*

The work of the worthy curate, as may be inferred from the foregoing statement, is deficient in regularity of plan; the style is artless and often inelegant, but it abounds in facts not to be met with elsewhere, often given in a very graphical manner, and strongly characteristic of the times. As he was contemporary with the events, and familiar with many of the persons of his history, and as he was a man of probity and void of all pretension, his manuscript is a document of high authenticity. He was much respected in the limited sphere in which he moved, "yet," says one of his admirers, who wrote a short preface to his chronicle, "he had no other reward than that of the curacy of Los Palacios, and the place of chaplain to the Archbishop Don Diego Deza."

In the possession of O. Rich, Esq., of Madrid, is a very curious manuscript chronicle of the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, already quoted in this work, made up from this history of the curate of Los Palacios, and from various other historians of the time, by some contemporary writer. In his account of the voyage of Columbus, he differs in some trivial particulars from the regular copy of the manuscript of the curate. These variations have been carefully examined by the author of this work, and wherever they appear to be for the better, have been adopted.

No. XXXII.—"Navigatione del Re de Castiglia delle Isole e Paese Nuovamente Ritrovate." "Navigatio Christophori Columbi."

The above are the titles, in Italian and in Latin, of the earliest narra-

* Cura de los Palacios, cap. 7.

tives of the first and second voyages of Columbus that appeared in print. It was anonymous; and there are some curious particulars in regard to it. It was originally written in Italian by Montalbodo Fracanzo, or Francanzano, or by Francapano de Montabaldo (for writers differ in regard to the name), and was published in Vicenza, in 1507, in a collection of voyages, entitled Mondo Novo, e Paese Nuovamente Ritrovate. The collection was republished at Milan, in 1508, both in Italian, and in a Latin translation made by Archangelo Madrignano, under the title of Itinerarium Portugallensium; this title being given, because the work related chiefly to the voyages of Luigi Cadamosto, a Venetian in the service of Portugal.

The collection was afterwards augmented by Simon Grinæus with other travels, and printed in Latin at Basle, in 1533,* by Hervagio, entitled Novus Orbis Regionum, &c. The edition of Basle, 1555, and the Italian edition of Milan, in 1508, have been consulted in the course of this work.

Peter Martyr (Decad. 2, Cap. 7,) alludes to this publication, under the first Latin title of the book, Itinerarium Portugallensium, and accuses the author, whom by mistake he terms Cadamosto, of having stolen the materials of his book from the three first chapters of his first Decade of the Ocean, of which, he says, he granted copies in manuscript to several persons, and in particular to certain Venetian ambassadors. Martyr's Decades were not published until 1516, excepting the first three, which were published in 1511, at Seville.

This narrative of the voyages of Columbus is referred to by Gio. Battista Spotorno, in his historical Memoir of Columbus, as having been written by a companion of Columbus.

It is manifest, from a perusal of the narrative, that though the author may have helped himself freely from the manuscript of Martyr, he must have had other sources of information. His description of the person of Columbus as a man tall of stature and large of frame, of a ruddy complexion and oblong visage, is not copied from Martyr, nor from any other writer. No historian had, indeed, preceded him, except Sabellicus, in 1504; and the portrait agrees with that subsequently given of Columbus in the biography written by his son.

It is probable that this narrative, which appeared only a year after the death of Columbus, was a piece of literary job-work, written for the collection of voyages published at Vicenza; and that the materials were taken from oral communication, from the account given by Sabellicus, and particularly from the manuscript copy of Martyr's first decade.

No. XXXIII.—Antonio de Herrera.

Antonio Herrera de Tordesillas, one of the authors most frequently cited in this work, was born in 1565, of Roderick Tordesillas, and Agnes de Herrera, his wife. He received an excellent education, and entered into the employ of Vespasian Gonzago, brother to the Duke of Mantua, who was viceroy of Naples for Philip the Second of Spain. He was for some time secretary to this statesman, and intrusted with all his secrets. He was afterwards grand historiographer of the Indies to Philip II., who added to that title a large pension. He wrote various books, but the

* Bibliotheca Pinello.

most celebrated is a General History of the Indies, or American Colonies, in four volumes, containing eight decades. When he undertook this work, all the public archives were thrown open to him, and he had access to documents of all kinds. He has been charged with great precipitation in the production of his two first volumes, and with negligence in not making sufficient use of the indisputable sources of information thus placed within his reach. The fact was, that he met with historical tracts lying in manuscript, which embraced a great part of the first discoveries, and he contented himself with stating events as he found them therein recorded. It is certain that a great part of his work is little more than a transcript of the manuscript history of the Indies by Las Casas, sometimes reducing and improving the language when tumid; omitting the impassioned sallies of the zealous father, when the wrongs of the Indians were in question, and suppressing various circumstances degrading to the character of the Spanish discoverers. The author of the present work has, therefore, frequently put aside the history of Herrera, and consulted the source of his information, the manuscript history of Las Casas.

Muñoz observes, that "in general Herrera did little more than join together morsels and extracts, taken from various parts, in the way that a writer arranges chronologically the materials from which he intends to compose a history;" he adds, that "had not Herrera been a learned and judicious man, the precipitation with which he put together these materials would have led to innumerable errors." The remark is just; yet it is to be considered, that to select and arrange such materials judiciously, and treat them learnedly, was no trifling merit in the historian.

Herrera has been accused also of flattering his nation; exalting the deeds of his countrymen, and softening and concealing their excesses. There is nothing very serious in this accusation. To illustrate the glory of his nation is one of the noblest offices of the historian; and it is difficult to speak too highly of the extraordinary enterprises and splendid actions of the Spaniards in those days. In softening their excesses, he fell into an amiable and pardonable error, if it were indeed an error for a Spanish writer to endeavour to sink them in oblivion.

Vossius passes a high eulogium on Herrera. "No one," he says, "has described with greater industry and fidelity the magnitude and boundaries of provinces, the tracts of sea, positions of capes and islands, of ports and harbours, the windings of rivers, and dimensions of lakes; the situation and peculiarities of regions, with the appearance of the heavens, and the designation of places suitable for the establishment of cities." He has been called among the Spaniards the prince of the historians of America, and it is added that none have risen since his time capable of disputing with him that title. Much of this praise will appear exaggerated by such as examine the manuscript histories from which he transferred chapters and entire books, with very little alteration, to his volumes; and a great part of the eulogiums passed on him for his work on the Indies, will be found really due to Las Casas, who has too long been eclipsed by his copyist. Still Herrera has left voluminous proofs of industrious research, extensive information and great literary talent. His works bear the mark of candour, integrity, and a sincere desire to record the truth.

He died in 1625, at sixty years of age, after having obtained from Philip IV the promise of the first charge of secretary of state that should become vacant.

No. XXXIV.—Bishop Fonseca.

The singular malevolence displayed by Bishop Juan Rodriguez de Fonseca toward Columbus and his family, and which was one of the secret and principal causes of their misfortunes, has been frequently noticed in the course of this work. It originated, as has been shown, in some dispute between the admiral and Fonseca at Seville in 1493, on account of the delay in fitting out the armament for the second voyage, and in regard to the number of domestics to form the household of the admiral. Fonseca received a letter from the sovereigns, tacitly reproving him, and ordering him to show all possible attention to the wishes of Columbus, and to see that he was treated with honour and deference. Fonseca never forgot this affront, and, what with him was the same thing, never forgave it. His spirit appears to have been of that unhealthy kind which has none of the balm of forgiveness; and in which a wound once made, for ever rankles. The hostility thus produced continued with increasing virulence throughout the life of Columbus, and at his death was transferred to his son and successor. This persevering animosity has been illustrated in the course of this work by facts and observations, cited from authors, some of them contemporary with Fonseca, but who were apparently restrained by motives of prudence, from giving full vent to the indignation which they evidently felt. Even at the present day, a Spanish historian would be cautious of expreseing his feelings freely on the subject, lest they should prejudice his work in the eyes of the ecclesiastical censors of the press. In this way, Bishop Fonseca has in a great measure escaped the general odium his conduct merited.

This prelate had the chief superintendence of Spanish colonial affairs, both under Ferdinand and Isabella, and the Emperor Charles V. He was an active and intrepid, but selfish, overbearing, and perfidious man. His administration bears no marks of enlarged and liberal policy; but is full of traits of arrogance and meanness. He opposed the benevolent attempts of Las Casas to ameliorate the condition of the Indians, and to obtain the abolition of repartimientos; treating him with personal haughtiness and asperity.* The reason assigned is that Fonseca was enriching himself by those very abuses, retaining large numbers of the miserable Indians in slavery, to work on his possessions in the colonies.

To show that his character has not been judged with undue severity, it is expedient to point out his invidious and persecuting conduct towards Hernando Cortez. The bishop, while ready to foster rambling adventurers who came forward under his patronage, had never the head or the heart to appreciate the merits of illustrious commanders like Columbus and Cortez.

At a time when disputes arose between Cortez and Diego Velazquez, governor of Cuba, and the latter sought to arrest the conqueror of Mexico in the midst of his brilliant career, Fonseca, with entire disregard of the

* Herrera, decad. ii. lib. ii. cap. 3.

merits of the case, took a decided part in favour of Velazquez. Personal interest was at the bottom of this favour; for a marriage was negotiating between Velazquez and a sister of the bishop.* Complaints and misrepresentations had been sent to Spain by Velazquez of the conduct of Cortez, who was represented as a lawless and unprincipled adventurer, attempting to usurp absolute authority in New Spain. The true services of Cortez had already excited admiration at court, but such was the influence of Fonseca, that, as in the case of Columbus, he succeeded in prejudicing the mind of the sovereign against one of the most meritorious of his subjects. One Christoval de Tapia, a man destitute of talent or character, but whose greatest recommendation was his having been in the employ of the bishop,† was invested with powers similar to those once given to Bobadilla to the prejudice of Columbus. He was to inquire into the conduct of Cortez, and in case he thought fit, to seize him, sequestrate his property, and supersede him in command. Not content with the regular official letters furnished to Tapia, the bishop shortly after his departure, sent out Juan Bono de Quexo with blank letters signed by his own hand, and with others directed to various persons, charging them to admit Tapia for governor, and assuring them that the king considered the conduct of Cortez as disloyal. Nothing but the sagacity and firmness of Cortez prevented this measure from completely interrupting, if not defeating his enterprises; and he afterwards declared, that he had experienced more trouble and difficulty from the menaces and affronts of the ministers of the king than it cost him to conquer Mexico.‡

When the dispute between Cortez and Velazquez came to be decided upon in Spain, in 1522, the father of Cortez, and those who had come from New Spain as his procurators, obtained permission from Cardinal Adrian, at that time governor of the realm, to prosecute a public accusation of the bishop. A regular investigation took place before the council of the Indies of their allegations against its president. They charged him with having publicly declared Cortez a traitor and a rebel: with having intercepted and suppressed his letters addressed to the king, keeping his majesty in ignorance of their contents and of the important services he had performed, while he diligently forwarded all letters calculated to promote the interest of Velazquez: with having prevented the representations of Cortez from being heard in the council of the Indies, declaring that they should never be heard there while he lived: with having interdicted the forwarding of arms, merchandise, and reinforcements to New Spain: and with having issued orders to the office of the India House at Seville to arrest the procurators of Cortez and all persons arriving from him, and to seize and detain all gold that they should bring. These and various other charges of similar nature were dispassionately investigated. Enough were substantiated to convict Fonseca of the most partial, oppressive, and perfidious conduct, and the cardinal consequently forbade him to interfere in the cause between Cortez and Velazquez, and revoked all the orders which the bishop had issued in the matter to the India House of Seville. Indeed Salazar, a Spanish historian, says that Fonseca was totally divested of his authority

* Herrera, Hist. Ind., decad. iii. lib. iv. cap. 3. † Idem, decad. iii. lib. i. cap. 15.
‡ Idem, decad. iii. lib. iv. cap. 3.

as president of the council, and of all control of the affairs of New Spain, and adds that he was so mortified at the blow, that it brought on a fit of illness, which well nigh cost him his life.*

The suit between Cortez and Velazquez was referred to a special tribunal, composed of the grand chancellor and other persons of note, and was decided in 1522. The influence and intrigues of Fonseca being no longer of avail, a triumphant verdict was given in favour of Cortez, which was afterwards confirmed by the Emperor Charles V., and additional honours awarded him. This was another blow to the malignant Fonseca, who retained his enmity against Cortez until his last moment, rendered still more rancorous by mortification and disappointment.

A charge against Fonseca, of a still darker nature than any of the preceding, may be found lurking in the pages of Herrera, though so obscure as to have escaped the notice of succeeding historians. He points to the bishop as the instigator of a desperate and perfidious man who conspired against the life of Hernando Cortez. This was one Antonio de Villafaña, who fomented a conspiracy to assassinate Cortez, and elect Francisco Verdujo, brother-in-law of Velazquez, in his place. While the conspirators were waiting for an opportunity to poniard Cortez, one of them relenting, apprised him of his danger. Villafaña was arrested. He attempted to swallow a paper containing a list of the conspirators, but being seized by the throat, a part of it was forced from his mouth, containing fourteen names of persons of importance. Villafaña confessed his guilt, but tortures could not make him inculpate the persons whose names were on the list, who he declared were ignorant of the plot. He was hanged by order of Cortez.†

In the investigation of the disputes between Cortez and Velazquez, this execution of Villafaña was magnified into a cruel and wanton act of power; and in their eagerness to criminate Cortez the witnesses on the part of Alvarez declared that Villafaña had been instigated to what he had done by letters from Bishop Fonseca! (Que se movió a lo que hizo con cartas del obispo de Burgos.‡) It is not probable that Fonseca had recommended assassination, but it shows the character of his agents, and what must have been the malignant nature of his instructions, when these men thought that such an act would accomplish his wishes.

Fonseca died at Burgos, on the 4th of November, 1524, and was interred at Coca.

No. XXXV.—Of the Situation of the Terrestrial Paradise.

The speculations of Columbus on the situation of the terrestrial paradise, extravagant as they may appear, were such as have occupied many grave and learned men. A slight notice of their opinions on this curious subject may be acceptable to the general reader, and may take from the apparent wildness of the ideas expressed by Columbus.

The abode of our first parents was anciently the subject of anxious inquiry; and indeed mankind have always been prone to picture some place of perfect felicity, where the imagination, disappointed in the coarse realities of life, might revel in an Elysium of its own creation.

* Salazar, Conq. de Mexico, lib. i. cap. 2. † Herrera, decad. iii. lib. i. cap. 1.
‡ Idem, decad. iii. lib. iv. cap. 3.

It is an idea not confined to our religion, but is found in the rude creeds of the most savage nations, and it prevailed generally among the ancients. The speculations concerning the situation of the garden of Eden, resemble those of the Greeks concerning the garden of the Hesperides; that region of delight, which they for ever placed at the most remote verge of the known world; which their poets embellished with all the charms of fiction; after which they were continually longing, and which they could never find. At one time it was in the Grand Oasis of Arabia. The exhausted travellers, after traversing the parched and sultry desert, hailed this verdant spot with rapture; they refreshed themselves under its shady bowers, and beside its cooling streams, as the crew of a tempest-tost vessel repose on the shores of some green island in the deep; and from its being thus isolated in the midst of an ocean of sand, they gave it the name of the Island of the Blessed. As geographical knowledge increased, the situation of the Hesperian gardens was continually removed to a greater distance. It was transferred to the borders of the great Syrtis, in the neighbourhood of Mount Atlas. Here, after traversing the frightful deserts of Barca, the traveller found himself in a fair and fertile country, watered by rivulets and gushing fountains. The oranges and citrons transported hence to Greece, where they were as yet unknown, delighted the Athenians by their golden beauty and delicious flavour, and they thought that none but the garden of the Hesperides could produce such glorious fruits. In this way the happy region of the ancients was transported from place to place, still in the remote and obscure extremity of the world, until it was fabled to exist in the Canaries, thence called the Fortunate or the Hesperian islands. Here it remained, because discovery advanced no farther, and because these islands were so distant, and so little known, as to allow full latitude to the fictions of the poet.*

In like manner the situation of the terrestrial paradise, or garden of Eden, was long a subject of earnest inquiry and curious disputation, and occupied the laborious attention of the most learned theologians. Some placed it in Palestine or the Holy Land; others in Mesopotamia, in that rich and beautiful tract of country embraced by the wanderings of the Tigris and the Euphrates; others in Armenia, in a valley surrounded by precipitous and inaccessible mountains, and imagined that Enoch and Elijah were transported thither, out of the sight of mortals, to live in a state of terrestrial bliss until the second coming of our Saviour. There were others who gave it situations widely remote, such as in the Trapoban of the ancients, at present known as the island of Ceylon; or in the island of Sumatra; or in the Fortunate or Canary islands; or in one of the islands of Sunda; or in some favoured spot under the equinoctial line.

Great difficulty was encountered by these speculators to reconcile the allotted place with the description given in Genesis of the garden of Eden; particularly of the great fountain which watered it, and which afterwards divided itself into four rivers, the Pison or Phison, the Gihon, the Euphrates, and the Hiddekel. Those who were in favour of the Holy Land, supposed that the Jordan was the great river which afterwards divided itself into the Phison, Gihon, Tigris, and Euphrates,

* Gosselin, Recherches sur la Géog. des Anciens, tom. i.

but that the sands have choked up the ancient beds by which these streams were supplied; that originally the Phison traversed Arabia Deserta and Arabia Felix, whence it pursued its course to the Gulf of Persia; that the Gihon bathed northern or stony Arabia and fell into the Arabian Gulf or the Red Sea; that the Euphrates and the Tigris passed by Eden to Assyria and Chaldea, whence they discharged themselves into the Persian Gulf.

By most of the early commentators, the river Gihon is supposed to be the Nile. The source of this river was unknown, but was evidently far distant from the spots whence the Tigris and the Euphrates arose. This difficulty, however, was ingeniously overcome, by giving it a subterranean course of some hundreds of leagues from the common fountain, until it issued forth to daylight in Abyssinia.* In like manner, subterranean courses were given to the Tigris and the Euphrates, passing under the Red Sea, until they sprang forth in Armenia, as if just issuing from one common source. So also those who placed the terrestrial paradise in islands, supposed that the rivers which issued from it, and formed those heretofore named, either traversed the surface of the sea, as fresh water, by its greater lightness, may float above the salt; or that they flowed through deep veins and channels of the earth, as the fountain of Arethusa was said to sink into the ground in Greece, and rise in the island of Sicily, while the river Alpheus pursuing it, but with less perseverance, rose somewhat short of it in the sea.

Some contended that the deluge had destroyed the garden of Eden, and altered the whole face of the earth; so that the rivers had changed their beds, and had taken different directions from those mentioned in Genesis; others, however, amongst whom was St. Augustine, in his Commentary upon the Book of Genesis, maintained that the terrestrial paradise still existed, with its original beauty and delights, but that it was inaccessible to mortals, being on the summit of a mountain of stupendous height, reaching into the third region of the air, and approaching the moon; being thus protected by its elevation from the ravages of the deluge.

By some this mountain was placed under the equinoctial line; or under that band of the heavens metaphorically called by the ancients "the table of the sun,"† comprising the space between the tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, beyond which the sun never passed in his annual course. Here would reign a uniformity of nights and days and seasons, and the elevation of the mountain would raise it above the heats and storms of the lower regions. Others transported the garden beyond the equinoctial line and placed it in the southern hemisphere; supposing that the torrid zone might be the flaming sword appointed to defend its entrance against mortals. They had a fanciful train of argument to support their theory. They observed that the terrestrial paradise must be in the noblest and happiest part of the globe; that part must be under the noblest part of the heavens; as the merits of a place do not so much depend upon the virtues of the earth, as upon the happy influences of the stars and the favourable and benign aspect of the heavens. Now, according to philosophers, the world was divided into

* Feyjoo, Theatro Critico, lib. vii, § 2.
† Herodot. lib. iii. Virg. Georg. i. Pomp. Mela lib. iii. cap. 10.

two hemispheres. The southern they considered the head, and the northern the feet, or under part; the right hand the east, whence commenced the movement of the primum mobile, and the left the west, towards which it moved. This supposed, they observed that as it was manifest that the head of all things, natural and artificial, is always the best and noblest part, governing the other parts of the body, so the south, being the head of the earth, ought to be superior and nobler than either east, or west, or north; and in accordance with this, they cited the opinion of various philosophers among the ancients, and more especially that of Ptolemy, that the stars of the southern hemisphere were larger, more resplendent, more perfect, and of course of greater virtue and efficacy than those of the northern: an error universally prevalent until disproved by modern discovery. Hence they concluded that in this southern hemisphere, in this head of the earth, under this purer and brighter sky, and these more potent and benignant stars, was placed the terrestrial paradise.

Various ideas were entertained as to the magnitude of this blissful region. As Adam and all his progeny were to have lived there, had he not sinned, and as there would have been no such thing as death to thin the number of mankind, it was inferred that the terrestrial paradise must be of great extent to contain them. Some gave it a size equal to Europe or Africa; others gave it the whole southern hemisphere. St. Augustine supposed that as mankind multiplied, numbers would be translated without death to heaven; the parents, perhaps, when their children arrived at mature age; or portions of the human race at the end of certain periods, and when the population of the terrestrial paradise had attained a certain amount.* Others supposed that mankind, remaining in a state of primitive innocence, would not have required so much space as at present. Having no need of rearing animals for subsistence, no land would have been required for pasturage; and the earth not being cursed with sterility, there would have been no need of extensive tracts of country to permit of fallow land and the alternation of crops required in husbandry. The spontaneous and never-failing fruits of the garden would have been abundant for the simple wants of man. Still, that the human race might not be crowded, but might have ample space for recreation and enjoyment, and the charms of variety and change, some allowed at least a hundred leagues of circumference to the garden.

St. Basilius in his eloquent discourse on paradise† expatiates with rapture on the joys of this sacred abode, elevated to the third region of the air, and under the happiest skies. There a pure and never-failing pleasure is furnished to every sense. The eye delights in the admirable clearness of the atmosphere, in the verdure and beauty of the trees, and the never-withering bloom of the flowers. The ear is regaled with the singing of the birds, the smell with the aromatic odours of the land. In like manner the other senses have each their peculiar enjoyments. There the vicissitudes of the seasons are unknown, and the climate

* St. August., lib. ix. cap. 6. Sup. Genesis.

† St. Basilius was called the Great. His works were read and admired by all the world, even by Pagans. They are written in an elevated and majestic style, with great splendour of idea, and vast erudition.

unites the fruitfulness of the summer, the joyful abundance of autumn, and the sweet freshness and quietude of spring. There the earth is always green, the flowers ever blooming, the waters limpid and delicate, not rushing in rude and turbid torrents, but swelling up in crystal fountains, and winding in peaceful and silver streams. There no harsh and boisterous winds are permitted to shake and disturb the air, and ravage the beauty of the groves; there prevails no melancholy nor darksome weather, no drowning rain, nor pelting hail; no forked lightning, nor rending and resounding thunder; no wintry pinching cold, nor withering and panting summer heat; nor any thing else that can give pain, or sorrow, or annoyance, but all is bland, and gentle, and serene; a perpetual youth and joy reigns throughout all nature, and nothing decays and dies.

The same idea is given by St. Ambrosius, in his book on paradise,* an author likewise consulted and cited by Columbus. He wrote in the fourth century, and his touching eloquence, and graceful yet vigorous style, insured great popularity to his writings. Many of these opinions are cited by Glanville, usually called Bartholomeus Anglicus, in his work De Proprietatibus Rerum; a work with which Columbus was evil dently acquainted. It was a species of encyclopedia of the general knowledge current at the time, and was likely to recommend itself to a curious and inquiring voyager. This author cites an assertion as made by St. Basilius and St. Ambrosius, that the water of the fountain which proceeds from the garden of Eden falls into a great lake with such a tremendous noise that the inhabitants of the neighbourhood are born deaf; and that from this lake proceed the four chief rivers mentioned in Genesis.†

This passage, however, is not to be found in the Hexameron of either Basilius or Ambrosius, from which it is quoted; neither is it in the oration on Paradise by the former, nor in the letter on the same subject written by Ambrosius to Ambrosius Sabinus. It must be a mis-quotation by Glanville. Columbus, however, appears to have been struck with it, and Las Casas is of opinion that he derived thence his idea that the vast body of fresh water which filled the gulph of La Ballena or Paria, flowed from the fountain of Paradise, though from a remote distance; and that in this gulph, which he supposed in the extreme part of Asia, originated the Nile, the Tigris, the Euphrates, and the Ganges which might be conducted under the land and sea by subterranean channels, to the places where they spring forth on the earth and assume their proper names.

I forbear to enter into various other of the voluminous speculations which have been formed relative to the terrestrial paradise, and perhaps it may be thought that I have already said too much on so fanciful a subject; but to illustrate clearly the character of Columbus, it is neces-

* St. Ambros. Opera. Edit. Coignard. Parisiis. MDCXC.

† Paradisus autem in Oriente, in altissimo monte, de cujus cacumine cadentes aquæ, maximum faciunt lacum, que in suo casu tantum faciunt strepitum et fragorem, quod omnes incolæ, juxta prædictum lacum, nascuntur surdi, ex immoderato sonitu seu fragore sensum auditus in parvulis corrumpente. *Ut dicit Basilius in Hexameron, similiter et Ambros.* Ex illo lacu, velut ex uno fonte, procedunt illa flumina quatuor, Phison, qui et Ganges, Gyon, qui et Nilus dicitur, et Tigris ac Euphrates. Bart. Angl. de Proprietatibus rerum, lib. 15, cap. 112. Francofurti, 1540.

sary to elucidate those veins of thought passing through his mind while considering the singular phenomena of the unknown regions he was exploring, and which are often but slightly and vaguely developed in his journals and letters. These speculations, likewise, like those concerning fancied islands in the ocean, carry us back to the time, and make us feel the mystery and conjectural charm which reigned over the greatest part of the world, and have since been completely dispelled by modern discovery. Enough has been cited to show, that, in his observations concerning the terrestrial paradise, Columbus was not indulging in any fanciful and presumptuous chimeras, the offspring of a heated and disordered brain. However visionary his conjectures may seem, they were all grounded on written opinions held little less than oracular in his day; and they will be found on examination to be far exceeded by the speculations and theories of sages held illustrious for their wisdom and erudition in the school and cloister.

No. XXXVI.—Will of Columbus.

In the name of the Most Holy Trinity, who inspired me with the idea, and afterwards made it perfectly clear to me, that I could navigate and go to the Indies from Spain, by traversing the ocean westwardly; which I communicated to the king, Don Ferdinand, and to the queen, Doña Isabella, our sovereigns; and they were pleased to furnish me the necessary equipment of men and ships, and to make me their admiral over the said ocean, in all parts lying to the west of an imaginary line, drawn from pole to pole, a hundred leagues west of the Cape de Verd and Azore islands; also appointing me their viceroy and governor over all continents and islands that I might discover beyond the said line westwardly; with the right of being succeeded in the said offices by my eldest son and his heirs for ever; and a grant of the tenth part of all things found in the said jurisdiction; and of all rents and revenues arising from it; and the eighth of all the lands and everything else, together with the salary corresponding to my rank of admiral, viceroy, and governor, and all other emoluments accruing thereto, as is more fully expressed in the title and agreement sanctioned by their highnesses.

And it pleased the Lord Almighty, that in the year one thousand four hundred and ninety-two, I should discover the continent of the Indies and many islands, among them Hispaniola, which the Indians call Ayte, and the Monicongos, Cipango. I then returned to Castile to their highnesses, who approved of my undertaking a second enterprise for farther discoveries and settlements; and the Lord gave me victory over the island of Hispaniola, which extends six hundred leagues, and I conquered it and made it tributary; and I discovered many islands, inhabited by cannibals, and seven hundred to the west of Hispaniola, among which is Jamaica, which we call Santiago; and three hundred and thirty-three leagues of continent from south to west, besides a hundred and seven to the north, which I discovered in my first voyage, together with many islands, as may more clearly be seen by my letters, memorials, and maritime charts. And as we hope in God that before long a good and great revenue will be derived from the above islands and continent, of which, for the reasons aforesaid, belong to me the tenth and the eighth, with the salaries and emoluments specified above; and considering that we are mortal, and

that it is proper for every one to settle his affairs, and to leave declared to his heirs and successors the property he possesses or may have a right to: Wherefore I have concluded to create an entailed estate (mayorazgo) out of the said eighth of the lands, places, and revenues, in the manner which I now proceed to state.

In the first place, I am to be succeeded by Don Diego, my son, who in case of death without children is to be succeeded by my other son Ferdinand; and should God dispose of him also without leaving children, and without my having any other son, then my brother Don Bartholomew is to succeed; and after him his eldest son; and if God should dispose of him without heirs, he shall be succeeded by his sons from one to another for ever; or, in the failure of a son, to be succeeded by Don Ferdinand, after the same manner, from son to son successively; or in their place by my brothers Bartholomew and Diego. And should it please the Lord that the estate, after having continued for some time in the line of any of the above successors, should stand in need of an immediate and lawful male heir, the succession shall then devolve to the nearest relation, being a man of legitimate birth, and bearing the name of Columbus derived from his father and his ancestors. This entailed estate shall in nowise be inherited by a woman, except in case that no male is to be found, either in this or any other quarter of the world, of my real lineage, whose name, as well as that of his ancestors, shall have always been Columbus. In such an event, (which may God forefend,) then the female of legitimate birth, most nearly related to the preceding possessor of the estate, shall succeed to it: and this is to be under the conditions herein stipulated at foot, which must be understood to extend as well to Don Diego, my son, as to the aforesaid, and their heirs, every one of them, to be fulfilled by them; and failing to do so they are to be deprived of the succession, for not having complied with what shall herein be expressed; and the estate to pass to the person most nearly related to the one who held the right: and the person thus succeeding shall in like manner forfeit the estate, should he also fail to comply with said conditions; and another person, the nearest of my lineage, shall succeed, provided he abide by them, so that they may be observed for ever in the form prescribed. This forfeiture is not to be incurred for trifling matters, originating in lawsuits, but in important cases, when the glory of God, or my own, or that of my family, may be concerned, which supposes a perfect fulfilment of all the things hereby ordained; all which I recommend to the courts of justice. And I supplicate his Holiness, who now is, and those that may succeed in the holy church, that if it should happen that this my will and testament has need of his holy order and command for its fulfilment, that such order be issued in virtue of obedience, and under penalty of excommunication, and that it shall not be in anywise disfigured. And I also pray the king and queen, our sovereigns, and their eldest-born, Prince Don Juan, our lord, and their successors, for the sake of the services I have done them, and because it is just, that it may please them not to permit this my will and constitution of my entailed estate to be any way altered, but to leave it in the form and manner which I have ordained, for ever, for the greater glory of the Almighty, and that it may be the root and basis of my lineage, and a memento of the services I have rendered their highnesses; that, being born in Genoa, I came over to serve them in Castile,

and discovered to the west of Terra Firma, the Indies and islands before mentioned. I accordingly pray their highnesses to order that this my privilege and testament be held valid, and be executed summarily and without any opposition or demur, according to the letter. I also pray the grandees of the realm and the lords of the council, and all others having administration of justice, to be pleased not to suffer this my will and testament to be of no avail, but to cause it to be fulfilled as by me ordained; it being just that a noble, who has served the king and queen, and the kingdom, should be respected in the disposition of his estate by will, testament, institution of entail or inheritance, and that the same be not infringed either in whole or in part.

In the first place, my son Don Diego, and all my successors and descendants, as well as my brothers Bartholomew and Diego, shall bear my arms, such as I shall leave them after my days, without inserting anything else in them; and they shall be their seal to seal withal. Don Diego my son, or any other who may inherit this estate, on coming into possession of the inheritance, shall sign with the signature which I now make use of, which is an X with an S over it, and an M with a Roman A over it, and over that an S, and then a Greek Y, with an S over it, with its lines and points as is my custom, as may be seen by my signatures, of which there are many, and it will be seen by the present one.

He shall only write "the Admiral," whatever other titles the king may have conferred on him. This is to be understood as respects his signature, but not the enumeration of his titles, which he can make at full length if agreeable, only the signature is to be "the Admiral."

The said Don Diego, or any other inheritor of this estate, shall possess my offices of admiral of the ocean, which is to the west of an imaginary line, which his highness ordered to be drawn, running from pole to pole a hundred leagues beyond the Azores, and as many more beyond the Cape de Verd islands, over all which I was made, by their order, their admiral of the sea, with all the pre-eminences held by Don Henrique in the admiralty of Castile, and they made me their governor and viceroy perpetually and for ever, over all the islands and main-land discovered, or to be discovered, for myself and heirs, as is more fully shown by my treaty and privilege as above-mentioned.

Item: The said Don Diego, or any other inheritor of this estate, shall distribute the revenue which it may please our Lord to grant him, in the following manner, under the above penalty.

First—Of the whole income of this estate, now and at all times, and of whatever may be had or collected from it, he shall give the fourth part annually to my brother Don Bartholomew Columbus, Adelantado of the Indies; and this is to continue till he shall have acquired an income of a million of maravadises, for his support, and for the services he has rendered and will continue to render to this entailed estate; which million he is to receive, as stated, every year, if the said fourth amount to so much, and that he have nothing else; but if he possess a part or the whole of that amount in rents, that thenceforth he shall not enjoy the said million, nor any part of it, except that he shall have in the said fourth part unto the said quantity of a million, if it should amount to so much; and as much as he shall have of revenue beside this fourth part, whatever sum of maravadises of known rent from property or perpetual

offices, the said quantity of rent or revenue from property or offices shall be discounted; and from the said million shall be reserved whatever marriage portion he may receive with any female he may espouse; so that whatever he may receive in marriage with his wife, no deduction shall be made on that account from said million, but only for whatever he may acquire, or may have, over and above his wife's dowry, and when it shall please God that he or his heirs and descendants shall derive from their property and offices a revenue of a million arising from rents, neither he nor his heirs shall enjoy any longer anything from the said fourth part of the entailed estate, which shall remain with Don Diego, or whoever may inherit it.

Item: From the revenues of the said estate, or from any other fourth part of it, (should its amount be adequate to it,) shall be paid every year to my son Ferdinand two millions, till such time as his revenue shall amount to two millions, in the same form and manner as in the case of Bartholomew, who, as well as his heirs, are to have the million or the part that may be wanting.

Item: The said Don Diego or Don Bartholomew shall make, out of the said estate, for my brother Diego, such provision as may enable him to live decently, as he is my brother, to whom I assign no particular sum, as he has attached himself to the church, and that will be given him which is right: and this is to be given him in a mass, and before anything shall have been received by Ferdinand my son, or Bartholomew my brother, or their heirs, and also according to the amount of the income of the estate. And in case of discord, the case is to be referred to two of our relations, or other men of honour; and should they disagree among themselves, they will choose a third person as arbitrator, being virtuous, and not distrusted by either party.

Item: All this revenue which I bequeath to Bartholomew, to Ferdinand, and to Diego, shall be delivered to and received by them as prescribed under the obligation of being faithful and loyal to Diego my son, or his heirs, they as well as their children; and should it appear that they, or any of them, had proceeded against him in anything touching his honour, or the prosperity of the family, or of the estate, either in word or deed, whereby might come a scandal and debasement to my family, and a detriment to my estate; in that case, nothing farther shall be given to them or him, from that time forward, inasmuch as they are always to be faithful to Diego and to his successors.

Item: As it was my intention, when I first instituted this entailed estate, to dispose, or that my son Diego should dispose for me, of the tenth part of the income in favour of necessitous persons, as a tithe, and in commemoration of the Almighty and Eternal God; and persisting still in this opinion, and hoping that his High Majesty will assist me, and those who may inherit it, in this or the New World, I have resolved that the said tithe shall be paid in the manner following:

First—It is to be understood that the fourth part of the revenue of the estate which I have ordained and directed to be given to Don Bartholomew, till he have an income of one million, includes the tenth of the whole revenue of the estate; and that as in proportion as the income of my brother Don Bartholomew shall increase, as it has to be discounted from the revenue of the fourth part of the entailed estate, that the said

revenue shall be calculated, to know how much the tenth part amounts to; and the part which exceeds what is necessary to make up the million for Don Bartholomew shall be received by such of my family as may most stand in need of it, discounting it from said tenth, if their income do not amount to fifty thousand maravadises; and should any of these come to have an income to this amount, such a part shall be awarded them as two persons, chosen for the purpose, may determine along with Don Diego, or his heirs. Thus, it is to be understood that the million which I leave to Don Bartholomew comprehends the tenth of the whole revenue of the estate; which revenue is to be distributed among my nearest and most needy relations in the manner I have directed; and when Don Bartholomew have an income of one million, and that nothing more shall be due to him on account of said fourth part, then, Don Diego my son, or the person who may be in possession of the estate, along with the two other persons which I shall herein point out, shall inspect the accounts, and so direct, that the tenth of the revenue shall still continue to be paid to the most necessitous members of my family that may be found in this or any other quarter of the world, who shall be diligently sought out: and they are to be paid out of the fourth part from which Don Bartholomew is to derive his million; which sums are to be taken into account, and deducted from the said tenth, which, should it amount to more, the overplus, as it arises from the fourth part, shall be given to the most necessitous persons as aforesaid; and should it not be sufficient, that Don Bartholomew shall have it until his own estate goes on increasing, leaving the said million in part or in the whole.

Item: The said Don Diego my son, or whoever may be the inheritor, shall appoint two persons of conscience and authority, and most nearly related to the family, who are to examine the revenue and its amount carefully, and to cause the said tenth to be paid out of the fourth from which Don Bartholomew is to receive his million, to the most necessitated members of my family that may be found here or elsewhere, whom they shall look for diligently upon their consciences; and as it might happen that said Don Diego, or others after him, for reasons which may concern their own welfare, or the credit and support of the estate, may be unwilling to make known the full amount of the income; nevertheless I charge him, on his conscience, to pay the sum aforesaid; and to charge them, on their souls and consciences, not to denounce or make it known, except with the consent of Don Diego, or the person that may succeed him; but let the above tithe be paid in the manner I have directed.

Item: In order to avoid all disputes in the choice of the two nearest relations who are to act with Don Diego or his heirs, I hereby elect Don Bartholomew my brother for one, and Don Fernando my son for the other; and when these two shall enter upon the business, they shall choose two other persons among the most trusty, and most nearly related, and these again shall elect two others when it shall be question of commencing the examination; and thus it shall be managed with diligence from one to the other, as well in this as in the other of government, for the service and glory of God, and the benefit of the said entailed estate.

Item: I also enjoin Diego, or any one that may inherit the estate, to have and maintain in the city of Genoa, one person of our lineage to reside there with his wife, and appoint him a sufficient revenue to enable

him to live decently, as a person closely connected with the family, of which he is to be the root and basis in that city; from which great good may accrue to him, inasmuch as I was born there, and came from thence.

Item: The said Don Diego, or whoever shall inherit the estate, must remit in bills, or in any other way, all such sums as he may be able to save out of the revenue of the estate, and direct purchases to be made in his name, or that of his heirs, in a stock in the Bank of St. George, which gives an interest of six per cent. and in secure money; and this shall be devoted to the purpose I am about to explain.

Item: As it becomes every man of property to serve God, either personally or by means of his wealth, and as all moneys deposited with St. George are quite safe, and Genoa is a noble city, and powerful by sea, and as at the time that I undertook to set out upon the discovery of the Indies, it was with the intention of supplicating the king and queen, our lords, that whatever moneys should be derived from the said Indies, should be invested in the conquest of Jerusalem; and as I did so supplicate them, if they do this, it will be well; if not, at all events, the said Diego, or such person as may succeed him in this trust, to collect together all the money he can, and accompany the king our lord, should he go to the conquest of Jerusalem, or else go there himself with all the force he can command; and in pursuing this intention, it will please the Lord to assist towards the accomplishment of the plan; and should he not be able to effect the conquest of the whole, no doubt he will achieve it in part. Let him therefore collect and make a fund of all his wealth in St. George of Genoa, and let it multiply there till such time as it may appear to him that something of consequence may be effected as respects the project on Jerusalem; for I believe that when their highnesses shall see that this is contemplated, they will wish to realise it themselves, or will afford him, as their servant and vassal, the means of doing it for them.

Item: I charge my son Diego and my descendants, especially whoever may inherit this estate, which consists, as aforesaid, of the tenth of whatsoever may be had or found in the Indies, and the eighth part of the lands and rents, all which, together with my rights and emoluments as admiral, viceroy, and governor, amount to more than twenty-five per cent.; I say, that I require of him to employ all this revenue, as well as his person and all the means in his power, in well and faithfully serving and supporting their highnesses, or their successors, even to the loss of life and property; since it was their highnesses, next to God, who first gave me the means of getting and achieving this property, although it is true, I came over to these realms to invite them to the enterprise, and that a long time elapsed before any provision was made for carrying it into execution; which, however, is not surprising, as this was an undertaking of which all the world was ignorant, and no one had any faith in it; wherefore I am by so much the more indebted to them, as well as because they have since also much favoured and promoted me.

Item: I also require of Diego, or whomsoever may be in possession of the estate, that in the case of any schism taking place in the church of God, or that any person of whatever class or condition should attempt to despoil it of its property and honours, they hasten to offer at the feet of his holiness, that is, if they are not heretics (which God forbid!)

their persons, power, and wealth, for the purpose of suppressing such schism, and preventing any spoliation of the honour and property of he church.

Item: I command the said Diego, or whoever may possess the said estate, to labour and strive for the honour, welfare, and aggrandizement of the city of Genoa, and to make use of all his power and means in defending and enhancing the good and credit of that republic, in all things not contrary to the service of the church of God, or the high dignity of our king and queen, our lords, and their successors.

Item: The said Diego, or whoever may possess or succeed to the estate, out of the fourth part of the whole revenue, from which, as aforesaid, is to be taken the tenth, when Don Bartholomew or his heirs shall have saved the two millions, or part of them, and when the time shall come of making a distribution among our relations, shall apply and invest the said tenth in providing marriages for such daughters of our lineage as may require it, and in doing all the good in their power.

Item: When a suitable time shall arrive, he shall order a church to be built in the island of Hispaniola, and in the most convenient spot, to be called Santa Maria de la Conception; to which is to be annexed an hospital, upon the best possible plan, like those of Italy and Castile, and a chapel erected to say mass in for the good of my soul, and those of my ancestors and successors with great devotion, since no doubt it will please the Lord to give us a sufficient revenue for this and the afore-mentioned purposes.

Item: I also order Diego my son, or whomsoever may inherit after him, to spare no pains in having and maintaining in the island of Hispaniola, four good professors of theology, to the end and aim of their studying and labouring to convert to our holy faith the inhabitants of the Indies; and in proportion as, by God's will, the revenue of the estate shall increase, in the same degree shall the numbers of teachers and devout increase, who are to strive to make Christians of the natives; in attaining which no expense should be thought too great. And in commemoration of all that I hereby ordain, and of the foregoing, a monument of marble shall be erected in the said church of La Conception, in the most conspicuous place, to serve as a record of what I here enjoin on the said Diego, as well as to other persons who may look upon it; which marble shall contain an inscription to the same effect.

Item: I also require of Diego my son, and whomsoever may succeed him in the estate, that every time, and as often as he confesses, he first show this obligation, or a copy of it, to the confessor, praying him to read it through, that he may be enabled to inquire respecting its fulfilment; from which will redound great good and happiness to his soul.

S.
S. A. S.
X. M. Y.
EL ALMIRANTE.

No. XXXVII.—Signature of Columbus.

As every thing respecting Columbus is full of interest, his signature has been a matter of some discussion. It partook of the pedantic and bigoted character of the age, and perhaps of the peculiar character of the

man, who, considering himself mysteriously elected and set apart from among men for certain great purposes, adopted a correspondent formality and solemnity in all his concerns. His signature was as follows:

S.
S. A. S.
X. M. Y.
XPO FERENS.

The first half of the signature, XPO, (for CHRISTO,) is in Greek letters; the second, FERENS, is in Latin. Such was the usage of those days; and even at present both Greek and Roman letters are used in signatures and inscriptions in Spain.

The ciphers or initials above the signature are supposed to represent a pious ejaculation. To read them one must begin with the lower letters, and connect them with those above. Signor Gio. Batista Spotorno conjectures them to mean either Xristus (Christus) Sancta Maria Yosephus, or, Salve me, Xristus, Maria, Yosephus. The North American Review, for April, 1827, suggests the substitution of Jesus for Josephus, but the suggestion of Spotorno is most probably correct, as a common Spanish ejaculation is "Jesus Maria y José."

It was an ancient usage in Spain, and it has not entirely gone by, to accompany the signature with some words of religious purport. One object of this practice was to show the writer to be a Christian. This was of some importance in a country in which Jews and Mahometans were proscribed and persecuted.

Don Fernando, son to Columbus, says that his father, when he took his pen in hand, usually commenced by writing "Jesus cum Maria sit nobis in viâ;" and the book which the admiral prepared and sent to the sovereigns, containing the prophecies which he considered as referring to his discoveries, and to the rescue of the holy sepulchre, begins with the same words. This practice is akin to that of placing the initials of pious words above his signature, and gives great probability to the mode in which they have been deciphered.

No. XXXVIII.—A Visit to Palos.

[The following narrative was actually commenced, by the author of this work, as a letter to a friend, but unexpectedly swelled to its present size. He has been induced to insert it here from the idea, that many will feel the same curiosity to know something of the present state of Palos and its inhabitants that led him to make the journey.]

Seville, 1828.

Since I last wrote to you, I have made what I may term an American pilgrimage, to visit the little port of Palos in Andalusia, where Columbus fitted out his ships, and whence he sailed for the discovery of the New World. Need I tell you how deeply interesting and gratifying it has been to me? I had long meditated this excursion, as a kind of pious, and, if I may so say, filial duty of an American, and my intention was quickened when I learnt that many of the edifices, mentioned in the History of Columbus, still remained in nearly the same state in which they existed at the time of his sojourn at Palos, and that the descendants of the intrepid Pinzons, who aided him with ships and money, and sailed with him in the great voyage of discovery, still flourished in the neighbourhood.

The very evening before my departure from Seville on the excursion, I heard that there was a young gentleman of the Pinzon family studying law in the city. I got introduced to him, and found him of most prepossessing appearance and manners. He gave me a letter of introduction to his father, Don Juan Fernandez Pinzon, resident of Moguer, and the present head of the family.

As it was in the middle of August, and the weather intensely hot, I hired a calesa for the journey. This is a two-wheeled carriage, resembling a cabriolet, but of the most primitive and rude construction; the harness is profusely ornamented with brass, and the horse's head decorated with tufts, and tassels, and dangling bobs of scarlet and yellow worsted. I had for calasero, a tall, long-legged Andalusian, in short jacket, little round-crowned hat, breeches decorated with buttons from the hip to the knees, and a pair of russet leather bottinas or spatterdashes. He was an active fellow, though uncommonly taciturn for an Andalusian, and strode along beside his horse, rousing him occasionally to greater speed by a loud malediction or a hearty thwack of his cudgel.

In this style, I set off late in the day to avoid the noontide heat, and, after ascending the lofty range of hills which borders the great valley of the Guadalquiver, and having a rough ride among their heights, I descended about twilight into one of those vast, silent, melancholy plains, frequent in Spain, where I beheld no other signs of life than a roaming flock of bustards, and a distant herd of cattle, guarded by a solitary herdsman, who, with a long pike planted in the earth, stood motionless in the midst of the dreary landscape, resembling an Arab of the desert. The night had somewhat advanced when we stopped to repose for a few hours at a solitary venta or inn, if it might so be called, being nothing more than a vast, low-roofed stable, divided into several compartments for the reception of the troops of mules and arrieros (or carriers) who carry on the internal trade of Spain. Accommodation for the traveller there was none—not even for a traveller so easily accommodated as myself. The landlord had no food to give me, and as to a bed, he had none but a horse-cloth, on which his only child, a boy of eight years old, lay naked on the earthen floor. Indeed, the heat of the weather, and the fumes from the stables made the interior of the hovel insupportable; so I was fain to bivouac, on my cloak, on the pavement, at the door of the venta, where, on waking, after two or three hours of sound sleep, I found a contrabandista (or smuggler) snoring beside me, with his blunderbuss on his arm.

I resumed my journey before break of day, and had made several leagues by ten o'clock, when we stopped to breakfast, and to pass the sultry hours of mid-day in a large village; whence we departed about four o'clock, and after passing through the same kind of solitary country, arrived just after sunset at Moguer. This little city (for at present it is a city) is situated about a league from Palos, of which place it has gradually absorbed all the respectable inhabitants, and, among the number, the whole family of the Pinzons.

So remote is this little place from the stir and bustle of travel, and so destitute of the show and vain-glory of this world, that my calsea, as it rattled and jingled along the narrow and ill-paved streets, caused a great sensation; the children shouted and scampered along by its side, admiring

its splendid trappings of brass and worsted, and gazing with reverence at the important stranger who came in so gorgeous an equipage.

I drove up to the principal posada, the landlord of which was at the door. He was one of the very civilest men in the world, and disposed to do every thing in his power to make me comfortable; there was only one difficulty, he had neither bed nor bed-room in his house. In fact it was a mere venta for muleteers, who are accustomed to sleep on the ground, with their mule-cloths for beds and pack-saddles for pillows. It was a hard case, but there was no better posada in the place. Few people travel for pleasure or curiosity in these out-of-the-way parts of Spain, and those of any note are generally received into private houses. I had travelled sufficiently in Spain to find out that a bed, after all, is not an article of indispensable necessity, and was about to bespeak some quiet corner where I might spread my cloak, when fortunately the landlord's wife came forth. She could not have a more obliging disposition than her husband, but then—God bless the women!—they always know how to carry their good wishes into effect. In a little while, a small room, about ten feet square, which had formed a thoroughfare between the stables and a kind of shop or bar-room, was cleared of a variety of lumber, and I was assured that a bed should be put up there for me. From the consultations I saw my hostess holding with some of her neighbour gossips, I fancied the bed was to be a kind of piecemeal contribution among them for the credit of the house.

As soon as I could change my dress, I commenced the historical researches which were the object of my journey, and inquired for the abode of Don Juan Fernandez Pinzon. My obliging landlord himself volunteered to conduct me thither, and I set off full of animation at the thoughts of meeting with the lineal representative of one of the coadjutors of Columbus.

A short walk brought us to the house, which was most respectable in its appearance, indicating easy, if not affluent, circumstances. The door, as is customary in Spanish villages during summer, stood wide open, We entered with the usual salutation or rather summons, "Ave Maria!" A trim Andalusian handmaid answered to the call, and, on our inquiring for the master of the house, led the way across a little patio or court, in the centre of the edifice, cooled by a fountain surrounded by shrubs and flowers, to a back court or terrace, likewise set out with flowers, where Don Juan Fernandez was seated with his family, enjoying the serene evening in the open air.

I was much pleased with his appearance. He was a venerable old gentleman, tall, and somewhat thin, with fair complexion and gray hair. He received me with great urbanity, and on reading the letter from his son, appeared struck with surprise to find I had come quite to Moguer, merely to visit the scene of the embarkation of Columbus; and still more so on my telling him, that one of my leading objects of curiosity was his own family connection; for it would seem that the worthy cavalier had troubled his head but little about the enterprisee of his ancestors.

I now took my seat in the domestic circle, and soon felt myself quite at home, for there is generally a frankness in the hospitality of Spaniards that soon puts a stranger at his ease beneath their roof. The wife of Don

Juan Fernandez was extremely amiable and affable, possessing much of that natural aptness for which the Spanish women are remarkable. In the course of conversation with them I learnt, that Don Juan Fernandez, who is seventy-two years of age, is the eldest of five brothers, all of whom are married, have numerous offsprings, and live in Moguer and its vicinity, in nearly the same condition and rank of life as at the time of the discovery. This agreed with what I had previously heard, respecting the families of the discoverers. Of Columbus no lineal and direct descendant exists; his was an exotic stock which never took deep and lasting root in the country; but the race of the Pinzons continues to thrive and multiply in its native soil.

While I was yet conversing, a gentleman entered, who was introduced to me as Don Luis Fernandez Pinzon, the youngest of the brothers. He appeared between fifty and sixty years of age, somewhat robust, with fair complexion, gray hair, and a frank and manly deportment. He is the only one of the present generation that has followed the ancient profession of the family; having served with great applause as an officer of the royal navy, from which he retired, on his marriage about twenty-two years since. He is the one, also, who takes the greates interest and pride in the historical honours of his house, carefully preserving all the legends and documents of the achievements and distinctions of his family, a manuscript volume of which he lent to me for my inspection.

Don Juan now expressed a wish that, during my residence in Moguer, I would make his house my home. I endeavoured to excuse myself, alleging, that the good people at the posada had been at such extraordinary trouble in preparing quarters for me, that I did not like to disappoint them. The worthy old gentleman undertook to arrange all this, and, while supper was preparing, we walked together to the posada. I found that my obliging host and hostess had indeed exerted themselves to an uncommon degree. An old rickety table had been spread out in a corner of the little room as a bedstead, on top of which was propped up a grand *cama de luxo*, or state bed, which appeared to be the admiration of the house. I could not, for the soul of me, appear to undervalue what the poor people had prepared with such hearty good-will, and considered such a triumph of art and luxury; so I again entreated Don Juan to dispense with my sleeping at his house, promising most faithfully to make my meals there whilst I should stay at Moguer, and as the old gentleman understood my motives for declining his invitation, and felt a good-humoured sympathy in them, we readily arranged the matter. I returned therefore with Don Juan to his house and supped with his family. During the repast a plan was agreed upon for my visit to Palos, and to the convent La Rabida, in which Don Juan volunteered to accompany me and be my guide, and the following day was allotted to the expedition. We were to breakfast at a hacienda, or country-seat, which he possessed in the vicinity of Palos, in the midst of his vineyards, and were to dine there on our return from the convent.—These arrangements being made, we parted for the night; I returned to the posada highly gratified with my visit, and slept soundly in the extraordinary bed which, I may almost say, had been invented for my accommodation.

On the following morning, bright and early, Don Juan Fernandez and myself set off in the calesa for Palos. I felt apprehensive at first, that

the kind-hearted old gentleman, in his anxiety to oblige, had left his bed at too early an hour, and was exposing himself to fatigues unsuited to his age. He laughed at the idea, and assured me that he was an early riser, and accustomed to all kinds of exercise on horse and foot, being a keen sportsman, and frequently passing days together among the mountains on shooting expeditions, taking with him servants, horses, and provisions, and living in a tent. He appeared, in fact, to be of an active habit, and to possess a youthful vivacity of spirit. His cheerful disposition rendered our morning drive extremely agreeable; his urbanity was shown to every one whom we met on the road; even the common peasant was saluted by him with the appellation of *caballero*, a mark of respect ever gratifying to the poor but proud Spaniard, when yielded by a superior.

As the tide was out, we drove along the flat grounds bordering the Tinto. The river was on our right, while on our left was a range of hills, jutting out into promontories, one beyond the other, and covered with vineyards and fig-trees. The weather was serene, the air soft and balmy, and the landscape of that gentle kind calculated to put one in a quiet and happy humour. We passed close by the skirts of Palos, and drove to the hacienda, which is situated at some little distance from the village, between it and the river. The house is a low stone building, well white-washed, and of great length; one end being fitted up as a summer residence, with saloons, bed-rooms, and a domestic chapel; and the other as a bodega or magazine for the reception of the wine produced on the estate.

The house stands on a hill, amidst vineyards, which are supposed to cover a part of the site of the ancient town of Palos, now shrunk to a miserable village. Beyond these vineyards, on the crest of a distant hill, are seen the white walls of the convent of La Rabida rising above a dark wood of pine-trees.

Below the hacienda flows the river Tinto, on which Columbus embarked. It is divided by a low tongue of land, or rather the sand-bar of Saltes, from the river Odiel, with which it soon mingles its waters, and flows on to the ocean. Beside this sand-bar, where the channel of the river runs deep, the squadron of Columbus was anchored, and thence he made sail on the morning of his departure.

The soft breeze that was blowing scarcely ruffled the surface of this beautiful river; two or three picturesque barks, called mystics, with long latine sails, were gliding down it. A little aid of the imagination might suffice to picture them as the light caravels of Columbus, sallying forth on their eventful expedition, while the distant bells of the town of Huelva, which were ringing melodiously, might be supposed as cheering the voyagers with a farewell peal.

I cannot express to you what were my feelings on treading the shore which had once been animated with the bustle of departure, and whose sands had been printed by the last footstep of Columbus. The solemn and sublime nature of the event that had followed, together with the fate and fortunes of those concerned in it, filled the mind with vague, yet melancholy ideas. It was like viewing the silent and empty stage of some great drama when all the actors had departed. The very aspect of the landscape, so tranquilly beautiful, had an effect upon me; and as I paced

the deserted shores by the side of a descendant of one of the discoverers, I felt my heart swelling with emotions, and my eyes filling with tears.

What surprised me was, to find no semblance of a sea-port; there was neither wharf nor landing-place—nothing but a naked river bank, with the hulk of a ferry-boat, which I was told carried passengers to Huelva, lying high and dry on the sands, deserted by the tide. Palos, though it has doubtless dwindled away from its former size, can never have been important as to extent and population. If it possessed warehouses on the beach, they have disappeared. It is at present a mere village of the poorest kind, and lies nearly a quarter of a mile from the river, in a hollow among hills. It contains a few hundred inhabitants, who subsist principally by labouring in the fields and vineyards. Its race of merchants and mariners is extinct. There are no vessels belonging to the place, nor any show of traffic, excepting at the season of fruit and wine, when a few mystics and other light barks anchor in the river to collect the produce of the neighbourhood, The people are totally ignorant, and it is probable that the greater part of them scarce know even the name of America. Such is the place whence sallied forth the enterprise for the discovery of the western world!

We were now summoned to breakfast in a little saloon of the hacienda. The table was covered with natural luxuries produced upon the spot—fine purple and muscatel grapes from the adjacent vineyard, delicious melons from the garden, and generous wines made on the estate. The repast was heightened by the genial manners of my hospitable host, who appeared to possess the most enviable cheerfulness of spirit and simplicity of heart.

After breakfast, we set off in the calesa to visit the convent of La Rabida, about half a league distant. The road, for a part of the way, lay through the vineyards, and was deep and sandy. The calasero had been at his wits' end to conceive what motive a stranger like myself, apparently travelling for mere amusement, could have in coming so far to see so miserable a place as Palos, which he set down as one of the very poorest places in the whole world; but this additional toil and struggle through deep sand to visit the old convent of La Rabida completed his confusion—"Hombre!" exclaimed he, "es una ruina! no hay mas que dos frailes!" —"Zounds! why it's a ruin! there are only two friars there!" Don Juan laughed, and told him that I had come all the way from Seville precisely to see that old ruin and those two friars. The calasero made the Spaniard's last reply when he is perplexed—he shrugged his shoulders and crossed himself. After ascending a hill and passing through the skirts of a straggling pine wood, we arrived in front of the convent. It stands in a bleak and solitary situation, on the brow of a rocky height or promontory, overlooking to the west a wide range of sea and land, bounded by the frontier mountains of Portugal, about eight leagues distant. The convent is shut out from a view of the vineyard of Palos by the gloomy forest of pines already mentioned, which cover the promontory to the east, and darken the whole landscape in that direction.

There is nothing remarkable in the architecture of the convent; part of it is Gothic, but the edifice, having been frequently repaired, and being whitewashed, according to a universal custom in Andalusia, inherited from

the Moors, has not that venerable aspect which might be expected from its antiquity.

We alighted at the gate where Columbus, when a poor pedestrian, a stranger in the land, asked bread and water for his child! As long as the convent stands, this must be a spot calculated to awaken the most thrilling interest. The gate remains apparently in nearly the same state as at the time of his visit, but there is no longer a porter at hand to administer to the wants of the wayfarer. The door stood wide open, and admitted us into a small court-yard. Thence we passed through a Gothic portal into the chapel, without seeing a human being. We then traversed two interior cloisters, equally vacant and silent, and bearing a look of neglect and dilapidation. From an open window we had a peep at what had once been a garden, but that had also gone to ruin; the walls were broken and thrown down; a few shrubs, and a scattered fig-tree or two, were all the traces of cultivation that remained. We passed through the long dormitories, but the cells were shut up and abandoned; we saw no living thing except a solitary cat stealing across a distant corridor, which fled in a panic at the unusual sight of strangers. At length, after patrolling nearly the whole of the empty building to the echo of our own footsteps, we came to where the door of a cell, being partly open, gave us the sight of a monk within, seated at a table writing. He rose, and received us with much civility, and conducted us to the superior, who was reading in an adjacent cell. They were both rather young men, and, together with a novitiate and a lay-brother, who officiated as cook, formed the whole community of the convent.

Don Juan Fernandez communicated to them the object of my visit, and my desire also to inspect the archives of the convent, to find if there was any record of the sojourn of Columbus. They informed us that the archives had been entirely destroyed by the French. The younger monk, however, who had perused them, had a vague recollection of various particulars concerning the transactions of Columbus at Palos, his visit to the convent, and the sailing of his expedition. From all that he cited, however, it appeared to me that all the information on the subject contained in the archives had been extracted from Herrera and other well-known authors. The monk was talkative and eloquent, and soon diverged from the subject of Columbus, to one which he considered of infinitely greater importance—the miraculous image of the Virgin possessed by their convent, and known by the name of "Our Lady of La Rabida." He gave us a history of the wonderful way in which the image had been found buried in the earth, where it had lain hidden for ages, since the time of the conquest of Spain by the Moors; the disputes between the convent and different places in the neighbourhood for the possession of it; the marvellous protection it extended to the adjacent country, especially in preventing all madness, either in man or dog, for this malady was anciently so prevalent in this place as to gain it the appellation of La Rabia, by which it was originally called; a name which, thanks to the beneficent influence of the Virgin, it no longer merited nor retained. Such are the legends and relics with which every convent in Spain is enriched, which are zealously cried up by the monks, and devoutly credited by the populace.

Twice a year, on the festival of our Lady of La Rabida, and on that of

the patron saint of the order, the solitude and silence of the convent are interrupted by the intrusion of a swarming multitude, composed of the inhabitants of Moguer, of Huelva, and the neighbourhood plains and mountains. The open esplanade in front of the edifice resembles a fair, the adjacent forest teems with the motley throng, and the image of our Lady of La Rabida is borne forth in triumphant procession.

While the friar was thus dilating upon the merits and renown of the image, I amused myself with those day-dreams, or conjurings of the imagination, to which I am a little given. As the internal arrangements of convents are apt to be the same from age to age, I pictured to myself this chamber as the same inhabited by the guardian, Juan Perez de Marchena, at the time of the visit of Columbus. Why might not the old and ponderous table before me be the very one on which he displayed his conjectural maps, and expounded his theory of a western route to India? It required but another stretch of the imagination to assemble the little conclave around the table; Juan Perez the friar, Garci Fernandez the physician, and Martin Alonzo Pinzon the bold navigator, all listening with rapt attention to Columbus, or to the tale of some old seaman of Palos, about islands seen in the western parts of the ocean.

The friars, as far as their poor means and scanty knowledge extended, were disposed to do everything to promote the object of my visit. They showed us all parts of the convent, which however, has little to boast of, excepting the historical associations connected with it. The library was reduced to a few volumes, chiefly on ecclesiastical subjects, piled promiscuously in the corner of a vaulted chamber, and covered with dust. The chamber itself was curious, being the most ancient part of the edifice, and supposed to have formed part of a temple in the time of the Romans.

We ascended to the roof of the convent to enjoy the extensive prospect it commands. Immediately below the promontory on which it is situated, runs a narrow but tolerably deep river, called the Domingo Rubio, which empties itself into the Tinto. It is the opinion of Don Luis Fernandez Pinzon, that the ships of Columbus were careened and fitted out in this river, as it affords better shelter than the Tinto, and its shores are not so shallow. A lonely bark of a fisherman was lying in this stream, and not far off, on a sandy point, were the ruins of an ancient watch-tower. From the roof of the convent, all the windings of the Odiel and the Tinto were to be seen, and their junction into the main stream, by which Columbus sallied forth to sea. In fact the convent serves as a landmark, being, from its lofty and solitary situation, visible for a considerable distance to vessels coming on the coast. On the opposite side I looked down upon the lonely road, through the wood of pine trees, by which the zealous guardian of the convent, Fray Juan Perez, departed at midnight on his mule, when he sought the camp of Ferdinand and Isabella in the Vega of Granada, to plead the project of Columbus before the queen.

Having finished our inspection of the convent, we prepared to depart, and were accompanied to the outward portal by the two friars. Our calasero brought his rattling and rickety vehicle for us to mount; at sight of which one of the monks exclaimed, with a smile, "Santa Maria! only to think! A calesa before the gate of the convent of La Rabida!" And, indeed, so solitary and remote is this ancient edifice, and so simple is the mode of living of the people in this by-corner of Spain, that the

appearance of even a sorry calesa might well cause astonishment. It is only singular that in such a by-corner the scheme of Columbus should have found intelligent listeners and coadjutors, after it had been discarded, almost with scoffing and contempt, from learned universities and splendid courts.

On our way back to the hacienda, we met Don Rafael, a younger son of Don Juan Fernandez, a fine young man, about twenty-one years of age, and who, his father informed me, was at present studying French and mathematics. He was well mounted on a spirited gray horse, and dressed in the Andalusian style, with the little round hat and jacket. He sat his horse gracefully, and managed him well. I was pleased with the frank and easy terms on which Don Juan appeared to live with his children. This I was inclined to think his favourite son, as I understood he was the only one that partook of the old gentleman's fondness for the chase, and that accompanied him in his hunting excursions.

A dinner had been prepared for us at the hacienda, by the wife of the capitaz, or overseer, who, with her husband, seemed to be well pleased with this visit from Don Juan, and to be confident of receiving a pleasant answer from the good-humoured old gentleman whenever they addressed him. The dinner was served up about two o'clock, and was a most agreeable meal. The fruits and wines were from the estate, and were excellent; the rest of the provisions were from Moguer, for the adjacent villege of Palos is too poor to furnish anything. A gentle breeze from the sea played through the hall, and tempered the summer heat. Indeed I do not know when I have seen a more enviable spot than this country retreat of the Pinzons. Its situation on a breezy hill, at no great distance from the sea, and in a southern climate, produces a happy temperature, neither hot in summer nor cold in winter. It commands a beautiful prospect, and is surrounded by natural luxuries. The country abounds with game, the adjacent river affords abundant sport in fishing, both by day and night, and delightful excursions for those fond of sailing. During the busy seasons of rural life, and especially at the joyous period of vintage, the family pass some time here, accompanied by numerous guests, at which times, Don Juan assured me, there was no lack of amusements, both by land and water.

When we had dined, and taken the siesta, or afternoon nap, according to the Spanish custom in summer time, we set out on our return to Moguer, visiting the village of Palos in the way. Don Gabriel had been sent in advance to procure the keys of the village church, and to apprise the curate of our wish to inspect the archives. The village consists principally of two streets of low, white-washed houses. Many of the inhabitants have very dark complexions, betraying a mixture of African blood.

On entering the village, we repaired to the lowly mansion of the curate. I had hoped to find him some such personage as the curate in Don Quixote, possessed of shrewdness and information in his limited sphere, and that I might gain some anecdotes from him concerning his parish, its worthies, its antiquities, and its historical events. Perhaps I might have done so at any other time, but, unfortunately, the curate was something of a sportsman, and had heard of some game among the neighbouring hills. We met him just sallying forth from his house, and, I must confess, his appearance was picturesque. He was a short, broad, sturdy,

little man, and had doffed his cassock and broad clerical beaver, for a short jacket and a little round Andalusian hat; he had his gun in hand, and was on the point of mounting a donkey which had been led forth by an ancient, withered handmaid. Fearful of being detained from his foray, he accosted my companion the moment he came in sight. "God preserve you, Señor Don Juan! I have received your message, and have but one answer to make. The archives have all been destroyed. We have no trace of anything you seek for—nothing—nothing. Don Rafael has the keys of the church. You can examine it at your leisure—Adois, caballero!" With these words the galliard little curate mounted his donkey, thumped his ribs with the butt end of his gun, and trotted off to the hills.

In our way to the church we passed by the ruins of what had once been a fair and spacious dwelling, greatly superior to the other houses of the village. This Don Juan informed me, was an old family possession, but since they had removed from Palos it had fallen to decay for want of a tenant. It was probably the family residence of Martin Alonzo or Vicente Yañez Pinzon, in the time of Columbus.

We now arrived at the Church of St. George, in the porch of which Columbus first proclaimed to the inhabitants of Palos the order of the sovereigns, that they should furnish him with ships for his great voyage of discovery. This edifice has lately been thoroughly repaired, and, being of solid mason-work, promises to stand for ages, a monument of the discoverers. It stands outside of the village, on the brow of a hill, looking along a little valley towards the river. The remains of a Moorish arch prove it to have been a mosque in former times; just above it, on the crest of the hill, is the ruin of a Moorish castle.

I paused in the porch, and endeavoured to recall the interesting scene that had taken place there, when Columbus, accompanied by the zealous friar Juan Perez, caused the public notary to read the royal order in presence of the astonished alcaldes, regidors, and alguazils; but it is difficult to conceive the consternation that must have been struck into so remote a little community, by this sudden apparition of an entire stranger among them, bearing a command that they should put their persons and ships at his disposal, and sail with him away into the unknown wilderness of the ocean.

The interior of the church has nothing remarkable, excepting a wooden image of St. George vanquishing the Dragon, which is erected over the high altar, and is the admiration of the good people of Palos, who bear it about the streets in grand procession on the anniversary of the saint. This group existed in the time of Columbus, and now flourishes in renovated youth and splendour, having been newly painted and gilded, and the countenance of the saint rendered peculiarly blooming and lustrous.

Having finished the examination of the church, we resumed our seats in the calesa and returned to Moguer. One thing only remained to fulfil the object of my pilgrimage. This was to visit the chapel of the Convent of Santa Clara. When Columbus was in danger of being lost in a tempest on his way home from his great voyage of discovery, he made a vow, that, should he be spared, he would watch and pray one whole night in this chapel; a vow which he doubtless fulfilled immediately after his arrival.

My kind and attentive friend Don Juan, conducted me to the convent. It is the wealthiest in Moguer, and belongs to a sisterhood of Franciscan nuns. The chapel is large, and ornamented with some degree of richness, particularly the part about the high altar, which is embellished by magnificent monuments of the brave family of the Puerto Carreros, the ancient lords of Moguer, and renowned in Moorish warfare. The alabaster effigies of distinguished warriors of that house, and of their wives and sisters, lie side by side, with folded hands, on tombs immediately before the altar, while others recline in deep niches on either side. The night had closed in by the time I entered the church, which made the scene more impressive. A few votive lamps shed a dim light about the interior; their beams were feebly reflected by the gilded work of the high altar and the frames of the surrounding paintings, and rested upon the marble figures of the warriors and dames lying in the monumental repose of ages. The solemn pile must have presented much the same appearance when the pious discoverer performed his vigil, kneeling before this very altar, and praying and watching throughout the night, and pouring forth heartfelt praises for having been spared to accomplish his sublime discovery.

I had now completed the main purpose of my journey, having visited the various places connected with the story of Columbus. It was highly gratifying to find some of them so little changed though so great a space of time had intervened; but in this quiet nook of Spain, so far removed from the main thoroughfares, the lapse of time produces but few violent revolutions. Nothing, however, had surprised and gratified me more than the continued stability of the Pinzon family. On the morning after my excursion to Palos, chance gave me an opportunity of seeing something of the interior of most of their households. Having a curiosity to visit the remains of a Moorish castle, once the citadel of Moguer, Don Fernandez undertook to show me a tower which served as a magazine of wine to one of the Pinzon family. In seeking for the key, we were sent from house to house of nearly the whole connection. All appeared to be living in that golden mean equally removed from the wants and superfluities of life, and all to be happily interwoven by kind and cordial habits of intimacy. We found the females of the family generally seated in the patios, or central courts of their dwellings, beneath the shade of awnings and among shrubs and flowers. Here the Andalusian ladies are accustomed to pass their mornings at work, surrounded by their handmaids, in the primitive, or rather, oriental style. In the porches of some of the houses I observed the coat of arms granted to the family by Charles V., hung up like a picture in a frame. Over the door of Don Luis, the naval officer, it was carved on an escutcheon of stone, and coloured. I had gathered many particulars of the family also from conversation with Don Juan, and from the family legend lent me by Don Luis. From all that I could learn, it would appear that the lapse of nearly three centuries and a half has made but little change in the condition of the Pinzons. From generation to generation they have retained the same fair standing and reputable name throughout the neighbourhood, filling offices of public trust and dignity, and possessing great influence over their fellow-citizens by their good sense and good conduct. How rare is it to see such an in-

stance of stability of fortune in this fluctuating world, and how truly honourable is the hereditary respectability, which has been secured by no titles nor entails, but perpetuated merely by the innate worth of the race! I declare to you that the most illustrious descents of mere titled rank could never command the sincere respect and cordial regard with which I contemplated this staunch and enduring family, which for three centuries and a half has stood merely upon its virtues.

As I was to set off on my return to Seville before two o'clock, I partook of a farewell repast at the house of Don Juan, between twelve and one, and then took leave of his household with sincere regret. The good old gentleman, with the courtesy, or rather the cordiality of a true Spaniard, accompanied me to the posada, to see me off. I had dispensed but little money in the posada, thanks to the hospitality of the Pinzons—yet the Spanish pride of my host and hostess seemed pleased that I had preferred their humble chamber, and the scanty bed they had provided me, to the spacious mansion of Don Juan; and when I expressed my thanks for their kindness and attention, and regaled mine host with a few choice segars, the heart of the poor man was overcome. He seized me by both hands and gave me a parting benediction, and then ran after the calasero, to enjoin him to take particular care of me during my journey.

Taking a hearty leave of my excellent friend Don Juan, who had been unremitting in his attentions to me to the last moment, I now set off on my wayfaring, gratified to the utmost with my visit, and full of kind and grateful feelings towards Moguer and its hospitable inhabitants.

No. XXXIX.—Manifesto of Alonzo de Ojeda.

The following curious formula, composed by learned divines in Spain, was first read aloud by the friars in the train of Alonzo De Ojeda, as a prelude to his attack on the savages of Carthagena, and was subsequently adopted by the Spanish discoverers in general, in their invasions of Indian countries.

"I, Alonzo de Ojeda, servant of the high and mighty kings of Castile and Leon, civilizers of barbarous nations, their messenger and captain, notify and make known to you, in the best way I can, that God our Lord, one and eternal, created the heavens and earth, and one man and one woman, from whom you, and we, and all the people of the earth, were and are descendants, procreated, and all those who shall come after us; but the vast number of generations which have proceeded from them in the course of more than five thousand years that have elapsed since the creation of the world, made it necessary that some of the human race should disperse in one direction, and some in another, and that they should divide themselves into many kingdoms and provinces, as they could not sustain and preserve themselves in one alone. All these people were given in charge, by God our Lord, to one person, named Saint Peter, who was thus made lord and superior of all the people of the earth, and head of the whole human lineage; whom all should obey, wherever they might live, and whatever might be their law, sect, or belief: he gave him also the whole world for his service and jurisdiction; and though he desired

that he should establish his chair in Rome, as a place most convenient for governing the world, yet he permitted that he might establish his chair in any other part of the world, and judge and govern all the nations, Christians, Moors, Jews, Gentiles, and whatever other sect or belief might be. This person was denominated Pope, that is to say, Admirable, Supreme, Father and Guardian, because he is father and governor of all mankind. This holy father was obeyed and honoured as lord, king, and superior of the universe, by those who lived in his time, and in like manner have been obeyed and honoured all those who have been elected to the pontificate; and thus it has continued unto the present day, and will continue until the end of the world.

"One of these pontiffs, of whom I have spoken, as lord of the world, made a donation of these islands and continents of the ocean sea, and all that they contain, to the Catholic kings of Castile, who, at that time were Ferdinand and Isabella, of glorious memory, and to their successors, our sovereigns, according to the tenor of certain papers, drawn up for the purpose (which you may see, if you desire). Thus his majesty is king and sovereign of these islands and continents by virtue of the said donation, and, as king and sovereign, certain islands, and almost all, to whom this has been notified, have received his majesty, and have obeyed and served, and do actually serve him. And, moreover, like good subjects, and with good will, and without any resistance or delay, the moment they were informed of the foregoing, they obeyed all the religious men sent among them to preach and teach our holy faith; and these of their free and cheerful will, without any condition or reward, became Christians, and continue so to be. And his majesty received them kindly and benignantly, and ordered that they should be treated like his other subjects and vassals. You also are required and obliged to do the same. Therefore, in the best manner I can, I pray and entreat you, that you consider well what I have said, and that you take whatever time is reasonable to understand and deliberate upon it, and that you recognize the church for sovereign and superior of the universal world, and the supreme pontiff, called pope, in her name, and his majesty, in his place, as superior and sovereign king of the islands and terra firma by virtue of said donation; and that you consent that these religious fathers declare and preach to you the foregoing: and if you shall so do, you will do well, and will do that to which you are bounden and obliged; and his majesty, and I, in his name, will receive you with all due love and charity, and will leave you your wives and children free from servitude, that you may freely do with them and with yourselves whatever you please and think proper, as have done the inhabitants of the other islands. And, beside this, his majesty will give you many privileges and exemptions, and grant you many favours. If you do not do this, or wickedly and intentionally delay to do so, I certify to you that, by the aid of God, I will forcibly invade and make war upon you in all parts and modes that I can, and will subdue you to the yoke and obedience of the church and of his majesty; and I will take your wives and children, and make slaves of them, and sell them as such, and dispose of them as his majesty may command: and I will take your effects, and will do you all the harm and injury in my power, as vassals who will not obey or receive their sovereign, and who resist and oppose

him. And I protest that the deaths and disasters, which may in this manner be occasioned, will be the fault of yourselves, and not of his majesty, nor of me, nor of these cavaliers who accompany me. And of what I here tell you, and require of you, I call upon the notary here present to give me his signed testimonial."



THE END.

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