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NARRATIVES

OF

ADVENTURE AND EARLY DISCOVERY.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS AND AMERICAN DISCOVERY.
HERNANDO CORTES AND THE CONQUEST OF MEXICO.
PIZARRO AND THE CONQUEST OF PERU.
VASCO DE GAMA AND THE CONQUEST OF HINDOSTAN.
LA PEROUSE. ALONZO DE OJEDA.
DON DIEGO NICUESA.

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CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

AND

AMERICAN DISCOVERY.

TO COLUMBUS DYING.

FROM THE GERMAN OF ŒHLENSCHLÆGER.

Soon with thee will all be over,
  Soon the voyage will be begun,
That shall bear thee to discover
  Far away a land unknown—

Land, that each alone must visit,
  But no tidings bring to men,
For no sailor, once departed,
  Ever hath return'd again.

No carved wood, no broken branches,
  Ever drift from that far wild;
He who on that ocean launches
  Meets no corse of angel-child.

All is mystery before thee;
  But in peace, and love, and faith,
And with hope attended, sail'st thou
  Off upon the ship of Death.

Undismay'd, my noble sailor,
  Spread then, spread thy canvass out;
Spirit! on a sea of ether
  Soon shalt thou serenely float!

Where the deeps no plummet soundeth,
  Fear no hidden breakers there,
And the fanning wings of angels
  Shall thy bark right onward bear.

Quit now, full of heart and comfort,
  These Azores—they are of earth;
Where the rosy clouds are parting,
  There the Blessed Isles loom forth.

Seest thou now thy San Salvador?
  Him, thy Saviour, thou shalt hail,
Where no storms of earth shall reach thee,
  Where thy hope shall no more fail.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

AND

AMERICAN DISCOVERY.

THE discovery of a new planet, so small and distant that to the greater part of mankind it must ever remain invisible, has lately been exciting the curiosity of the public, and will in all probability secure immortality to the fortunate astronomer who first observed it. Such are among the greatest triumphs reserved for science in the present day, when every corner of the globe has been searched out, and the very stars of heaven numbered as they shine. Far different was the state of the world in the middle of the fifteenth century, when, awaking from the slumber of ages, men set themselves to explore the laws regulating the system of the heavens and the earth, and when new or unknown worlds remained in both to reward their labours.

Among the successful discoverers of that period, the name of Christopher Columbus, or, as he designated himself when he fixed his residence in Spain, Cristoval Colon, is the most justly distinguished. Some obscurity attaches to the place of his birth, but the honour seems due to Genoa, where his father, a poor but worthy woolcomber, was long resident. When his name had become illustri-

ous, many noble families claimed kindred with Columbus, but on such uncertain grounds that his son and historian was content to assume him as the founder of the family; 'for I am of opinion,' says he, 'that I should derive less dignity from any nobility of ancestry, than from being the son of such a father.' In the ancient city of Genoa, then, in the year 1435 or 1436, was Columbus born. His education seems to have been considerable for the period, having been taught reading and writing, arithmetic, drawing and painting, with such success that, as one of his historians observes, by these acquirements he might have earned his bread. At Pavia, then a celebrated school, he subsequently studied Latin; and with more diligence, geometry, geography, astronomy, and navigation; to which branches his inclination so powerfully led him, that he afterwards ascribed it to a secret impulse from the Deity, leading him to those studies which should fit him to accomplish his high destiny. His birth in a maritime city like Genoa, at a time when reviving literature was anew unfolding the geographical knowledge and theories of the ancients, was no less fortunate, and must have tended greatly to strengthen his inclination for naval pursuits.

His life after leaving the university is for some time involved in obscurity, perhaps from the unwillingness of his son to disclose the mean condition from which he rose. If he ever followed his father's trade, as has been asserted, it could only be for a short time, as he says that he began to navigate when only fourteen years of age. The Mediterranean, surrounded by numerous independent states, engaged not only in mutual commerce, but in frequent wars and piratical excursions, formed a good though rough school for the young sailor, in which he would soon acquire those habits of decision, boldness, and command over fierce associates, so essential to his future success. In

1459 he was employed in the Genoese fleet, which assisted the Duke of Calabria in his attempts to recover the throne of Naples for his father, Count René of Provence. Under this king he had command of a vessel sent to Tunis to capture a galley lying there. His sailors, frightened by reports of the enemy's strength, insisted on returning; but Columbus, while seeming to yield, by altering the card of the compass led them to the place he wished, and as he boasts of his deceit, probably succeeded in this enterprise. The attempt on Naples, after a four years' contest, failed, and Columbus seems for some time to have been occupied in commercial voyages in the Mediterranean, in one of which he is known to have visited the isle of Scio. Two admirals of his own name, or Colombo, as it is in the Italian, then commanded the fleets of Genoa, which were usually under the influence of France, notwithstanding the nominal independence of the republic. The younger of these was so famous for his exploits against the infidels, that it is said the Moorish women used his name to quiet their unruly children. Genoa being then at war with Venice, this bold corsair on one occasion undertook to intercept four rich Venetian galleys on their return from Flanders. The vessels met on the coast of Portugal, and a desperate battle ensued. The vessel commanded by Columbus having grappled with her opponent, according to the custom of that time, both were involved in flames, and it being impossible to separate them, the crews had to escape into the sea. Columbus being an expert swimmer, seized an oar, and by means of it reached the shore, though fully two leagues distant. In this strange fashion his son relates that Columbus first arrived in Portugal, and repairing to Lisbon, where he found many of his countrymen, took up his abode for some time in that city. As this incident happened in the summer of 1485, if Columbus was

actually engaged in it, this must have been at a later period of his history, after he had been some time in Portugal.

No country in Europe was at that time better adapted for the future discoverer. Portugal, under the influence of Prince Henry, was engaged in the full career of maritime adventure. Despising the fabled dangers of the ocean and the torrid zone, the Portuguese were gradually extending their voyages along the African coast, and the prince just mentioned already foresaw the time when, following the course of Hanno round the southern extremity of Africa, a direct road should be opened to the treasures of the east. Columbus arrived in Portugal in 1470. He was then in the full vigour of manhood, and is described by his cotemporaries as tall, well-formed, muscular, and of an elevated, dignified demeanour. His visage was long, his complexion fair and ruddy, his nose aquiline, his eyes light grey, but apt to enkindle, and his hair, once of a light colour, now white with care and trouble. He had subdued his naturally irritable temper, and was amiable and affable in social intercourse. He was at the same time strict in his religious observances, and his whole character was strongly tinctured with a lofty solemn enthusiasm, which led him to regard himself as the appointed agent to work out some great designs of heaven. In this country, and with these feelings, it required but a slight impulse to direct the whole mind and energy of Columbus into the path of maritime discovery. And this he received from an apparent accident which might have rather seemed destined to fix him at home. When attending religious service in the convent of All Saints, he saw and became enamoured with a lady of Italian descent, the daughter of a distinguished navigator in the service of Prince Henry. Having married the lady, he had access to the

charts and papers of her father, now dead, and thus became acquainted with the plans and routes of the Portuguese. When on shore he occupied himself in constructing maps and charts for the support of his family, but occasionally joined in the expeditions of his adopted countrymen to the coast of Guinea. He also resided for some time on the island Porto Santo, the governor of which was married to his wife's sister. Here his son, Diego, was born; and Columbus had frequent opportunities of meeting with persons engaged in the discoveries on the coast of Africa. Here also rumours of islands seen in the western ocean were frequently heard, and revived the belief in the fabled Atlantis of Plato. These tales, however little credit he might attach to them, and his trade of map-making, soon however gave a decided bias to his mind, and ripened into a grand scheme.

There were various grounds on which Columbus built his faith of new lands to be discovered by sailing west in the Atlantic Ocean. The travels of Marco Polo had made known to Europeans the vast empire of China, with the Japanese islands in the adjoining sea, and excited men's cupidity by accounts of their luxury and wealth. Columbus assumed that the earth was a sphere, and not a plane as was at that time the orthodox belief, and hence inferred that by sailing west he could reach those countries to which a long and wearisome overland journey had conducted the Venetian traveller. The width of the intervening ocean Columbus greatly underrated, having adopted very erroneous notions of the true dimensions of the globe from the Arabic geographers, then the highest authorities on scientific subjects. He was confirmed in his opinion of land to be discovered in the west, by various passages in ancient authors—in Aristotle, Pliny, Strabo, and Seneca; of whom the last in a remarkable passage prophecies that the time

should come when the chains of ocean should be loosened, and new worlds expand to the astonished gaze of men. Columbus also collected various indications of unknown land in the west, some of them very curious—as a piece of carved wood, evidently not laboured with an iron instrument, found far west of Cape St Vincent; the unknown trees, seeds, and immense reeds driven by currents on the Azores and coasts of Europe; and especially the dead bodies of two men, with features unlike any known tribe, cast on the island of Flores. His religious spirit also led him to read his discovery as foretold in Holy Writ, and dimly announced in the mystic revelations of the Prophets. These are the grounds he himself assigned for his opinion; but his enemies have ascribed his belief to a shipwrecked pilot, who died in his house, and left him written accounts of unknown lands seen in the west, or to a map of Martin Behem, a celebrated cotemporary cosmographer. A far more probable source of information is to be found in Columbus's intercourse with Iceland, to which he made a voyage in 1474, as its inhabitants are well known to have discovered and even founded a colony named Vinland, on the coast of North America, some centuries before. That Columbus never alluded to these discoveries may be ascribed to his fear of thus lessening his own reputation, and to the fact that the description given by the Northmen of the regions they visited did not correspond with the brilliant picture of Cathay and Cipango, by which he hoped to induce some sovereign to aid him in his splendid enterprise.

Columbus is reported to have first proposed his scheme of discovery to his native city, and on its rejection there, to have applied to the court of Portugal. His son relates that the king at first was favourable to the proposition, but refused it in consequence of his high demands of honours and rewards. Another authority states that the king

looked on Columbus as a vain-glorious boaster, and only referred his proposition to a junto of learned men, in consequence of his importunities. This junto, as was to be expected, treated the project as extravagant and visionary, and when it was brought before the royal council, their decision was confirmed. John II. was thus led to reject the proposal, but at the same time, with a meanness unworthy of a great and wise prince, endeavoured to deprive Columbus of the honour due to his genius. Having obtained all his maps, plans, and other documents, a vessel was secretly fitted out and directed to pursue the route indicated by Columbus. However, a storm arose, as if designed to defeat this treachery, and the sailors, easily frightened and devoid of zeal, returned home, ridiculing a scheme which they wanted courage to prosecute. Disgusted at this unworthy attempt, Columbus refused all further negociation with King John, and his wife being now dead, he resolved to leave Portugal. In the end of 1484 he left Lisbon secretly, either fearing that the king might try to detain him, or more probably wishing to elude his creditors. Next year he was in Genoa, and probably then made that proposition to his native city which has been erroneously placed at an earlier period. The republic, exhausted by war and with declining commerce, was in no condition to accept his offer. Some affirm that he then carried his proposal to Venice, where it was also declined in consequence of the critical state of affairs; but the national hostility of the rival republics, and the want of all express evidence, render this fact more than doubtful.

Columbus's wanderings are for a time hidden in obscurity, and the next trace of him is in Spain, on his way to the court of Ferdinand and Isabella. Whilst offering the gift of a new world to monarchs, he himself was in want of the merest necessaries. Near the little sea-port of

Palos, in Andalusia, stood a Franciscan convent. One day a stranger, accompanied by a young boy, stopped at the gate, and asked from the porter a little bread and water for his child. In the meantime the prior, Juan Perez, passing by, struck with his appearance, entered into conversation with the stranger, and was so interested in his story, as to detain him as his guest. The stranger, it need hardly be said, was Columbus, on his way to a neighbouring town to seek his brother-in-law, married to a sister of his late wife. The prior, though deeply interested in the magnificent views of Columbus, had too little confidence in his own judgment to give them immediate approval, and sent for a scientific friend, Garcia Fernandez, the physician of Palos. After many conferences and consultations with the most experienced mariners of the neighhouring town, the friar and his friend decided in favour of Columbus's plan, and advised him to lay it before the Spanish sovereigns. To aid him in this, Friar Juan Perez not only gave him a letter of recommendation to Fernando de Talavera, the queen's confessor, with whom he was on intimate terms, but in the meantime took charge of his son Diego. Inspired by this kindness with new hopes, Columbus set out in the spring of 1486 for the court of Castile.

This was truly the heroic age of Spanish history, when the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella, uniting the once rival kingdoms of Aragon and Castile, exalted the power of the cross and broke the terrible sway of the crescent. The fierce Moors, shut up in the mountain fastnesses of Granada, with difficulty defended this last remnant of their once powerful empire. The king and queen, though preserving their separate rights as independent sovereigns, yet made mutual cause against the unbelievers. Ferdinand was a wise and prudent, though cold, selfish, and artful sovereign, fighting rather for dominion than glory, and

inspired more by bigotry than religion. His three great objects—the conquest of the Moors, the expulsion of the Jews, and the establishment of the inquisition, were pursued from the commencement of his reign with unrelenting energy, and perhaps as much from motives of politics as religion. In all of them his queen, with more of a woman's heart and innate benignity of disposition, tried to modify his cruel zeal, even against the influence of her spiritual advisers. In many instances she exhibited much firmness and intrepidity, but was more distinguished by her zeal for the welfare of her people, her labours to heal the wounds which internal wars had inflicted, and her fostering care of literature and science. To these monarchs Columbus now proceeded with his proposals; but did not find that ready access he had expected. Talavera regarded his scheme as absurd; and the courtiers contrasted the splendour of his speculations with the poverty of his garb. 'Because he was a stranger and went but in simple apparel, nor otherwise credited than by the letter of a grey friar, they believed him not, neither gave ear to his words, whereby he was greatly tormented in his imagination.' The princes, too, were now personally engaged in the Moorish war; sometimes attacking their cities, at others hurried away to preserve their own country from the merciless ravages of the Saracen cavalry. Amidst such pressing affairs it is little wonder that the wild theories of a poor unfriended stranger met with a slow hearing. For some time he appears to have again supported himself by the sale of maps, whilst following the movements of the court. His earnest enthusiasm, however, gradually gained him friends and supporters; among them the celebrated Cardinal Mendoza, archbishop of Toledo, who to the scholarship of the period, added the qualities of a quick prudent man of business. He was in great favour with his sove-

reigns, who consulted him on all matters of consequence, so that he was named 'the third king of Spain.' The cardinal, when once convinced that the theory of Columbus involved nothing heretical, procured him an audience at court, where his modest self-possession, and the practical scientific reasons with which he supported his opinion, so far convinced Ferdinand, that he appointed a council of learned men to consider the question and make a report to him.

This council met in the Dominican convent at Salamanca, where Columbus was in the meanwhile lodged and entertained with great hospitality. The assembly consisted not only of learned professors, but of various dignitaries of the church and friars; none of them, we may well believe, likely to regard the bold innovator with much favour. It is said that when Columbus began his statement, the friars of St Stephens, the most learned convent, alone paid attention, whilst the other members seemed as if already resolved not to be convinced. Their most formidable objections were drawn from misapplied passages of Scripture, backed by long quotations from some of the fathers, who, in their simplicity, had ridiculed the notion that the earth was round, and that there could possibly be men walking with their heels upwards and their heads hanging down, or a place where trees grew topsy-turvy, and rain, hail, and snow fell upward. Columbus skilfully avoided the danger of heresy whilst maintaining the truth of science; he showed that the language of Scripture was figurative and adapted to popular comprehension; that the fathers were not writing philosophical treatises but pious homilies; and that the strongest argument, drawn from the notion that the torrid zone was uninhabitable, could not be true, as he himself had already sailed on the coast of Guinea almost to the equinoctial line. The eloquence, truth, and devout enthusiasm of Columbus, convinced many

of his judges, but the majority remained incredulous, conferences were multiplied without result, and a final decision was procrastinated till the return of summer (1487) again called the court to begin the campaign against the Moors. During its continuance there was no time to listen to his suit, though Columbus followed the court and took an active part in the war, receiving occasional supplies of money.

These delays do not appear to have exhausted his hopes or patience, as in the spring of 1488 he declined an invitation from King John to return to the court of Portugal, in which he was assured of protection from all civil or criminal suits pending against him. Perhaps disgust at the conduct of the king had some influence on this refusal, as his brother Bartholomew was now in England, endeavouring to prevail on Henry VII. to engage in this project of discovery. From this monarch he says that he received a favourable letter, though at what time does not appear. In 1489 Columbus was commanded to attend the court in order to have a conference with the king, but the Moorish war and other matters prevented him from obtaining an audience till the winter of 1491. The court was then preparing for the campaign in which Granada, the last refuge of the Moors, fell, and the council had given in its report that his scheme was vain and impossible. The most learned portion of its members were however in his favour, and hence probably the undecided nature of the royal answer, that the care and expense of the war prevented them engaging in any new enterprise, but that, on its conclusion, they would treat with him about his proposal. Bitterly disappointed with this cold and evasive answer, Columbus turned his back on the court where he had wasted so many precious years. But, bound to Spain by attachment to a lady of Cordova, he was unwilling to leave the country without another attempt. He applied to the Dukes of

Medina Sidonia, and Medina Celi, both possessing vast estates in the maritime provinces of Spain, which gave them the power and revenues rather of princes than of subjects. The former, however, rejected his proposal as the dream of an Italian visionary; and the latter, though so much disposed to engage in it, that he had actually three vessels ready to sail, at length, dreading the displeasure of the king, dismissed Columbus, advising him again to apply at the court, as the undertaking was too great for a subject, and fit only for a sovereign power. Thus baffled anew in his hopes, Columbus resolved to proceed to France, but first returned to the convent where he had, seven years before, left his son. Here he meant to leave his second son, whom the lady mentioned above had borne him, and whom, though illegitimate, he always treated with the same favour as his elder brother.

The worthy friar, Juan Perez, was greatly moved by the disappointment of his friend; still more so when he heard his determination to quit Spain, and carry his important project to another land. He again consulted his friend the physician, calling in also Martin Alonzo Pinzon, the head of a distinguished and wealthy family of merchants in the neighbouring town. Pinzon not only approved the plan of Columbus, but offered to bear the expense of a renewed application to the court. The friar, who had formerly been confessor to the queen, undertook to write to her on the subject, and having persuaded Columbus to wait an answer, dispatched a letter by a trusty messenger. In fourteen days he brought back an answer, thanking the friar for his timely services, and requesting Columbus to return to court. On receiving this epistle, Perez mounted his mule and set out secretly for the court, passing through the newly conquered territory of the Moors. He found the queen busy with the siege of Granada, but being admitted to an au-

dience, pled the cause of Columbus with so much earnestness, that Isabella again requested him to be sent to her, and ordered him a sum of money to pay his expenses. This favourable result was undoubtedly aided by the recommendation of the Duke of Medina Celi. On being informed of this returning favour, Columbus again set out for the court, and arrived there in time to witness the surrender of Granada, the mournful departure of the Moors, and the triumphal entry of the Spaniards into the magnificent halls of the Alhambra. Amidst the rejoicing multitudes he walked melancholy and dejected, perhaps contrasting with secret contempt the conquest which swelled every bosom with rapture, with that nobler and bloodless victory which he felt destined to achieve over the unbounded ocean, and musing on the vast realms he was to subjugate to the cross.

The monarchs were faithful to their promise. Persons of confidence were appointed to negociate with him, but an unexpected difficulty arose. Columbus demanded princely stipulations for himself, worthy of the vast empire he had to bestow. He was to be invested with the title and privileges of admiral and viceroy over the countries he should discover, and receive a tenth of the gains either by trade or conquest. These terms were at once rejected as degrading to the dignity of the crown, but Columbus would accept of nothing less, and again mounting his mule, took his departure for Cordova (February, 1492), resolved to proceed immediately to France. In this emergency Luis de St Angel, receiver of the revenues in Aragon, determined to make one bold effort to prevent this irreparable loss and dishonour to the nation. He obtained an audience of the queen, pointed out to her how small the risk compared to the probable gain, how much this enterprise might advance the glory of God, exalt the church, and extend her own

empire; and what cause of regret it would furnish to her friends, of triumph to her enemies, should it be accomplished by some other power. He urged these and other arguments, till Isabella declared her resolution to undertake the enterprise, but Ferdinand looked coldly on the affair, and represented the exhausted condition of the treasury. But the queen's enthusiasm was now roused, and she exclaimed, 'I undertake this enterprise for my own crown of Castile, and will pledge my jewels to raise the necessary funds.' St Angel offered to advance the money, but this was not required, and the funds really came from the revenue of Aragon, Ferdinand's own kingdom. A messenger on horseback was sent after Columbus, who overtook him two leagues from the city, and with some difficulty persuaded him to return.

Columbus was now received with great kindness, and in an audience with the queen, interested her deeply in his success, by expatiating on the opportunities it offered for extending the Christian faith. Ferdinand continued cold as usual, and smiled at the pious suggestion of Columbus, that the treasures won from his discoveries should be consecrated to recover the holy sepulchre from the power of the Infidels. The terms finally agreed to were—that Columbus and his heirs should enjoy the office of admiral and governor in all the countries he discovered, and be entitled to a tenth of all the gold, silver, precious stones, and other merchandise gained within his admiralty; or, on contributing an eighth of the cost, to an eighth part of the profits. This agreement was signed on the 17th of April, 1492, at Santa Fé, near Granada, and on the 30th of that month an order was issued to the town of Palos to have two caravels ready for sea in ten days, to be placed under the command of Columbus. His son was in the meantime appointed page to the young prince. Thus, at last success-

ful, after many weary years of poverty, neglect, and bitter ridicule, Columbus returned to Palos in his fifty-sixth year, to prepare for his great enterprise.

But his difficulties were not yet at an end. When the royal order was read at Palos, universal terror prevailed, and the boldest mariners refused to take part in an expedition devoted, as they believed, to certain destruction. The royal mandate, the persuasions of Columbus, the influence of the prior, were alike disregarded. On the 20th June a new order was issued, empowering the magistrates to press into this service any vessels or crews they might think proper; but this expedient was no less fruitless. At last Pinzon, already mentioned as a supporter of Columbus, came forward, and, with his brother, not only furnished one vessel, but offered to accompany the expedition. Their example and influence encouraged others, so that three small vessels were ready for sea within a month. Only one of them was fully decked, the two others were open in the centre, but built high at the prow and stern, with cabins for the accommodation of the crew. Columbus commanded the largest vessel, Martin Pinzon the second, with one of his brothers as pilot, and a third brother had command of the third vessel. The whole company consisted of one hundred and twenty persons, of whom ninety were sailors. Before setting sail, Columbus confessed himself to the Friar Juan Perez, and partook of the communion, in which he was joined by most of his associates.

On Friday the 3d August, 1492, half an hour before sunrise, Columbus sailed from the bar of Saltes, a small island opposite the town of Huelva, on this memorable expedition. He directed his course first for the Canaries, where he arrived on the 9th, and was detained for three weeks repairing one of his vessels, which was already injured, probably by its owners. When sailing past Teneriffe,

an eruption of its volcanic peaks terrified his crew, ready to interpret every event into a portent of disaster. Columbus re-assured them by pointing out its natural cause, being more concerned by a report he heard at Gomera, where he had stopped to take in provisions, that three Portuguese caravels were cruising about with an intent to capture him. On the 6th September he left this island, but was delayed by calms, so that it was the 9th of that month before they lost sight of Ferro, the farthest west of these islands. Then it is said the hearts of many of the crew failed them; they burst into tears and loud lamentations at thus taking leave, as for ever, of home, family, and friends, and plunging headlong into the unknown dangers of the trackless ocean. Columbus encouraged them by pictures of the wealth and splendour of the regions they were about to visit, and promises of rich rewards. He also issued orders to the commanders of the other vessels in case of separation, to sail on due westward for seven hundred leagues, when, as land might then be expected, they were to sail only during the day. He also, to deceive his crew, kept two reckonings of the ship's course, one correct for his own use, the other in which a number of leagues were daily subtracted from the sailing of the ship, open to the inspection of all. On the 11th September the sight of a broken mast anew excited the terrors of his sailors. Two days after, he, for the first time, observed the variation of the compass, which no longer pointed to the pole star, but gradually varied more and more to the west. He could not conceal this phenomenon from the pilots, who, not without reason, feared that the compass was about to lose its virtue, and to leave them without a guide in the pathless ocean. Columbus, for whose skill as an astronomer they had great respect, quieted their minds by telling them that the compass remained unchanged, its apparent motion being caused by

the revolution of the north star round the true pole—an explanation not satisfactory to his own mind.

The ships were now in the region of the trade-winds, which, blowing steadily from the east, so that for many days they did not require to shift a sail, wafted them rapidly on their way. Land-birds occasionally appeared, cheering the sailors with the hope that their voyage was near its end. The soft balmy air is compared to the pure mornings of April in Andalusia, wanting only the song of the nightingale to complete the illusion. Soon after they reached the large patches of floating sea-weed, now known to cover many thousand square miles in this part of the Atlantic. The sailors regarded this as another sign of land, and the crews were in high spirits, striving who should catch the first sight of it. Some clouds in the north, and the flight of a great number of birds, were also thought to indicate that it might be found in that quarter. But Columbus, firm to his purpose, steered boldly to the west, where alone he was convinced India was to be found. New fears were however rising in the minds of his people; the vast tract of ocean they had passed, seemed to separate them for ever from Spain, whilst the constant unvarying wind which favoured their progress, precluded all possibility of return. Columbus might have tried in vain to dispel their fears, had not new signs of land and a contrary wind added weight to his arguments. Some small birds also came singing to the ships in the morning and flew away in the evening, which wonderfully cheered the sailors, who thought them too weak of wing to have wandered far from land. Their fears from the calm were at the same time dispelled by a heavy swell of the sea without wind, which came so opportunely that Columbus regarded it as sent by Providence to allay the murmurs of his crew. Every new disappointment added to their discontent, and they were already

talking of compelling him to return, or if he was positive in refusing, casting him into the sea. Though conscious of his danger, Columbus remained serene and confident, soothing and encouraging some, menacing others with signal punishment. One incident will show the excitement prevailing among the crews. The lightness of the winds permitted the vessels to sail so close that the commanders could frequently converse together. On the 25th September, Martin Pinzon affirmed that they must be near the island of Cipango, which the admiral had entered in his chart. This document, tied to a cord, was flung from the one vessel to the other, and Columbus was busy examining it, when Pinzon cried out, 'Land, land, Senor; I claim my reward!' and pointed to the south-west, where indeed there was an appearance of an island. Columbus fell on his knees, thanking God; and Pinzon, joined by the crews, repeated the *Gloria in excelsis*. The joy of the people could not be restrained, and the admiral was forced to sail to the south-west, till the morning sun showed the land to have been only an evening cloud.

Similar deceptions repeatedly took place, and the crew, fearing that they had sailed between islands without observing them, began to utter murmurs and menaces, when renewed signs of land revived their hopes. Even Pinzon, however, on the 6th October, proposed that they should sail south; but the admiral maintained his course to the west. On the morning of the 7th, land was again announced in the west, but melted away before the evening; and Columbus having now reached the distance where he expected land, or 750 leagues (2600 miles), consented to sail to the south-west, to which he saw all the small land birds directing their flight in the evening. They continued three days in this direction, the indications of their approach to land always increasing in number. On the even-

ing of the third day the crew broke out in open defiance, but Columbus told them it was in vain to murmur, as he was determined to persevere; and next day the signs of land were so decisive, that every one was eagerly on the watch. In the evening, after singing the vesper hymn and addressing the crew on the prospect of finding land that night, he took his place on the high poop of the vessel. Suddenly, about ten o'clock, he thought he saw a light glimmering in the distance; and calling a friend, pointed it out to him. They called a third person, but it had disappeared, though returning afterwards at intervals. At two in the morning a gun from the Pinta, which, as the quickest sailer, usually kept the lead, announced that land was in sight. A sailor, Rodrigo de Triana, claimed the reward, but it was subsequently adjudged to Columbus, as having previously seen the light. Land was now clearly seen, when they shortened sail and lay to till the dawn. What must have been the feelings of Columbus in these few hours, when the vision that had haunted him for so many years, for which he had toiled and laboured, enduring poverty, reproach, and ridicule, was about to be realised—when the barrier of the ocean was to be broken down, and a new world laid open to civilised man!

On the morning of Friday, 12th October, 1492, Columbus first saw the New World. A low island, densely covered with trees, among which numerous naked savages were running to and fro, as if lost in astonishment, lay before him. He cast anchor, and with the two Pinzons put off for the shore in their boats. On landing, Columbus threw himself on his knees, kissed the earth, and returned thanks to God with tears of joy. He then took possession of the island for his sovereigns, and named it San Salvador. The crew had now passed to the opposite extreme of exultation, and were loud in professions of fidelity, and entreaties of

pardon for the past. The natives, meanwhile, watched them with trembling anxiety, but at last ventured to approach their guests, whom they fancied had come down from heaven, whilst their ships seemed to them monsters inspired with life. Their copper-coloured and painted skins were equally new to the Spaniards; whilst their simplicity, gentleness, and confidence, were not less pleasing. Columbus examined the island, but found no articles of commerce, and only a few ornaments of gold, which the natives seemed to intimate were procured in the south. On the evening of the 15th he sailed south, among the Bahamas, landing on several, and everywhere treating the natives with great kindness. The Spaniards were delighted with the rich vegetation, the beautiful climate, and the novelty of every thing they beheld, but disappointed at the scarcity of gold or other valuable metals. At last the admiral reached Cuba, whose lofty mountains and fertile plains reminded him of Sicily, though far surpassing that island in the tropical luxuriance of the vegetation and the brilliant plumage of the birds that thronged its woods. Columbus believed this island to be the Cipango of Marco Polo, or perhaps the continent of Asia, and was in constant expectation of finding gold, or reaching the court of the Grand Khan. He sent messengers into the interior, but they returned without discovering gold or spices, or any trace of the great monarch. They however noticed the potato, and soon after were astonished by observing the natives rolling up the tobacco in a leaf, setting it on fire, and inhaling the smoke. Thus early were these two most important gifts of the new to the old world noticed by its discoverers.

From Cuba Columbus ran eastward in search of a large island, which the Indians seemed to indicate as existing in that quarter. Adverse winds delayed the voyage, during

which Pinzon deserted him, his vessel being the best sailer, and set out in search of some region of vast wealth, to which one of the natives offered to guide him. On the 5th December, Columbus descried land in the south-east, with high mountains rising from rich plains, and covered with lofty forests. This was the beautiful island of Hispaniola, as the Spaniards named it, from the similarity to the finest parts of their native land, or Hayti, as it is now called. Many natives were seen at a distance, but all fled to the mountains on the Spaniards landing. At length communication with them was established, when they were found a fairer and handsomer race than in the previous islands; but no less mild and hospitable, and ready to propitiate their heavenly guests with their simple gifts. Columbus sailed along the coast, in constant admiration of the beauty of the country and the mildness of the sky. On the 24th December, Columbus set sail to visit a cacique who had sent him some presents. The light winds prolonged the voyage; and, in the evening, the admiral retired to rest, supposing there was no danger. But no sooner had he left the deck than the steersman gave the helm in charge to a boy, and with his comrades of the watch lay down to sleep. The ship was borne aside by the currents, and struck on a bank over which the waves were breaking with much fury. Columbus was first on deck, and ordered the master and sailors to carry out an anchor to warp the vessel off; but instead of obeying, they rowed away to the other caravel, leaving their commander in imminent peril. Here they were reproached for their desertion of their vessel, and forced to return with another boat, but too late to save the ship, which was carried more and more amongst the breakers. The crew took refuge in the other vessel; and next day, with the assistance of the Indians, landed all their goods. The conduct of the

natives was admirable in the extreme, for nothing was amissing among treasures, in their opinion, of inestimable value. The cacique visited the admiral and endeavourcd to console him for his misfortune; and a trade was established with the natives, who freely bartered gold-dust for hawk's bells and other trifles. Many of the sailors, charmed with the idle life of the natives, entreated to be allowed to remain on the island; and Columbus, willing to lay the foundations of a new colony, complied. He erected a fort from the wreck of the caravel, receiving eager assistance from the natives—little dreaming of the yoke they were preparing for themselves. The cacique continued to load Columbus with gifts, especially gold, having soon discovered the high estimation which was entertainecd for this metal. In ten days, the fortress named La Navidad, or the Nativity, in memorial of their shipwreck on Christmas-day, was completed, and thirty-nine men choscn to remain. Columbus charged them to maintain friendly relations with the natives—to keep united in large parties—and to endeavour to obtain a knowledge of the mines which he had heard existed in the island. On the 2d February, 1493, he paid a farewell visit to the cacique, and exhibited a mock fight among his crew, to impress the natives with a due sense of their prowess. The thunder of the artillery, and the destruction which the stone balls produced in the forests, struck them mute with awe and admiration.

On the 4th January, Columbus sailed on his return to Spain, and in a few days met the Pinta, whose commander endeavoured to excuse his desertion as involuntary. The admiral listened with silent incredulity, not wishing to give rise to any altercation. Pinzon had been for some time in Hispaniola, where he had collected much gold, and shared it with his crew to insure their silencc. They now sailed along thc coast, whcrc fresh proofs of Pinzon's du-

plicity appeared, which the admiral wisely left unnoticed. Some days after they reached the Gulf of Semana, whose shores were inhabited by a bolder and more warlike race. In a quarrel several of them were slain, the first blood shed by Europeans in the Western World; but Columbus regained the friendship of the chief. Some of the Indians offered to guide him to a large island inhabited by the Caribs, and he set sail for it; but a favourable wind from the west having sprung up, he bore away direct for Spain, dreading the mutinous temper of his crew, and anxious to secure the discoveries he had already made.

The favourable breeze soon died away, and they experienced much opposition from the trade-winds, till they got so far north as to be beyond the region where they prevail The pilots had lost all knowledge of the ship's course, and thought themselves much nearer Spain than they truly were. Columbus did not undeceive them, though aware of their real position. On the 13th February they were involved in a hurricane, which continued with great fury for several days. They now separated in the night from the Pinta, and lots were cast to decide which of the crew should go on certain pilgrimages if their lives were saved, two of these falling on the admiral. To secure, at least, a chance of preservation to his discoveries, he wrote an account on parchment, which he enclosed in a wax-cloth, addressed to the king, with a promise of a reward of a thousand ducats should it be delivered unopened. He then placed it in the centre of a cake of wax, and inclosing the whole in a large barrel, committed it to the sea. On the 15th land was descried; but two days elapsed before they could reach it, when it proved, as Columbus had affirmed, one of the Azores, named St Mary's, belonging to the Portuguese.

Columbus sent some of his men on shore, who brought

back a friendly message from the governor. Next day, however, when half the crew went on shore to perform a vow made during the storm, the Portuguese detained them, and another storm arising, the admiral had to put out to sea in great danger with his crazy, half-manned bark. He returned in two days, when his men were restored, and informed him that the governor had acted by orders from the King of Portugal, who had charged all the governors of distant islands and ports to seize and detain him. Columbus having taken in wood and water, set sail for Spain, but new storms arose, which shattered his vessels so much, that, notwithstanding his well-founded dread of the Portuguese, Columbus was glad to run into the Tagus, where he anchored on the 4th of March. He sent off a messenger to the king of Spain with the news of his arrival, and another to the court of Portugal, requesting liberty to take his vessel up to Lisbon. In this city the account of his discoveries excited an extraordinary sensation, and Columbus was soon after invited to the court. This he would willingly have declined, but the tempestuous weather would not allow him to put out to sea, and he was obliged to comply. He was received with much magnificence, but the king was evidently greatly mortified by the thought that this splendid enterprise had been formerly refused when offered to himself. He consulted his councillors on the subject, some of whom even suggested that Columbus should be assassinated, as trying to embroil the two nations by pretended discoveries, but the king had sufficient honour to reject this expedient, while he resolved to fit out a private armament, and take possession of the new country. Columbus was allowed to depart, and reached Palos on the 15th March, which place he had left on the 3d of August, the previous year. It has often been remarked, that had he encountered half the difficulties and storms on his outward

voyage which assailed him on his return, he would inevitably have been compelled to desist, and this great discovery have been deferred to an indefinite period.

At Palos, Columbus was received with shouts of joy, and his passage along the streets resembled a triumphal procession. The same evening, Pinzon, who had also escaped the tempest and touched at the port of Bayonne, whence he had sent a letter to the court with the news of his discovery, also entered the harbour. When he heard of the enthusiastic reception of Columbus, his heart sunk within him, all his treachery and evil conduct rose before him, and, dreading to meet his injured commander, he repaired privately to his dwelling, downcast and broken in health. A severe and reproachful reply to his letter to the king increased his dejection, and in a few days after he died of envy and remorse. As Washington Irving beautifully observes, 'his story shows how one lapse from duty may counterbalance the merits of a thousand services; how one moment of weakness many mar the beauty of a whole life of virtue; and how important a matter it is for a man, under all circumstances, to be true, not merely to others, but to himself.'

The Spanish court was now at Barcelona, and Columbus, whilst waiting orders, repaired to Seville. Here he received a letter requesting his immediate presence at court, and desiring him to make arrangements for a second voyage, as the summer was now at hand. Having complied as far as possible with the latter request, he set out for the court, taking with him six Indians and several curiosities he had brought home. His road was crowded with joyful and wondering multitudes, and he entered Barcelona in a procession that has been compared to a Roman triumph. He was received by the king and queen in great state, and when he knelt down they raised him up, and ordered him

to sit in their presence—a mark of rare honour in that ceremonious court. He was then requested to give an account of his voyage, at the conclusion of which the whole assembly sank on their knees, giving thanks to God for the discovery of a new world, and the anthem of *Te Deum* was sung. Columbus was for the moment the object of universal curiosity, applause, and admiration. Nor was this feeling confined to Spain, but responded to with general exultation over the whole civilised world of Europe. As yet the sudden splendour of his discovery overpowered all feelings save those of joy and exultation.

The Spanish sovereigns took every measure fitted to secure possession of their new discoveries. An envoy was sent to the pope, who granted a bull ceding to them all the rights, privileges, and indulgences, which had formerly been accorded to the Portuguese in their African discoveries, on the same condition of planting and propagating the Catholic faith. Another bull was issued on the following day, containing the famous line of demarcation between the territories of the rival monarchs, by a line from pole to pole, passing a hundred leagues west of the Azores. This has been frequently quoted as a proof of his holiness' ignorance of the true form of the earth, but perhaps only shows that he did not anticipate the possibility of the circumnavigation of the globe. The negociations with the court of Portugal were more difficult and tedious, each of the princes endeavouring to deceive and outwit his rival. After repeated embassies, the matter was, however, arranged on the 7th June, 1494, the papal line of partition being moved 370 leagues west of the Cape Verd islands, and the territory on the west assigned to Spain, that on the east to Portugal. Meantime Columbus was hurrying on his second expedition, afraid that the Portuguese should anticipate him by a secret attempt. To aid him, a board was appointed under

Juan de Fonseca, archdeacon of Seville, and afterwards patriarch of the Indies. Fonseca is represented as a worldly man, of a vindictive disposition, to gratify which he did not hesitate to sacrifice the interests of his master. He soon conceived a most rancorous hostility to Columbus, which occasioned him many vexations and delays, and proved highly injurious to the interests of their common master.

A fleet of seventeen vessels was soon ready at Seville, containing numerous skilful mechanics and miners, and loaded with horses, domestic cattle, grain, sugarcanes, and other plants. The number of persons had been limited to a thousand, but such was the eagerness of volunteers, that fifteen hundred eventually sailed, eager to engage in the new field of adventure, and reap a portion of its golden fruits. All the titles and privileges promised to Columbus were confirmed, and his powers in the New World even extended. Under such altered circumstances did the admiral leave Cadiz on the 25th September, on his second voyage to the Indies; his companions, no longer forced on board like condemned criminals devoted to sure destruction, but glad and rejoicing in their good fortune in being permitted to join the glorious enterprise. On the 5th October, the fleet anchored at Gomera, one of the Canaries, and increased their live-stock by various purchases, amongst which Las Casas mentions eight hogs, the fertile parents of the innumerable multitudes of swine dispersed through the Spanish colonies. After being becalmed for some days among the Canaries, Columbus kept further south, and thus out of the region of sea-weeds, which had so much encouraged his sailors on their former voyage. The trade-winds again bore them gently along, till the end of October, when they were awestruck by one of those tremendous thunder-storms common in the tropics. The electrical

fluid, adhering with lambent flames to the top of the masts, revived their spirits, as the sailors, according to an old superstition, thought it was St Elmo with seven lighted tapers—a sure proof that no danger would befal them. On the 2d November, Columbus thought he saw signs of land, and early next morning a lofty island appeared, to which he gave the name of Dominica, as it was discovered on Sunday. This event was celebrated by loud anthems of praise and thanks to God for guiding them in safety over the mighty ocean.

Columbus had reached the Antilles, a beautiful group of small islands shutting in the Caribbean Sea. After touching on one island which was uninhabited, they landed on another, named Guadaloupe, with a lofty mountain, from which streams of water broken into white foam descended. The natives had all fled, but their tents contained articles of earthenware, bows and arrows, plenty of provisions, domesticated geese, and beautiful parrots. Numerous human bones and skulls, apparently used as vases, filled the Spaniards with horror, and some women whom they took captive on the following day informed them that the natives, whom they named Caribs, were in the habit of killing and eating their prisoners. The captain of one of the ships with eight men had lost themselves in the woods, and Columbus entertained great apprehensions that they had fallen victims to the savages. Fortunately, however, the Carib warriors were all absent on some predatory expedition, and the stragglers returned just when the fleet was about to sail without them. Columbus proceeded to the north-west, being anxious to learn the fate of the colony left on Hispaniola, passing many islands on his way. At Santa Cruz a boat was sent on shore for water, and on its return intercepted a canoe with a few Indians, who came suddenly round a point of land between it and the ship.

After a desperate resistance, in which one of the Indians was killed, and their canoe destroyed, the others were captured and brought on board the ship, where their fierce untamed demeanour, so unlike the gentle manners of the natives of Hispaniola, struck the Spaniards with astonishment. They passed many other islands, among them Porto Rico, where they landed, but saw none of the natives, who were always at war with the Caribs. The latter people, said to have spread from the Apalachian mountains over the whole chain of the West India islands, and from thence even to the mainland of Brazil, were the scourge of the more peaceable and unwarlike tribes, though the reports of their cannibalism were probably false or at least exaggerated.

On the 22d November the fleet reached the eastern point of Hispaniola, and the admiral hoped soon to arrive at the fort where he had left his followers on the former voyage. On passing the Gulf of Samana, the scene of his former combat with the natives, a young Indian, who had accompanied him to Spain, was set on shore as a messenger of peace to his countrymen. No account was ever received of him afterwards, and he was not improbably sacrificed to their avarice or jealousy. On the evening of the 25th the fleet reached La Navidad, but it was already too dark to approach the coast or discern the fort. Two guns were fired as a signal to their comrades, but no answer was returned, no sign of life was to be seen on the coast. A canoe soon after appeared, and the Indians on seeing Columbus came on board. They told him that some of the Spaniards left in the fort had died of sickness, that others had been killed in quarrels amongst themselves, and the remainder had removed to another part of the island. Next day none of the natives appeared, and on landing, a burned and blackened ruin alone marked where the fort

had stood. Continuing their researches, they next discovered a grave containing eleven bodies, which proved to be those of Europeans. At last some Indians were met with, from whom the fate of the garrison was ascertained. The Spaniards were hardly relieved from the authority of the admiral, than they began to abuse the poor natives, robbing them of their property, and seducing their wives and daughters. Then they quarrelled among themselves, disobeyed the orders of the commander, and dispersed themselves over the country. Eleven of them set out for the dominions of Caonabo, a warlike chief of Carib origin, who ruled over the gold mountains in the interior, where they expected to find immense wealth. They were seized immediately on entering his dominions and put to death, and Caonabo resolved to rid the island of the strangers. He made a descent on the fort, and attacking it during the night, had full possession before the few men remaining in it were aware of their danger. The whole of the Spaniards were slain, and the village of the neighbouring Indians, who attempted to defend them, burned to the ground. The history of this first European settlement is an epitome of many that have followed—of the base vices and lawless abuse of their superior power, by men boasting of their civilisation—of the fierce revenge of the savage, his momentary success, his final destruction.

The cacique or chief of the Indians soon after sent a message excusing his absence, and stating that he was confined to his tent by a wound received in defence of the Spaniards. Columbus visited him, when he related the misfortune of the garrison with tears in his eyes, and convinced the admiral of his good faith, though some of his followers were of a different opinion. The cacique afterwards visited the ships, where he was lost in astonishment amidst the new and unknown objects that he beheld. The

horses especially, their great size, their apparent fierceness yet perfect docility, filled with amazement men who knew only the most diminutive quadrupeds. The females rescued from the Caribs were also a special object of attention; in particular one, distinguished by her lofty air and manner, with whom the cacique conversed repeatedly. After a repast the chief begged permission to return on shore, perhaps feeling uneasy at the dark suspicious looks of the Spaniards, some of whom advised Columbus to retain him prisoner. Next day the brother of the chief came on board and conversed for some time with the women. He was probably concerting their escape, as in the night they all slipped overboard, and though heard and pursued, swam to the land, three miles distant, and escaped. Next day, when Columbus sent on shore to reclaim them, he found the village deserted and the natives fled into the interior.

Columbus left this place, where there was now no inducement to remain, as the locality seemed unhealthy and unfit for a permanent settlement. When looking for a situation adapted for this purpose, he was driven by adverse weather into a harbour, and being pleased with its appearance, and hearing that the mountains of Cibao, containing gold mines, were at no great distance, he resolved to found a city, named Isabella from his royal patroness. A plan was formed, and preparations begun, when disease broke out among the Spaniards, already suffering from their long confinement on ship-board, and unaccustomed to the climate of the tropics. Disappointment, too, increased their maladies, when their golden dreams melted away, and the necessity of hard labour appeared. Even Columbus suffered from exposure to the climate and the numerous anxieties in which he was involved. Still, though confined to his bed, he continued to direct the affairs of the expedition and the building of the town. The ships had now

discharged their cargoes, and were soon to return to Spain, but no merchandise was provided, and no treasures even ascertained to exist. The golden mountains were, however, at no great distance, and Don Alonzo de Ojeda, one of the most adventurous of his followers, set out with a party to explore them. They found the natives friendly; the sands of the mountain streams glistened with particles of gold, and fragments weighing several ounces were collected. With these glad tidings he returned to the admiral, who now sent home twelve ships, retaining five for farther discoveries. As yet Columbus had only promises of wealth to give in return for the supplies he requested to be transmitted from Spain. Till articles of more value could be procured, Columbus proposed sending home Carib slaves in return for live-stock, but Isabella refused her consent to this inhuman project. Though no wealth was brought back by the fleet, still the reports of the gold mines prevented that disappointment whose effects the admiral so justly dreaded.

On recovering from his illness, Columbus was about to set out to explore the interior, when he discovered a plot among a portion of his followers to seize the ships and return to Spain, where they hoped to find forgiveness by accusing their chief of deception. The ringleaders were arrested, the chief, Bernal Diaz, confined, in order to be sent to Spain for trial, and some others punished less severely than they deserved. This act of authority formed a new ground of offence, and excited the national feelings of the Spaniards against the foreigner, as they regarded Columbus. On the 12th March, however, he set out for the interior with four hundred men, leaving the command of the town and fleet to his brother Diego, a man of an easy and facile disposition. On reaching the summit of the first range of mountains, the Spaniards were lost in

admiration of the beautiful plain, which extended like an earthly paradise before them. Through this region, which he named the Vega Real or Royal Plain, Columbus continued his march, being everywhere hospitably received by the Indians, when their first terror at the strange spectacle was overcome. On the second day he reached another chain of mountains, higher and more rugged, but as they were now in the golden region, Columbus, before penetrating farther, resolved to erect a fort and commence to work the mines which he believed to exist. The fort, named St Thomas, was built on an eminence, protected by a small river. Here he left fifty-six men, and set out on his return to the coast, halting some time, however, in the Indian villages on the way. He thus acquired more knowledge of the manners of the natives, some of whose customs and opinions are very curious. He at first regarded them as atheists, but soon found that, besides a belief in one supreme deity, they had also many inferior gods—some the peculiar guardians of each tribe, others allotted to watch over every special department of nature. They had also priests or magicians; and some imperfect notions of the creation of the world and universal deluge. They believed that mankind had originally come out of a certain cave; large men from a large hole, and the small men from a small one; and that they had no women among them at first, but at last found them among the branches of a forest near a small lake. The ladies were, however, as slippery as eels, so that the men could not for a long time catch any of them; till some whose hands were rough with a kind of leprosy, succeeded in securing four of these slippery females. The natives appeared an idle careless race, living chiefly on the spontaneous produce of their woods and rivers.

On reaching Isabella, Columbus found the sickness con-

tinuing, the stores of provisions almost consumed, and discontent and disappointment very prevalent. The last were greatly increased when he required the cavaliers to aid in erecting certain public works of immediate necessity, the proud hidalgos considering all labour as a degradation. These circumstances greatly embarrassed Columbus, who was desirous of proceeding on another voyage of discovery. He therefore sent all the persons who could be spared into the interior, under the command of Pedro Margarite, with orders to explore the country. He gave strict charges to treat the Indians with kindness, justice, and caution; to respect their property and persons, except Caonabo the Carib chief, whom they were to seize by stratagem. An incident that now occurred convinced him that there was little to fear from the natives. A horseman, returning from the interior, found five of his countrymen captive among a crowd of Indians. Though more than four hundred in number, the sight of his horse put them all to flight, and he brought off his friends in triumph. Leaving his brother Diego governor in his absence, Columbus sailed in the three smallest vessels in search of new lands.

He first proceeded west, and in five days came in sight of the east end of Cuba. He coasted along it for a short way, but learning from the natives that a country rich in gold was to be found in the south, he turned in that direction. The blue summits of Jamaica soon rose above the horizon, and on drawing near land they were met by a fleet of seventy canoes full of gaily painted savages, decorated with feathers, and brandishing their wooden lances with loud yells. A few presents pacified this angry armada; but next day, when he entered a harbour to careen his ship, he found the whole beach covered with hostile Indians. Wishing to inspire them with terror, in order to prevent all future molestation, the admiral caused some

boats to row close to the shore; the Spaniards let fly a volley of arrows from their cross-bows, and then springing to the land pursued the multitude. A fierce dog was then let loose on the Indians, the first instance of the employment of these animals against the natives. Subsequently, intercourse was established with the Indians, who were more warlike and ingenious than those of Hayti, and possessed larger canoes. These were hollowed from a single tree, and one of them measured ninety-six feet long by eight broad. After a few days, Columbus finding no signs of gold, returned to Cuba. Here he was involved among a vast multitude of small islands, which rendered navigation very dangerous and difficult. He, however, named them the Queen's Gardens, from the verdure with which they as it were covered the surface of the sea. Some of these islands were inhabited, and Columbus was much amused by a method the natives employed in fishing. They attached a long line to the tail of a small fish with a flat head furnished with numerous suckers. They allowed it to swim about, when it generally kept near the surface, but on perceiving a large fish would dart on it, and fixing itself firmly by its suckers, would retain its hold till both were drawn out of the water. Besides fish, the Spaniards saw large tortoises caught in this way, which it appears is also practised on the east coast of Africa. Columbus continued his voyage along the southern shore of the island, which he believed to form part of the Asiatic continent. In this navigation he encountered many difficulties from the numerous sandbanks and keys or small islands. At last being fully convinced that he had reached a continent, and fearing the exhaustion of his provisions, and the shattered condition of his vessels, he determined to return. After getting free of the small islands, he cast anchor at the mouth of a river in order to refresh his men, harassed

by their long voyage and anxieties. From this place he intended to return direct to Hispaniola, but was forced by contrary winds to the coast of Jamaica, along which he sailed a considerable distance, having frequent intercourse with the natives. Thence he reached the shores of Hispaniola, where he was soon recognised by some of the natives, among whom his fame was widely spread. After sailing along its southern side, he came to a region already explored, but intended to continue his researches farther east among the Caribbean islands. The hardships, exertions, and anxieties of his five months' voyage had, however, exhausted his mental and bodily powers; he was struck with a sudden malady which deprived him of memory, sight, and all his faculties, and the crew, alarmed at the deep lethargy of the admiral, abandoned all thought of prosecuting the voyage, and bore away direct for the harbour of Isabella. Here Columbus rejoiced to meet his brother Bartholomew, who had arrived from Spain with supplies, but found the affairs of the island fallen into the utmost confusion during his absence.

Columbus, before departing on his voyage, had, as already mentioned, given the command of his troops to Margarite, with orders to explore the island. Instead of obeying these orders, Margarite quartered himself and followers among the natives of the Vega, whom he oppressed and abused in all possible ways. To the remonstrances of the council and Diego Columbus he paid no attention, but at last, fearing the investigation of his conduct on the return of the admiral, he resolved, with his associates, to seize some of the ships and return to Spain. He was joined in this scheme by Friar Boyle, to whom the religious superintendence of the colony had been committed. Deserting their posts, they had sailed for Spain, leaving the army without a head and without discipline. The men became

bolder in their abuse of the natives, till the latter, roused to resentment, began to take secret vengeance on their oppressors. Scattered parties and individuals were put to death, and success in these attempts led to bolder undertakings. Caonabo resolved to attack the fortress, built without permission on his territories, and now garrisoned by only fifty men. They were commanded by Alonzo de Ojeda, who to great natural bravery added much military skill, acquired in the Moorish wars. Caonabo assembled ten thousand warriors, but found his adversary on his guard, and being unable to force so strong a fortress, endeavoured to reduce it by famine. After a thirty days' siege, in which many of the Indians perished, he was obliged to withdraw, but meditated an attack on the town, weakened by the dispersion of the troops and the sickness of those who remained. He made a league, for this purpose, with three other chiefs, but Guacanagari, the first friend of the Spaniards, whose dominions were nearest the town, remained faithful to them, and delayed the attempt. He thus brought on himself the hostility of the confederates, who plundered his country and killed many of his subjects.

Columbus took various measures to quiet the island, punishing some of the chiefs, and gaining others by conciliatory treatment. From his most dangerous enemy Caonabo, he was freed by a daring stratagem of Ojeda, who with ten horsemen ventured into the camp of the chief on a pretended friendly mission, and having by false representations induced the simple Indian to mount behind him, and suffer himself to be adorned with polished shackles, bore him off in triumph from among his astonished warriors. This deceit, however contrary to our feelings, seems to have been viewed in a different light by its victim, who, when a captive, always showed the highest respect for

Ojeda, whilst he proudly refused all marks of deference for Columbus, though well aware of his superior rank. Another important event for the colony was the arrival of Antonio Torres, with four ships loaded with provisions, and accompanied with many workmen and mechanics. The dispatches from the court were still favourable; insidious enemies having not as yet poisoned the ear of the princes against Columbus. The admiral hastened the return of Torres, sending with him his brother Diego to support his interests at court, and to give his advice in settling the boundaries of their respective discoveries with Portugal. In the fleet was sent not only all the gold and other precious metals which he could procure, but also above five hundred Indian prisoners, whom he recommended to be sold as slaves at Seville. Thus early was begun that accursed trade in human flesh, which has produced more misfortune to mankind than all the wars from that time to the present; and which is no less disgraceful to humanity than the cannibalism of the savages for which the Spaniards express such horror.

One of Caonabo's brothers, attempting to revenge his captivity, had been defeated by Ojeda, but this did not prevent the other chiefs from collecting their forces for his rescue. Columbus learning from the friendly Indians that they had assembled in the Vega, marched out to meet them, though his whole army only amounted to two hundred infantry, twenty horse, and the same number of bloodhounds, not the least dangerous opponents to the naked Indians. A battle, or rather massacre, took place in the Vega; the natives, who had trusted to their numbers, being at once dispersed by the fire of the infantry, and then cut down by the cavalry, or hunted like wild beasts by the savage dogs. Columbus followed up his victory by subduing almost the whole island, and imposing a tax of a certain quantity of

gold-dust, or, where this was not produced, of cotton, on each of the natives. The chiefs remonstrated against this grievous burden; but in vain. Their people, seeing no hope of relief, deserted their fields, and retired to the mountains, hoping that famine might drive away their persecutors. But this only increased their severities, and after a large part of the Indians had perished by want and violence, the remainder returned to linger under the yoke of slavery. Even the friendly Guacanagari and his people were subjected to the same impositions and cruelties, till the chief, unable to endure the reproaches of his miserable subjects, retired to the mountains, and died in poverty—a victim to the strangers whom his hospitality had more than once preserved from destruction.

The malcontents who had returned to Spain were not wholly unsuccessful in prejudicing the sovereigns against Columbus, who, as a foreigner, had no influence to support him at court. Even the arrival of Torres, with news of the discoveries made in the recent voyage, and the specimens of gold which he brought, did not restore Columbus to his former favour. Juan Aguado was sent as a commissioner to investigate the affairs of the island, and though formerly highly indebted to Columbus, soon became his bitterest foe. On arriving at Isabella, he found the admiral absent in the interior, and immediately assumed high authority to himself, and interfered in all public affairs. When the admiral returned from the interior, he received Aguado with all the courtesy due to the royal messenger; and when his inquiries were finished, intimated his intention of returning with him to Spain. Their departure was delayed by a tremendous hurricane, which swept over the island with such awful fury, that even the Indians thought it a divine judgment on the crimes and cruelties of the white men. It destroyed all the vessels in the harbour except one, left in

a very shattered condition. Whilst the vessels were repairing, Columbus received news of great importance. A Spaniard, Miguel Diaz, in the service of his brother Bartholomew, had wounded one of his comrades dangerously in a quarrel, and, fearing the consequences, had fled to the south side of the island. Here he had won the heart of a female cacique, and lived with her for some time very happily. But at length he became desirous of returning to his friends, and fell into deep melancholy. His Indian bride learning the cause, and desirous of drawing the Spaniards to her part of the island, that he might not thus be induced to abandon her, informed him that there were rich mines in the neighbourhood. Diaz having ascertained the truth of the report, returned to his master, who was easily reconciled to him, and set out personally to investigate the mines. He found them as rich as was reported, and deep pits near them, as if dug in former times, which gave rise to a curious conjecture of Columbus, that he had now discovered the ancient Ophir of Solomon. The tidings were indeed highly grateful to the admiral, both as decisive proofs of the wealth of the island, thus silencing the cavils of his enemies, and as an excuse for removing the colony from its unhealthy situation. Diaz was pardoned, and employed in various duties, all of which he discharged with fidelity. He also kept faith with his Indian spouse, who seems to have become a Christian, and to have been baptised.

On the 10th March, 1496, Columbus sailed for Spain, along with Aguado. Keeping too far south, within the trade-winds, his passage was long and tedious, so that he had to touch at Guadaloupe for provisions. The shores were only defended by the women, some of whom they took prisoners, but again set free before their departure. One heroine, however, refused liberty, and chose rather to ac-

company Caonabo, whom Columbus was taking with him to Spain. But the Carib chief was destined never to arrive there; his proud heart was broken by his misfortunes, and he died on the passage. During this voyage, the Spaniards were reduced to great extremity, some even proposing to kill and eat their Indian prisoners. On the 11th June, Columbus at last reached Cadiz, after a weary passage of three months. His hopes and reception were very different from what they had been on his former return three years before; and the miserable emaciated figures of his sickly companions, and their yellow countenances—a mockery, says an old writer, of that gold they had gone to seek—was no unfit emblem of the public disappointment. He, however, received a friendly letter from the court, and on his arrival there met with a kind reception; his great merits not being yet wholly forgotten. He proposed to undertake a new voyage of discovery, which was readily agreed to; but numerous delays were destined to intervene before its accomplishment. Affairs of more immediate necessity demanded all the care and resources of the king, whilst envious councillors insinuated to him the great cost and small profit of the boasted discoveries. At length the influence of the queen procured certain measures favourable to Columbus, and adapted to promote the prosperity of the colony; but the management of Indian affairs was committed to his cold-blooded enemy, Fonseca, who persecuted him, and embarrassed his proceedings by the meanest and most despicable artifices. 'Absent, envied, and a stranger,' as he said in a letter to the king, every one was against him, and it was only his gratitude to the queen that induced him to persevere.

At length, on the 30th May, 1498, Columbus sailed with six vessels on his third voyage to the New World. He proceeded south to the Cape Verd Islands. Thence he con-

tinued south-west, till his ship was involved in the region of the 'calms,' near the equator. Here the wind fell, and a dead, sultry air, as from a furnace, hung over the ships, wasting their stores, and destroying the health and spirits of the men. He then altered his course more to the west, and reached land with his provisions nearly exhausted, and only one cask of water remaining in each ship. It was the island of Trinidad, which Columbus named from a vow he made to consecrate the first land he should reach to the Trinity. He coasted along the southern shore of the island, and was surprised at its fertility, at the coolness of air, and the fair complexion of the natives—all so unlike the tropical character of Africa. He was now sailing in the strait between Trinidad and the mainland, on some parts of which he touched in the Gulf of Paria, but without knowing that it was in reality the continent he had long sought. The strings of pearls worn by the natives highly interested him as a new source of wealth, and a confirmation of his theories. His time, however, would not permit of further researches, so, retracing his way, he sailed through the narrow passage between Trinidad and Cape Boto in Paria, where the sea was raging and foaming, the currents being swollen by the large mass of fresh water then poured into the gulf. He passed through it, however, in safety, and examined part of the north coast of Paria, when he was compelled to sail for Hispaniola. He reached it considerably north of the point he wished, having been carried out of his reckoning by the strong currents. Sending a message on shore to his brother, he sailed for the river Ozema, and was soon met by his brother Bartholomew, who came off in a caravel to meet him. In a letter to the sovereigns, relating his voyage, Columbus enters into various speculations—some of them wild and fanciful in the extreme—concerning his new discoveries. He however

rightly conjectured from the quantity of fresh water flowing into the gulf, that it must come from some continent of vast extent, which he still maintained to be a part of Asia.

From his brother, who had governed the island under the title of Adelantado, Columbus received an account of the events which had occurred during his long absence. Bartholomew had proceeded to found a fort near the mines of Hayna, discovered by his servant, but, from want of provisions, the work had made slow progress. He then laid the foundation of San Domingo, on the harbour at the mouth of the Ozema river, and leaving a small garrison there, set out to explore the western region of the island. He was well received by the cacique of that district, who readily agreed to pay an annual tribute of cotton, alleging that no gold was produced in his part of the island. On returning to Isabella, he found nothing but misery and repining. The provisions received from Europe were consumed, the Spaniards, intent only on procuring gold, would not condescend to cultivate the ground, and yet, by their cruelties, had driven the natives to the mountains. The Adelantado sent all the men who could be spared into the interior, where the climate was more salubrious, and provisions in greater abundance. He then established military posts to overawe the natives, whose indignation was roused anew by fresh indignities. Two friars had laboured with small success to convert the Indians, who could not be persuaded that a religion was true, whose followers perpetrated such atrocities. In one place, the friars had built a small chapel, with crucifix, images, and altar, for the use of a family of converts. Some other Indians had, however, entered the chapel, and broken the images. For this crime the ignorant savages were tried by the ecclesiastical law, condemned, and burned. This cruel treatment excited the indignation of the whole natives, and a rebellion, to commence by a

general massacre of their oppressors, was concerted. It was betrayed, as usual, to the Spaniards; and, by a successful stratagem, the Adelantado seized fourteen of the assembled caciques, and carried them prisoners to a fortress. Two of the principal instigators of the insurrection were put to death, but the others released—an act of clemency which for a time restored tranquillity to the Vega. Bartholomew then set out to the western extremity of the island, where he received for tribute sufficient cotton and provisions to load a caravel.

A new trouble arose from the machinations of one Francisco Roldan, who, raised from low rank to be chief judge of the island, now turned his influence against his benefactor. During the absence of the Adelantado, he excited mutiny against him among the Spaniards at Isabella, and, on his return, set out into the interior, where he had formed friendship with the native chiefs, and hoped to seize one of the forts. Disappointed by the vigilance of the commander, he now endeavoured to obtain possession of it by force. The Adelantado marched to its relief, but distrusting the loyalty of his followers, durst not attack Roldan. He had an interview with him which led to no result, and Roldan, taking advantage of his absence, returned to Isabella, entered it by surprise, and breaking open the royal warehouse, supplied himself and his followers with arms and clothing. He then returned to the Vega, endeavouring to seduce the followers of the Adelantado from their allegiance. Not succeeding in this, he again endeavoured to stir up the natives to revolt, and continued to sow discontent among the Spaniards. The whole island was reduced to a state of complete anarchy, when two vessels arrived at San Domingo in February, 1498, with supplies of provisions, troops, and, what was of more importance, a royal confirmation of the authority of the Ade-

lantado. Roldan had, however, gone too far to hope for pardon, and feeling too weak for resistance, retired towards the west end of the island. The Indians in the Vega, seduced by his machinations, had taken up arms, but being defeated by the Spaniards, their chief fled to the mountains of Ciguay, where he found shelter with a brother cacique. Thither he was followed by the Adelantado, who, notwithstanding the difficulties of a mountain warfare with savage foes, soon dispersed the Indians, and captured both the chiefs, who had sought shelter in the recesses of the mountains. Such was the state of the island when Columbus returned thither from Spain, and such the immediate results of that unwise policy which the Spanish monarchs, instigated by his private enemies, pursued towards him. The productiveness of the colony was ruined; discontent, disloyalty, and crime fomented among the white settlers, and the poor Indians led into rebellions, in which they either perished miserably by the sword and famine, or were reduced to a state of cruel slavery, to which death in almost any form was preferable. Instead of the paradise which it seemed when the white men first set foot on its soil, it had become the abode of war and sedition, of strife, famine, and pestilence. The native population was melting away before the baleful presence of the stranger; and their once hospitable towns were desolate and silent. The Spaniards too were reaping the fruit of their crimes; vice had produced disease; indolence, poverty; whilst cruelty and oppression had turned the once friendly Indians into deadly foes, and the thickly peopled country into a lonely wilderness.

Columbus endeavoured to restore matters so far as it was still possible. He denounced Roldan as a rebel, but, at the same time, offered him pardon on immediate submission. Roldan had, however, strengthened his party,

by the accession of many criminals who had been sent from Spain at the same time with Columbus, but had arrived in the island before him, and now refused to submit. Columbus, surrounded by treachery and disaffection, was too weak to enforce compliance, and could only write home an account of the rebellion, and ask further aid. After various negociations, an agreement was made with the rebels, by which they were to return within a limited time to Spain; and the admiral set out to inspect the island. Circumstances delayed the fitting out of the ships, and Columbus soon learned that new seditions had broken out among the rebels, who refused to leave the island. A cold letter from the court added to his perplexities, as it showed the power of his enemies there, and how little trust he could put in the royal favour. He had thus to comply with all the demands of the mutineers, and enter into a new arrangement, reinstating Roldan in his office of chief judge, giving grants of land to some of his followers, and sending others of them home to Spain. To both parties, Indians were assigned as slaves, and instead of tribute, the free natives were compelled to cultivate the land of the Spaniards settled in their vicinity. This treatment of the Indians is one of the greatest stains on the memory of Columbus, and shows how little the rights of humanity and the duties of Christianity were understood in that age. By the same vessels that carried home the conspirators, Columbus sent letters to the king detailing all that had occurred, showing that the sovereign was not bound by the engagements he had made with the rebels, and requesting aid to restore tranquillity, and a learned man to act as judge of the island.

Four vessels had been seen off the west part of the island, which Columbus learned were commanded by Ojeda, the bold cavalier already mentioned. He sent Roldan to

inquire into this suspicious expedition, who gladly undertook the enterprise, as likely to secure possession of his ill-gotten gains. Roldan met Ojeda, and found that he had a license from Fonseca, that the vessels were fitted out as a private adventure, and that they had already sailed along the coast of the mainland, from two hundred leagues east of the Orinoco to the Gulf of Paria. In this expedition was a Florentine merchant, Amerigo Vespuccio, destined to give a name to the whole of this new world. Ojeda promised to meet the admiral at San Domingo, but instead of this, as soon as he had collected provisions, he sailed to Xaragua, where many of the mutinous followers of Roldan were settled. These men chose him for a leader, and were about to march with him to San Domingo for a redress of their grievances, when their old leader, with a band of resolute followers, arrived in their neighbourhood. Ojeda retired to his ships, and after various manœuvres between two such well matched opponents, had to leave the island, but not till he had landed in several places and plundered the poor natives. Ojeda, it appears, afterwards sailed to Porto Rico, and carried off numbers of the Indians, whom he sold in the slave market of Cadiz. Meantime another conspiracy broke out. Guevara, a young cavalier, had been banished from San Domingo for his licentious conduct; but there being no vessel to take him to Spain, was sent for a time to Xaragua. Here he fell in love with a daughter of Caonabo, the Carib chief, and intended to marry her, when Roldan, it is said, from jealousy, interfered. Roldan first sent him to another place, but he returned, and on his submission was allowed to remain. He, however, engaged in a conspiracy, having for its object to kill Roldan, or put out his eyes; but the experienced rebel was beforehand with them, seized the ringleaders, and sent them prisoners to the admiral. Guevara's uncle, Moxica,

a former comrade of Roldan, incensed at this action, began to collect his old followers to free his nephew, but was anticipated by Columbus, who fell upon him suddenly, and seized him and his principal confederates. Moxica was put to death, some others condemned, but retained in confinement; and the Adelantado, seconded by Roldan, soon reduced the whole island to a state of tranquillity.

This, however, was not to continue long. The enemies of Columbus were busy at court, where his friends were few and powerless. Ferdinand had undertaken these discoveries from no high or generous motive, but moved only by hopes of wealth, which he now found greatly disappointed. Instead of receiving supplies from them, they were a constant drain on his treasury, already exhausted by his numerous wars. His disappointed avarice made him lend a ready ear to all the accusations brought against Columbus by the idle dissolute men who returned home. Many of these persons flocked to court, demanding arrears of pay, whilst their conduct in the colony had only deserved punishment. Their insolence may be judged of from the imprecations with which they saluted the two sons of Columbus, who attended court as pages to the queen. 'There go,' they would exclaim, 'the sons of the admiral, the whelps of him who discovered the land of vanity and delusion, the grave of Spanish hidalgos!' The queen had long been his faithful friend, but her humanity was excited by the treatment of the Indians, whom Columbus persisted in sending home as slaves. She ordered them all to be returned to their native land, and gave her consent to a commission to inquire into the conduct of the admiral. One principal object of this appointment on the part of Ferdinand, was his wish to obtain some excuse for depriving Columbus of the high privileges with which he had invested him. Like many other wicked men, he sought to

cover one act of ingratitude and injustice by adding to it another. The person chosen for this purpose was Francesco de Bobadilla, whom some represent as a very honest and religious man, others, with more semblance of truth, as needy, passionate, and ambitious. He was empowered to examine into the late rebellion, and the government of the admiral and his brothers; and on finding them guilty, to supersede them in the administration.

With the latter part of his commission, Bobadilla was not long of complying. He reached San Domingo on the 23d of August, 1500, and having landed the next morning, ordered his commission to be read, authorising him to investigate the late rebellion. Columbus was absent in the interior; but his brother Diego refused to give up the prisoners till his return, and asked for a copy of this letter to send to him. Bobadilla refused this, and next morning read a second royal patent, investing him with the government of the island; and again demanded the prisoners. Diego replied, that he held the prisoners in obedience to the admiral, who was invested with higher powers, on which Bobadilla produced a third mandate from the crown, ordering Columbus and his brothers to deliver up to him all fortresses, ships, and other royal property; and a fourth mandate, ordering him to pay all arrears of wages to persons in the royal service, which was received with shouts of applause by the multitude. He again demanded the prisoners, and when they were refused, repaired to the fort where they were confined. The alcade, Miguel Diaz, had the gates closed, and appearing on the wall, declared that he would only obey his lord the admiral. Enraged beyond measure, Bobadilla assembled his followers in order to storm the fort, which, having no garrison, he entered without resistance. He then took possession of the house of Columbus, and seized upon all his effects, books, and

private papers. When information of these events reached the admiral, he considered them merely as the acts of some private adventurer, and moved towards San Domingo. He was met by an alcade, who proclaimed Bobadilla's accession to office; but the new governor took no notice of him, and did not even answer a letter he had written. Columbus was in great uncertainty how to act, when two messengers arrived with a royal letter of credence, commanding him to give implicit faith and obedience to Bobadilla; and presented, at the same time, a summons from the latter to appear before him. Columbus at once obeyed, but on reaching the town was seized, put in irons, and confined in the fortress. When the irons were brought, no one was found to put them on him, till the task was undertaken by one of his own domestics, 'a graceless and shameless cook, who rivetted the fetters with as much readiness and alacrity, as though he were serving him with choice and savoury viands.' His two brothers met the same fate, being also put in irons, and confined separately on board a caravel. Bobadilla never came to see them, or gave them any account of the crimes with which they were charged, so that, in the admiral's own words, they 'were thrown into a ship, loaded with irons, with little clothing, and much ill treatment, without being summoned or convicted by justice.' Such was the reward Columbus received from his unworthy sovereign, whom it is in vain to defend by throwing the blame on the miserable instrument of his malice and ingratitude.

To justify his own conduct, Bobadilla collected evidence from all quarters against the admiral and his brothers, to whom all the late disturbances in the island were imputed. When this was completed, he sent Columbus home in charge of Alonzo de Villejo, an honourable officer. When he came to conduct him on board, Columbus, knowing the invete-

racy of his enemies, thought it was to lead him to the scaffold. 'Villejo,' said he mournfully, 'whither are you taking me?' 'To the ship, your excellency, to embark,' replied the other. 'To embark!' repeated the admiral earnestly; 'Villejo, do you speak the truth?' 'By the life of your excellency, it is true,' replied the honest officer. With these words the admiral was comforted, and felt as one restored from death to life. Such is the account of this touching incident which Washington Irving has taken from Las Casas, who probably received it from his friend Villejo himself. Columbus left the island early in October, 'shackled like the vilest of culprits, amidst the scoffs and shouts of a miscreant rabble.' Villejo would have removed his irons, but Columbus would not consent; they had been imposed by the authority of their majesties, and, said he, 'I will wear them until they shall order them to be taken off; and I will preserve them as relics and memorials of the reward of my services.' 'He did so,' adds his son; 'I saw them always hanging in his cabinet, and he requested that when he died they might be buried with him.'

When Columbus arrived in irons at Cadiz from the world that he had discovered, a universal burst of indignation was heard throughout Spain, and was responded to by the whole of the civilised world. Even the cold heartless monarch quailed before it, and had to express his reprobation of such unworthy treatment. Columbus was ordered to be set free, was received with many marks of favour at court, and the charges against him were never listened to. But the true vindication of his conduct, that which justice strongly demanded, was withheld, notwithstanding repeated solicitations. He was not restored to his viceroyalty; and Ferdinand, whilst disowning the crime, retained its fruits. Many voyages to, and discoveries in, the New World had recently taken place, not only among his

own subjects, but by other nations. Sebastian Cabot, in 1497, had coasted along North America from Labrador to Florida, in an English ship fitted out by Henry VII.; and Cabral, a Portuguese, in a voyage to India, had discovered, in April, 1500, the coast of Brazil. Ferdinand thus saw his new dominions expanding to a boundless extent, and in danger of being encroached on by other nations. He had long repented of the powers granted to Columbus, and every new discovery only made him repine the more at the reward conferred on a foreigner, whose services could now be dispensed with. Ovando was appointed to supersede Bobadilla in the government, for which the latter had shown himself wholly incapable. For this, various excuses were assigned to Columbus, and a promise given him of being restored to his office in two years, when all angry passions were allayed and affairs restored to order. Ovando was fitted out with great splendour, and his departure hastened by the reports of the evil results of the administration of Bobadilla. This person had parcelled out the natives among the white men, who, well aware that the time of license would be but short, exercised the most capricious tyranny, and compelled them to work in the mines by the most inhuman cruelties. Ovando left Spain in February, 1502, with a fleet of thirty sail, containing about 2500 persons. In a storm which it encountered, one ship, with 120 passengers, was lost, and a rumour that the whole fleet had perished, spread consternation throughout Spain, but afterwards proved unfounded.

Whilst these events were taking place, Columbus remained with the court at Granada, endeavouring to restore his affairs, and at the same time to excite the sovereigns to undertake an expedition to recover the holy sepulchre from the infidels. This seems to have been the leading object in his mind to which all his great discoveries

were only preparatory, but probably receiving no encouragement, he turned again to the old path. He therefore requested permission to fit out a new expedition, the object of which was to search for some channel between the countries already discovered, leading directly to the rich realms of eastern Asia. The king gladly granted his request, as putting off for a time more troublesome claims, and as likely to gratify his own cupidity. Before setting out Columbus wrote to the pope, excusing his delay in visiting his holiness to give a personal account of his discoveries, and explaining the causes that prevented his expedition to the holy sepulchre. He also transmitted two copies of all the letters and grants he had received from the sovereigns, with an account of his discoveries, and a vindication of his rights, to a friend in Genoa, showing his well-founded fear of Spanish ingratitude, and his desire to secure his own dear-bought fame. Having arranged these matters he left Cadiz in May, 1502, on his fourth and last voyage, accompanied by his son Fernando and his brother Bartholomew. He had four small vessels, the largest only seventy tons burden. After touching on the coast of Morocco and at the Canaries, he reached the Caribbee islands in the middle of June. From this he steered by Santa Cruz and Porto Rico for San Domingo, where he wished to exchange one of his vessels which sailed extremely ill. This course was contrary both to his own plan and the orders of the king, by which he had been forbidden to touch on Hispaniola. Columbus anchored off the town on the 29th June, and asked permission of Ovando to enter the harbour, stating the purpose for which he had come, and his dread of an approaching storm. Ovando had now been some time in office, and his fleet was about to return, having on board Bobadilla, Guarionex, once cacique of the fertile Vega, and an immense quantity of

gold collected by the oppression of the natives. One piece of gold, the *grano de oro*, as it is called in the old chronicles, was particularly famous, weighing, according to the best computation, about forty pounds troy English. Ovando refused to allow Columbus to enter the harbour, and neglected his repeated warning to delay the sailing of the fleet. It left the harbour, but in two days was overtaken by an awful hurricane: the ship containing Bobadilla, Roldan, and some others of the most inveterate enemies of Columbus, with all their ill-gotten wealth, was swallowed up in the ocean, and only one vessel, the weakest of the fleet, and containing some property of Columbus, could continue her voyage to Spain. The admiral had sailed along the coast, expecting the storm to be from the land, and, sheltered by it, reached Port Hermoso without much damage. Columbus regarded his own safety almost as miraculous, whilst the destruction of his enemies was ascribed to Divine interposition by his cotemporaries.

Columbus, after refitting his vessels, sailed for the mainland, which he reached on the coast of Honduras. Here he met with a large canoe, containing a cacique and family, who seemed to have come from a long journey, bringing with them articles of copper and manufactures of a superior kind to any yet seen among the natives. The Indians pointed out to him a rich country in the west, probably Yucatan or Mexico, but Columbus turned east, looking for the supposed strait. He made but slow progress, being opposed by the winds and currents, and a tempest which he says surpassed in violence and duration any he had ever seen. At last they doubled a cape, which he named Gracias a Dios, as the coast turning direct south gave them a free navigation and favourable wind. They stopped at a river to take in wood and water, but the sudden swell of the sea in the estuary swamped one of the

boats, whose whole crew perished. Leaving this melancholy place, Columbus next anchored near an Indian village named Cariarri, where he was kindly entertained, and remained some time to refresh his men. He next sailed along the region afterwards named Costa Rica or the Rich Coast, from the mines of the precious metals found in its mountains, and in his traffic with the natives procured, for the merest trifles, several large plates of gold, which they wore as ornaments. Many reports of countries in the west, rich in gold and silver, were communicated to him, and probably had reference to Mexico or Peru; but instead of following these he continued east, looking for the imaginary strait that was to open up a passage to the east. He next touched at a harbour named Puerto Bello from its beauty, and afterwards was forced to take shelter in a small port, so deep that there was no anchorage till the ships almost touched the land. The sailors used to leap on shore during the night, and so provoked the Indians by their bad conduct that they assembled in great numbers to attack the ships, but were dispersed on the first discharge of artillery. Here Columbus, despairing of finding any passage through the mainland, turned back to explore the rich country he had left behind.

The wind which had opposed their eastward progress for three months, now suddenly changed to the west, and they were driven out to sea by a tremendous storm, which continued for nine days. The sea boiled like a cauldron, and at night its waves resembled great surges of flame; the thunder and lightning were almost incessant, and the rain poured down in torrents into their open vessels. One day a waterspout passed close by the ships but without injuring them, and after great difficulties they at last reached the river Belen on the coast of Veragua. Here he remained some time, till his brother the Adelantado investigated the

country which was very rich in gold. Columbus again imagined he had found one of those places whence Solomon had procured his unbounded wealth, and resolved to found a new colony. Eighty men were to remain with the Adelantado, whilst Columbus returned to Spain for supplies. Their various arrangements were soon completed, but the river, lately swollen by rains in the mountains, was now so shallow that his vessels could not pass over the bar at its mouth, and he was detained till another inundation should set them free. Mean time Quibian, the cacique of the Indians, resolved to expel the unwelcome guests, and collected his warriors. Diego Mendez, notary to the fleet, suspected their designs, and, venturing boldly into their camp, had his suspicions confirmed. A native, too, revealed the plot of his countrymen to the admiral. They intended to attack the fort by night, set it on fire, and kill all the white men. The Adelantado resolved to anticipate them, and marching into their camp with seventy-five men, seized Quibian, and sent him away captive in a boat, but the wily savage contrived to free himself from his bonds, plunged into the sea, and escaped. Returning to his dwelling he found it wasted and his family carried into captivity. The admiral had now put out to sea, and was only waiting for a fair wind. Before he could sail, however, the Indians had attacked the fort, and though repulsed, had again assembled in great numbers, massacred a boat's crew, which had been sent on shore for wood, and shut the Spaniards up within their defences. The admiral was in great anxiety for his brother, the high surf preventing any communication with the shore, when during the night he heard a mysterious voice reproaching him with his want of faith in God, who had given him the keys to unlock the gates of the ocean sea, shut by such mighty chains. Immediately after this vision the sea became

calm, and the Adelantado with his followers embarked on board the vessels, leaving the settlement deserted. The family of the cacique confined in the ships had partly escaped and partly destroyed themselves in despair at leaving their native land.

Columbus now sailed for Hispaniola, but the winds and currents carried him far west of his appointed port. One of the caravels had been left in the river Belen, another was so wasted that it had to be deserted on the voyage, and the two that remained were so honeycombed by the teredo as to be scarcely seaworthy. Columbus tried to beat up to Hispaniola, but all his efforts were in vain, and at last, fearing his vessels might founder at sea, he had to run them aground on the coast of Jamaica, where they soon filled with water. He then built thatched cabins on the prow and stern for the crews, and remained castled in the sea. His trusty follower, Diego Mendez, went on shore and arranged with the Indians to supply them with provisions, and then offered to proceed to Hispaniola in an Indian canoe to ask relief. With him Columbus sent letters to the sovereigns, giving a most glowing description of the land now discovered, and indulging in romantic visions contrasting strangely with his actual condition—'broken down by age and infirmities, racked with pain, confined to his bed, and shut up in a wreck on the coast of a remote and savage island.' Mendez set out on his expedition, accompanied by one Spaniard and six Indians. He reached the end of the island, but was taken prisoner by some hostile Indians who determined to kill them. He contrived to escape in his canoe, and returned to the ships, where he offered to make a second attempt. He was now accompanied in another canoe by a Genoese named Fiesco, whilst the Adelantado guarded them along the coast. Taking advantage of a calm day, the canoes set sail and soon lost

sight of land, but on the second day the water was almost exhausted, and one of the Indians died under the heat and labour. In the evening even the leaders had begun to despair, when the rising moon showed them the island of Navasa, a mere barren rock but containing water in the hollow clefts. They remained here a day, living on shell fish, and on the fourth day reached Hispaniola, distant about a hundred miles from Jamaica. Mendez proceeded along the coast for San Domingo, but hearing that the governor was in Xaragua, he left his canoe and proceeded overland to meet him. Ovando promised to send immediate relief, but delayed from day to day and month to month.

A new misfortune had in the mean time fallen on Columbus. Part of the crew, led by a person of the name Porras, rose in mutiny, and seizing some canoes that Columbus had bought from the natives, deserted him and the sick, and resolved to sail for Hispaniola. They took what arms and provisions they chose, and proceeded along the coast plundering and abusing the Indians. They made two attempts to leave the island, but were driven back by the wind, and then wandered about the country, supporting themselves by robbing the natives. Columbus by skilful arrangements had recruited the health and spirits of those who remained with him, but the Indians began to relax in supplying him with provisions, and as the toys given in payment became more common, asked a far higher price for what they brought. In this extremity Columbus, knowing that on a particular night an eclipse of the moon would take place, resolved to use it to intimidate the natives. He assembled all the caciques, and told them that the God of the heavens, whom he and his people worshipped, was angry with the Indians for refusing them supplies, and meant to punish them with famine and pestilence. As

a token of this they would that night see the moon become dark and change its colour. Some of the Indians derided the prediction, but when they saw the dark shadow stealing over the moon, they were seized with terror, and hurried to the ships with provisions, entreating Columbus to intercede to avert the threatened calamity. Columbus retired to his cabin to commune with the Deity, whilst the Indians filled the woods with their wild lamentations; and when the eclipse was about to diminish, Columbus came forth and told them that he had prevailed with God in their behalf, and that they would be pardoned on condition of fulfilling their promises, in sign of which the darkness would now withdraw from the moon. Columbus was henceforth regarded by the Indians with awe, as possessed of supernatural powers, and from that time no want of provisions was felt in the ships.

Eight months had now passed away, with no prospect of relief, and a new mutiny was about to break out, when one evening a vessel was seen off the harbour. Next day a boat came from it to the ships, in which was Escobar, one of the former rebels against Columbus. He had been sent by Ovando probably as a spy, for, after a short conversation with Columbus, and giving him a letter from the governor, he departed. The crew were much disappointed at this desertion, but were re-assured by the admiral, who said that Escobar's vessel was too small to take the whole, and that he had sailed for larger ships. Columbus afterwards sent a messenger to the mutineers offering them a free pardon and passage home, provided they would return to their obedience. Porras rejected all conditions, and to render his men hopeless of forgiveness, resolved to attack and plunder the ships. Columbus sent his brother to meet them, who again offered them pardon, but, confident in their numbers, the rebels would listen to no terms, and

attacked the Adelantado. They were well received by this experienced soldier, who took Porras captive with his own hand, when his followers fled leaving several slain. Next day the fugitives sent a petition for pardon, binding themselves to obedience by horrid imprecations. Columbus granted this request, and at length, after a year of delay, two vessels arrived, one fitted out by Mendez at the admiral's own expense, the other by Ovando, whose long neglect had roused the public indignation so that even the clergy were condemning it from the pulpit. On the 28th June, 1504, Columbus took leave of the wreck which had been so long his home, amid the tears of the Indians, who regretted the departure of their celestial visitants. On the 13th August he anchored at San Domingo, where he was received with the highest marks of distinction by the people, in which the governor saw fit to agree. There was, however, no friendly feeling between them, and Columbus found reason to complain of the way in which the island where he had so strong an interest had been governed.

The condition to which Hispaniola had been reduced during the absence of Columbus, is the best refutation of the calumnies of his enemies. Ovando had been accompanied to the island by a large band of adventurers, who on their arrival set out for the mines, but, unaccustomed to labour, and ignorant of the method of collecting the precious metals, soon exhausted their store of provisions without any result, and returned in utter poverty to the town, where more than a thousand of them died of want and disease. Isabella had ordered the Indians to be set free, when they, of course, refused to labour in the mines. A new decree was then obtained, by which they were to work a short time for hire, and in order to aid in their conversion. On this pretence they were anew portioned out among their former masters, who treated them with the

most brutal cruelty. Las Casas, an eyewitness, says, 'they were compelled to labour by the lash, fed on unsubstantial cassava bread, and so sparingly that they scrambled like dogs under the table for the bones thrown to them by their masters; and when at last dismissed, were found dead on the road home, or lying gasping under the trees, faintly crying 'Hunger, hunger!'' Many fled to the mountains, others killed themselves in despair, and before twelve years from its first discovery was over, several hundred thousand of its once happy natives had been sacrificed to the lust and avarice of the white men. A more striking fate was reserved for the people of Xaragua, still independent, and governed by Anaconda, the wife of Caonabo, formerly mentioned. Ovando marched thither with three hundred men, and was received in the most friendly manner by the natives. On a Sunday afternoon he assembled the chiefs and people to witness a mock fight among his soldiers, but at an appointed signal took all the caciques who had met in his lodgings, to the number of eighty, prisoners, forced from them by torture a confession of guilt, and then consumed them in the flames of the house. His troops, meanwhile, massacred the naked and defenceless Indians, shut up in a square from whence they could not escape. The excuse for this treachery was an alleged conspiracy of the natives, for which Anaconda was subsequently hanged, and the fertile country reduced to a desolate wilderness. Another province, Higuey, was still independent, but the Spaniards soon penetrated there also, and after an obstinate but unavailing resistance, massacred or subdued the people, and taking the cacique prisoner, hanged him like a common felon. In this war the Spaniards committed deeds of horrid and atrocious cruelty, such as cannot now even be related, so that their countryman Las Casas says, 'All these things, and others revolting to human nature, my own eyes beheld,

and now I almost fear to repeat them, scarce believing myself, or whether I have not dreamed them.'

Such was the state of the once rich and happy island when Columbus returned to it after his long absence, more like a region given as a prey to evil spirits, than the earthly paradise he originally imagined it. He left it for Spain on the 12th September, 1504, after assisting from his private funds many of the companions of his misfortunes, some of whom had been the most violent among the rebels. His vessel suffered much from tempests, and he himself was confined to bed by the gout, but arrived in Spain on the 7th November, and took up his residence at Seville. Trouble followed him even here, the revenue he should have received from the Indies being withheld by the governor, and his remonstrances to the king unheeded. The calumnies of his enemies prevailed against him, though, in his own words, he had 'served their majesties with as much zeal and diligence as if it had been to gain Paradise.' His best friend was now gone, Isabella having died on the 26th November, of deep melancholy caused by the death of her favourite children. Columbus remained in Seville during the winter, his health not permitting him to proceed to court, where the king received all his applications for justice with cold indifference. In May he was able to travel to Segovia, where he had an interview with Ferdinand, who received him with cold professions of kindness and evasive promises. The king never meant to keep his word—'a little more delay, a little more disappointment, a little more infliction of ingratitude, and this loyal and generous heart would cease to beat; he should then be delivered from the just claims of a well-tried servant, who, in ceasing to be useful, was considered by him to have become importunate.'

And this event was now at hand. Tortured by disease,

and despairing of justice, Columbus having made a will settling all his affairs with scrupulous minuteness, and performed the pious offices required by his religion, expired with great resignation on the 20th May, 1506, in about the seventieth year of his age. His remains were first deposited in the convent of St Francisco, whence they were transferred in 1513 to a monastery at Seville, and in 1536, along with the body of his son Diego, were transported to Hispaniola, and interred in the cathedral of San Domingo. Even there they were not destined to rest in peace, but in 1795, when the island was given up to France, were removed to Havannah in Cuba. Ferdinand erected a memorial to his memory, or rather of his own ingratitude, inscribed thus —'For Castile and Leon, Columbus found a New World.' The true monument of the great Genoese is the vast continent he made known to mankind—his true reward, the gratitude of posterity, and the fame that will attend him to the latest ages. His actions show his character in its truest and noblest light, especially when contrasted with those of his cotemporaries, with whom he came into immediate contact. His imagination was ardent, and apt to lead him astray, but regulated by a knowledge of science rare in those days. His ambition was lofty and soaring, and thus the source of much misfortune to him. He was not satisfied with common rewards, but sought others which the haughty dignity of the Spanish monarch felt degraded by granting, and the very importance of his services became a reason for withholding from him his due reward. Avarice seems to have influenced his mind less than honour and dignity, and he was always more disposed to maintain his authority by mildness than severity. His conduct to the poor Indians is the darkest spot on his character, and when we read of the misery and destruction his discovery entailed on that unoffending race, we almost feel as if his own suffer-

ings were demanded by justice. Though he often tried to defend the natives from the oppressions of his followers, we cannot forget that it was his constant appeals to the low avarice of the Spanish court, and the visions of gold and precious stones by which he endeavoured to prove the value of his discoveries, that drew to the New World that horde of lawless ruffians who were the great cause of all his trials. He led out colonies by the hope of gold, wrested from the hands of weak and defenceless savages, and his reckless followers, balked of their prey, turned on him as a deceiver. This curse of the greed of gold has adhered to the Spanish colonies even to the present day, like a malignant pestilence, wasting their strength and never suffering them to take root in the land. It is but justice to this great man to remark, that many of his errors were those of his time, and that even the church justified his treatment of the natives. His loftiest imaginings also fell short of the wonderful reality. 'How would his magnanimous spirit have been consoled,' says his eloquent historian, 'amidst the afflictions of age and the cares of penury, the neglect of a fickle public, and the injustice of an ungrateful king, could he have anticipated the splendid empires which were to spread over the beautiful world he had discovered; and the nations, tongues, and languages which were to fill its lands with his renown, and to revere and bless his name to the latest posterity!'

It may not be uninteresting to mention the subsequent fortunes of the family of Columbus. He was succeeded in his rights as viceroy of the New World by his son Diego, described as a man of great integrity, of respectable talents, and of a frank, generous, and gentle disposition. He came forward to claim the restitution of the family offices and privileges; but Ferdinand was not inclined to bestow on the son what he had withheld from the higher merit of the father. After two years' vain solicitation, Diego only ob-

tained leave to prosecute his claim in the ordinary courts of law. The suit, commenced in 1508 and continued for several years, was decided in his favour, but the court had no power to enforce compliance on the monarch. At last, Diego having married a niece of the celebrated Duke of Alva, the chief favourite of the king, the monarch yielded to this powerful influence what he had denied to justice. Ovando was recalled in compliance with a promise long before made to the queen on her deathbed; and Diego appointed with the same powers. He went out to San Domingo in 1509, with his wife, his two uncles, and his brother, and ruled with a degree of splendour hitherto unknown. But he could not reform the abuses that had crept into the colony; factious men still disputed his authority, and the oppression and destruction of the Indians continued. In 1510, Cuba was colonised, and the mines in Hispaniola being exhausted, the culture of the sugarcane, a more certain source of riches, was introduced. On the representations of the Dominican friars, the labour of the natives was diminished, and negro slaves from Africa employed instead, but treated with a barbarity surpassing even that inflicted on the Indians. In 1515, Diego repaired to court to answer charges brought against him; but though his innocence was admitted, he continued involved in long and troublesome litigation with the fiscal officers of the crown. He returned to the island in 1520, but was recalled about three years afterwards, and spent the rest of his life in the vain endeavour to obtain justice from the court, having died near Toledo in 1526. His wife claimed the inheritance for his son, Don Luis, who, finding his dignities and privileges mere sources of vexation to himself, resigned them to the Emperor Charles V., and in return was created Duke of Veragua, and received a fixed sum of money for his claim to a tenth of the produce of the Indies. In 1578,

all the legitimate male heirs of Columbus were extinct, and a long law-suit commenced, which was at last decided in favour of Don Nuno de Portugallo, a branch of the Portuguese house of Braganza, and the great-grandson of Diego, the eldest son of Columbus.

Columbus's brother, the Adelantado, survived him several years, but was never employed in any office of importance, the king being jealous of the too great influence of the family. Fernando, the second son of Columbus, made several voyages to the New World, and also travelled over many parts of Europe, Asia, and Africa. He possessed good natural abilities and studious habits, and collected a library of more than twenty thousand volumes, which he left to the Cathedral of Seville, where he died in 1539, aged about fifty-one years. He wrote several works, the only one of which that is known being his history of his father the admiral. It is singular that this history only exists in Spanish, in a retranslation from an Italian translation of the original. This has given rise to many errors in names and dates, but the work is still entitled to great credit, and forms the foundation of all the biographies of Columbus. One of the best and fullest of these is the production of Washington Irving, a native of that continent Columbus was the first to discover. It is to this work that we have been chiefly indebted in drawing up this account of the fortunes of the illustrious Genoese, whose merits have survived all calumny, and are indelibly inscribed on the history of the world.

HERNANDO CORTES

AND THE

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CHAPTER I.

HAVING given an account of the life of Columbus and the discovery of the western continent, we now propose to trace the history of another brilliant incident in the progress of Spanish discovery, and to record the fortunes of a man whose adventures perhaps exceed in romantic interest even those of the celebrated Genoese mariner. This is Hernando Cortes, the conqueror of Mexico, the richest and most remarkable of those kingdoms that flourished in the western continent before the arrival of Europeans, and that in which civilisation had made the most extended progress. As the subject is exceedingly interesting in itself, we will, in the first place, give a short sketch of the ancient kingdom of Mexico, and the manners, customs, and religion of its inhabitants, as an introduction to the account of its overthrow and subjugation by the Spaniards.

The present republic of Mexico extends over the southern part of North America, from the gulf of the same name to the Pacific Ocean. Geographers estimate its extent at nearly nine hundred thousand square miles, or ten times

the extent of Great Britain. Only about a fourth of this vast territory was, however, included in the ancient kingdom, whose boundaries are very imperfectly ascertained. In this part of America the chain of the Andes, which had sunk down to a low level in the isthmus of Panama, again rises and spreads out into a wide plateau, whose mean height is estimated by Humboldt at about 7500 feet. Above this rise many volcanic mountains, whose summits range from east to west, and consequently in a direction different from that of the Cordilleras. Their summits are clothed in perpetual snow, while the low grounds near the sea have a temperature little inferior to that of the equatorial regions of Southern America. In this limited tract, therefore, almost every climate may be found, and all the productions of the globe flourish luxuriantly. So well marked are these zones of vegetation, that even the unobservant natives distinguish them by various names. The first is the *tierra caliente* or hot region, lying along the shores of the Atlantic, with a mean temperature of 80 degrees, rising in summer to 86 or occasionally higher. Here sandy plains are mingled with tracts of exuberant fertility, where aromatic shrubs and flowers spring up below majestic forest trees. But the warmth of the climate produces a malignant malaria, the source of the vomito, a kind of bilious fever, which rages with fatal virulence during the summer months. This region extends about sixty or eighty miles into the interior, when the ground rises and the traveller enters a new zone, where the air is cooler, the vegetation less luxuriant, and moisture more abundant. This is the *tierra templada* or temperate region, where many of the productions of the inferior zone have vanished, as the vanilla, indigo, and cocoa trees; but others, as the sugar-cane and glossy leaved banana, still grow. This region rises to about 4000 feet, when wheat and other

kinds of European produce begin to mingle with the maize or Indian corn, and oaks and pines constitute an important portion of the forests. This is the *tierra fria* or cold region, the last of the great natural divisions of the country, whose climate, however, resembles that of the finest parts of Italy. Near Mexico, the mean of the whole year is about 62 degrees, corresponding to that of Lisbon or Naples; whilst the winter is only 55, and the summer 66 degrees, being thus far more uniform and temperate than in these European cities. Above the plain rise various volcanic peaks, of which Orizaba and Popocatepetl reach an elevation of 18,000 feet or more above the sea. Their summits are clothed in perpetual snow, only dissolved by the warm vapours rising from the ever active fires within.

In the middle of the plateau lies the celebrated valley of Mexico, of an oval form, and about 230 miles in circumference. It is surrounded by a range of lofty mountains of igneous rock, and in the lower parts occupied by several lakes, on whose shores stood the cities of Mexico and Tezcuco, the capitals of two ancient kingdoms. These lakes were, at the time of the invasion, much larger in extent than subsequently, when the indiscriminate destruction of the thick forests that once covered the land had diminished the rain and increased evaporation. This valley was then inhabited by several tribes, whose history is involved in mysterious obscurity, rendered only more striking by the legendary fragments handed down by the conquerors, which serve to excite curiosity without satisfying it. The first race was the Toltecs, who, coming from the north, in the seventh century, fixed their capital at Tula, on the northern side of the Mexican valley, and are reported to have been well instructed in agriculture, the arts, and architecture. For four centuries they ruled the

land, when famine, pestilence, and war carried them away, and a race of rude barbarians from the north-west occupied their habitations. Then other civilised races followed, among them the Aztecs or Mexicans, and the Acolhuans, also named Tezcucans from their chief city on the great lake. The latter seem to have been a mild and gentle race, who not only preserved the remains of Toltec civilisation, but communicated them to the barbarous tribes among whom they had settled. The Mexicans, with whom we are more immediately concerned, also arrived in this valley in the beginning of the thirteenth century, from the north, the fruitful source of migrating nations both in the Old and New World. For more than a century they continued their wandering life, sometimes free, sometimes in bondage, till in 1325 they fixed their abode by the shore of the central lake. Their choice was determined by observing a royal eagle, of singular size and beauty, seated on a cactus or prickly pear springing from a crevice in a rock washed by the waters, holding a serpent in his talons, and spreading his broad wings to the rising sun. Accepting this as a favourable omen, they built their city—rude huts of reeds raised on piles above the water—and supported themselves on fish and water-fowl. Such was the origin of Mexico, so named from their war-god Mexitli, but known to its founders by another title, from its legendary origin, which has also been commemorated by the eagle and cactus, the emblem of the present Mexican republic. For a time, internal dissensions limited them to their island home, but in the beginning of the fifteenth century they formed a league with some of the other tribes in the vicinity, and not only conquered the whole of the surrounding basin, but, before the arrival of the Spaniards, had extended their empire from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and even south into Guatemala and Nicaragua.

This wide-expanded empire was the work of the able and warlike sovereigns who ruled the state. The monarchs were nearly absolute in authority, and elected by the nobles from a particular family, their choice being determined by the military talents of the candidates. The monarch was installed with many religious ceremonies, when, in a victorious campaign, he had secured a sufficient number of captives to sacrifice to their bloody gods. He lived with much barbaric pomp, surrounded by his body-guard, his councillors, and nobility, who seem to have held large tracts of land by a kind of feudal tenure, being bound to follow the monarch in war, and to render him various other services in peace. The administration of justice was, in important cases, reserved to judges appointed by the king in the various districts; less important matters were decided by magistrates elected by the people themselves. In the allied kingdom of Tezcuco, a more artificial gradation of courts was established, at the head of which was a general assembly, meeting in the capital, and presided over by the king himself. The judges held their office for life, were paid from the crown lands, and when convicted of receiving a present or bribe, were punished with death. The proceedings in each case were recorded in hieroglyphic paintings, which were sometimes produced as testimony in suits respecting real property, even under the Spaniards. In these paintings the laws also were recorded, and the punishment of various crimes announced. Murder, adultery, and certain cases of theft were capital, and intemperance in the young was visited with the same penalty, in the old by loss of rank and property. Marriage was celebrated with much formality, and divorces only authorised by the sentence of a particular court. Captives, criminals, and debtors, might be reduced to slavery, but their condition was alleviated by mild regulations, and all the chil-

dren were free. By a peculiarity which it would have been well for Christian states to have imitated, no one could be born to slavery in Mexico. Continual wars produced an abundant supply of slaves and victims for sacrifice.

The royal revenue was derived partly from the crown lands, partly from a portion of the produce rendered by the people; whilst various services were performed by persons living in the vicinity of the court. Manufacturers also contributed a portion of their goods, and tax-gatherers collected the various articles with much rigour. War was, however, the chief aim of the Mexican institutions, and on its followers the highest honours of the state were lavished. Their king, we have seen, must be a warrior; their tutelar deity was the god of war, on whose altars hecatombs of captives were sacrificed; and death in battle was a sure passport to the realms of bliss and the bright mansions of the sun. Their higher warriors were clad in quilted cotton, often covered with gorgeous feather-work or plates of gold, which is beautifully described in Southey's Madoc:—

> 'Their mail, if mail it may be called, was woven
> Of vegetable down, like finest flax,
> Bleached to the whiteness of new fallen snow.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Others, of higher office, were arrayed
> In feathery breast-plates, of more gorgeous hue
> Than the gay plumage of the mountain cock,
> Than the pheasant's glittering pride. But what were these,
> Or what the thin gold hauberk, when opposed
> To arms like ours in battle?'

The religious faith of the Mexicans was so anomalous as to lead some historians to ascribe it to two independent sources. They recognised the existence of one supreme God, the Creator and Lord of the universe, and in their prayers addressed him as 'the God by whom we live, omnipresent, that knoweth all thoughts, and giveth all gifts, without whom man is as nothing, who is invisible,

incorporeal, of perfect perfection and purity, under whose wings we find repose and a sure defence.' But this pure faith was too simple, too sublime, for their savage minds; and they added thirteen principal and above two hundred inferior deities, presiding over the elements and the fortunes of men. At the head was the god of war, the patron deity of the nation, whose fantastic image, loaded with costly ornaments, was enshrined in stately temples, whose altars reeked with the blood of human victims. Another was the god of the air, who resided for a time on earth, and taught the use of metals, agriculture, and the arts of government. Then was the golden age of Anahuac, when the earth teemed with fruits and flowers, and the air was filled with sweet perfumes and the melody of birds; but a more powerful hostile deity compelled him to leave the earth, and the celestial stranger—described as tall in stature, with a white skin, long dark hair, and a flowing beard—set sail on the Mexican Gulf, promising again to revisit the land. The whole legend would almost induce us to believe that some wanderer from the eastern hemisphere had reached their shores, taught the people certain religious truths and a few of the arts of civilisation, and then set sail for his home, which he had never reached.

According to their mythology, the earth had undergone several revolutions, in which the race of men had been destroyed and afterwards renewed. They also believed in a future world, in which the wicked were punished in everlasting darkness; another class lived in indolent contentment; and the heroes who fell in battle passed to the presence of the sun, whom they followed in his course round the heavens, or animated the clouds or singing birds of beautiful plumage that dwelt in the gardens of paradise. The dead were buried after ceremonies not unlike those of the Catholic church, and a throng of slaves were sacrificed

at the obsequies of the rich and powerful. When a child was named, its lips and bosom were sprinkled with water, and 'the Lord was implored to permit the holy drops to wash away the sin that was given to it before the foundation of the world, so that the child might be born anew.' Many of their moral precepts also bear a strong resemblance to Christianity, and would almost induce us to believe that either they had been derived from this source before the arrival of the Spaniards, or that Catholic historians have interpreted the rude rites and language of heathenism in conformity with their own ideas. The priests were very numerous, more than 5000 being attached to the principal temple in the capital; each had his particular deity, in whose temple he resided, at least when actively employed. Besides religious duties, they had also charge of the education of youth, and preserved the hieroglyphical paintings and oral traditions. They were presided over by two high priests, the chief councillors of the king. Their temples were very numerous, and were generally solid masses of earth cased with brick or stone, and rising in a succession of terraces in a kind of pyramidal form. On the top was a broad area on which stood one or two towers containing the images of the gods, and before them the stone of sacrifice, with two lofty altars, on which the fire was never extinguished.

Many of their ceremonies were of a light and joyous nature, consisting of songs and dances. But they had rites of a darker aspect. Not only were animals sacrificed to their deities, but for 200 years before the conquest human sacrifices prevailed to a great extent. The intended victim was often selected a year before, and in the interval treated with all manner of indulgence, arrayed in a splendid dress, and, when he went abroad, attended by a train of royal pages. But the fatal day arrived, he was led to the

temple, and as he ascended its winding steps, cast aside his chaplets and ornaments; five priests held him stretched on the sacred stone, whilst a sixth opened his breast with a sharp razor of volcanic glass, and tearing out the beating heart, held it up to the sun. The body of the victim was then handed over to the warrior who had taken him in battle, by whom it was dressed and served up as an entertainment to his friends. In this way, some authors affirm, that 20,000 to 50,000 victims were sacrificed every year; but there is probably some truth in the remark of Las Casas, that this is the estimate of brigands, who wished to find an apology for their own atrocities.

From these horrid rites, which show the depths to which the human mind, when left to itself, will sink, we gladly turn to their science and civilisation. As the basis of this we may consider their system of hieroglyphics or picture-writing, by which the memory of past events was preserved for posterity. In this real objects were represented by their image, and abstract notions by symbols, often of a very fanciful kind. Thus, a 'serpent' was chosen to represent time, a 'tongue' denoted speaking, a 'foot-print' travelling, a 'man sitting on the ground' an earthquake. Slight changes in the form and position of an object often materially altered its signification, and rendered this method of conveying knowledge imperfect and difficult. For the names of persons and places, the hieroglyphics were often used simply as marking sounds, though in this they had attained to less perfection than the ancient Egyptians. In these rude signs the Aztecs recorded the annals of their race, their laws, and religious ritual. Their manuscripts were inscribed on a kind of paper, made from the leaves of the American aloe, and immense quantities of them were in existence on the arrival of the Spaniards. But these people looked on them as magic scrolls, and the

first archbishop of Mexico, collecting them from all quarters, reduced the 'mountain heap,' as it was called, to ashes. Some remnants alone escaped, and are preserved in various European libraries, but the key to interpret them is lost probably for ever.

The Mexicans had a system of arithmetical notation of considerable complexity. Their year was divided into eighteen months of twenty days each, and five supplementary days were added, which belonged to no month, and were thought peculiarly unlucky. They had also a week of five days, the last being the market day. They had another intercalation of twelve or thirteen days every fifty-two years, by which the calendar was adjusted to true time with wonderful exactness. The priests had a peculiar system of chronology, by which they regulated the occurrence of the religious festivals, and which they used for calculating nativities and for other astrological purposes. In 1790 a dial or circular block of carved stone was dug up in the great square of Mexico, which has been held to show that the ancient Aztecs had the means of fixing with precision the hours of the day, of which they counted sixteen, the periods of the solstices and equinoxes, and that of the transit of the sun across the zenith of Mexico. In many respects their astronomical system bears a strong analogy to that of Eastern Asia, and as it seems too scientific in its details to have been the invention of a barbarous nation, philosophers have inclined to the belief that it was borrowed by some unknown means from the Old World.

In agriculture the Mexicans had made considerable advances; it was held in high respect, and formed the chief occupation of a great part of the people. The banana, the cacao, whose fruit produces the chocolate, the vanilla, and the maize or Indian corn, grew in abundance. But the most remarkable production was the *maguey* or great

Mexican aloe, 'whose clustering pyramids of flowers, towering above their dark coronals of leaves, were seen sprinkled over many a broad acre of the table land;' from its juice was produced an intoxicating beverage, *pulque*, still highly esteemed by the natives; its roots formed a palatable and nutritious food; its leaves were used to cover their dwellings, or made into thread, cords, cloth, or paper; whilst the thorns at the extremities were employed as pins or needles. Such were the varied uses of the agave, of which it is doubtful whether there are more species than the one now common both in Europe and the United States.

Gold, silver, lead, tin, and copper were abundant; but though iron ores were profusely scattered through the land, the use of that metal was unknown. For it they employed a kind of bronze or alloy of tin and copper. With this they carved vessels of gold and silver into the most curious forms, and even contrived to polish many of the precious stones. For this purpose they also used obsidian or volcanic glass, which they fashioned into various cutting instruments. A fine dye was procured from the cochineal insect, fed on plantations of cactus. Their garments of feather-work also employed many of the people, and were remarkable for the skill and beauty with which the various tints were blended. Gold dust, bits of tin, and bags of cacao served for money. They had no shops, but regular markets, and their merchants travelled over the whole country, and even into distant lands.

Marriage, as formerly stated, was sanctioned by various ceremonies, and only annulled by the decision of a legal court. Polygamy was, however, permitted, but does not seem to have produced its usual effects of degrading the character of the females, who were permitted to share the social intercourse and festivities of the men. These were very frequent, and, among the higher classes, exhibited

much luxury and profusion. Among the most esteemed dishes was a slave sacrificed on purpose, and elaborately cooked. Chocolate and pulque were the favourite beverages, and dancing and music usually closed the festivities.

In the allied kingdom of Tezcuco, civilisation had reached even a higher limit, and the people appear of a more refined and gentle character. Its leading features were, however, so similar, that we shall not describe them. The origin of this civilisation is a most interesting question, but one on which little light can be thrown. Modern researches have rather proved that it existed, than shown how it arose or whence it came. Many pious authors lead a colony of Jews, a portion of the lost ten tribes, into this remote land. A migration of Mongols, who, crossing at Behring's Straits or the Aleutian islands, journeyed down from the north to settle in this fertile land, has been adopted by others. Though more probable than the former, it is less so than the opinion supported by other authors, who seek for the origin of this civilisation from abroad—that some European sailors, driven from their course by the winds, or seeking adventure in the unknown ocean, may have reached that distant shore. Southey, in his poem of Madoc, has given popularity to the old Welsh tradition of a prince who, flying from the Saxon invader, found a home in a western land. Perhaps, however, the civilisation was of native growth, and its similarity to that of other lands arose simply from the unity of human nature producing like fruits in like conditions.

Not less singular is the completeness with which this civilisation has disappeared from among their descendants. The modern Mexican Indian has lost the highest lineaments of his ancestors, without acquiring any compensation from his European conquerors. As Prescott well remarks, 'The American Indian has something peculiarly sensitive

in his nature. He shrinks instinctively from the rude touch of a foreign hand. Even when this foreign influence comes in the form of civilisation, he seems to sink and pine away beneath it. It has been so with the Mexicans. Under the Spanish domination, their numbers have silently melted away. Their energies are broken. They no longer tread their mountain plains with the conscious independence of their ancestors. In their faltering step, and meek and melancholy aspect, we read the sad characters of the conquered race. The cause of humanity indeed has gained. They live under a better system of laws, a more assured tranquillity, a purer faith. But all does not avail. Their civilisation was of the hardy character which belongs to the wilderness. The fierce virtues of the Aztec were all his own. They refused to submit to European culture—to be engrafted on a foreign stock. His outward form, his complexion, his lineaments, are substantially the same; but the moral characteristics of the nation, all that constituted its individuality as a race, are effaced for ever.'

CHAPTER II.

At the time when Columbus was vainly soliciting royal aid to go forth on his noble scheme of discovery, in the year 1485, the most illustrious of his followers, Hernando Cortes, was born in the small town of Medellin, in Estremadura. He was descended from a poor but honourable family, his father, Martin Cortes, being a captain of infantry. His constitution in infancy was feeble, but strengthened with his years. At fourteen he was sent to

Salamanca to study law. This, however, did not suit his taste, and after loitering two years at college, he returned home and spent some time in idle dissipation. He now turned his thoughts to a military life, and intended to have sailed for Hispaniola with Ovando the successor of Columbus, but was detained in consequence of an accident met with in prosecuting an intrigue. At last, in 1504, he sailed for the Indies, and landed in Hispaniola. Here he was offered a grant of land, but answered with characteristic pride—'I came to get gold, not to till the soil like a peasant.' He, however, accepted a grant of land and slaves, and for some years followed this pursuit, diversified by military expeditions against the natives, and numerous duels, arising out of the amorous intrigues in which he was constantly engaged.

In 1511, Cortes followed Velasquez to the conquest of Cuba, and for a time stood high in his favour. A quarrel, arising from some new intrigue, induced him to join a conspiracy against the governor, who, having discovered it, seized him, and would have hung him but for the interposition of his friends. Cortes escaped from prison and took sanctuary in a church, but having inadvertently gone without the walls, was seized by an alguacil, and again put in prison. Cortes seems not to have forgot this treatment, as he afterwards had the officer hung for some offence in New Spain. He was carried on board a ship about to sail for Hispaniola, but again freeing his feet from the fetters, got on shore, and took refuge in the same sanctuary. He was at length reconciled to the governor, and receiving a grant of land, lived for some time cultivating it and working gold mines, by which he amassed a considerable sum of money.

Many reports of the wealthy regions of Yucatan and Mexico on the neighbouring mainland, having been brought

to Cuba, the governor, in 1518, fitted out a fleet under his nephew Grijalva, to investigate their truth. The commander was struck with the proofs of high civilisation, especially in architecture, which he found along the coast, and after carrying on a profitable traffic with the natives, in which gold and jewels were freely bartered for glass beads and other trinkets, sent back one of his ships with this rich cargo, whilst he continued his voyage. Velasquez resolved to follow out this splendid discovery, and without waiting for the return of his nephew, prepared an armament for the colonisation and conquest of the newly discovered realms. He was induced to intrust this to the command of Cortes, with whom he was now on good terms, and who could contribute materially to defray the necessary expense. Cortes set about equipping his fleet with such energy, that the suspicions of Velasquez were roused, lest his officer might prove too independent. He even had resolved to deprive him of the command, but Cortes, with his usual decision, set sail in the night, without taking leave of the governor, though his fleet was as yet but imperfectly furnished with supplies. He afterwards touched at several harbours on the coast, where he completed his stores and filled up his crew by volunteers. Velasquez wrote to the governors of these places to seize and detain Cortes; but they had not the power, as his followers 'would have cheerfully laid down their lives for him.' He finally mustered his forces at Cape St Antonio, the westerly point of Cuba, where they amounted to eleven vessels, the largest of a hundred tons burden. He was accompanied by 110 mariners, and 553 soldiers, with about 200 Indians. He had also 14 pieces of artillery and 16 horses, for which he had paid a large price, but of whose importance for striking terror into the savages he was well aware. With this paltry force he set out to conquer a

country larger and probably more populous than Spain itself. Cortes was then about thirty-three years of age, of a pale complexion, a grave countenance, and large dark eyes. He was rather above the middle size, with a slender but muscular figure, and remarkable for vigour and agility. His manners were frank, his disposition gay and humourous, but he possessed a cool calculating spirit, and bold prompt decision, which never failed him in the hour of trial.

On the 18th day of February, 1519, Cortes sailed for the coast of Yucatan. He landed first on the island of Cozumel, and there was joined by Jeronimo de Aguilar, a Spanish ecclesiastic, who had been nearly eight years captive among the Indians, with whose language he was now familiar, but had almost forgotten his native Castilian. Cortes next touched at the mouth of the Tabasco river, took possession of the town, and defeated the natives in a great battle. They then submitted, sent presents to the Spaniards, among which were twenty female slaves, and were nominally converted to Christianity. The natives showed many marks of civilisation; but the Spaniards were much disappointed by finding only a small quantity of gold, which they were informed came from Culhua, or Mexico, in the west. Cortes again set sail along the shore, and at last landed on a desolate sandy beach, where the town of Vera Cruz was afterwards built. He entered into communication with the natives through one of the female slaves, named Marina by the Spaniards, who was a Mexican by birth, and subsequently became the mistress of Cortes. He had an interview with the governor of this distant province of the Mexican empire, from whom he received various presents, and was astonished by seeing an artist sketching a picture of himself and followers on canvass, for the information of the emperor. In it the ships,

or 'water-houses,' of the strangers; their horses, so new and strange to the Indians; their cannon, vomiting out fire, and crushing the forest trees with irresistible violence, were not forgotten.

Mexico was then ruled by Montezuma, whose name, signifying the 'sad, or severe man,' well expressed his character. He had extended the empire by successful war, but disgusted the people by haughty arrogance, and alienated them by grievous impositions. He had also offended his neighbours, the kingdom of Tezcuco being divided by the successful revolt of a younger brother of the sovereign, and the small republic of Tlascala lying midway to the coast, fearing the growing power of the neighbouring monarch. Montezuma had been a priest before he was called to the throne, and dark superstition had a deep hold on his mind. He was constant in his religious services, and hecatombs of human victims were sacrificed to avert, if possible, the destruction of his empire, foretold by ancient oracles, and announced by recent prodigies—by a miraculous overflowing of the lakes, by the burning of the national temple, by comets in the heavens, and by a vast sheet or flood of fire 'thickly powdered with stars' seen in the east—the latter supposed by some historians to have been a volcanic eruption.

The arrival of the strangers seemed to give reality to all these strange prodigies, and spread consternation through the Mexican court. Montezuma assembled his wisest councillors, with his allied kings; but much diversity of sentiment prevailed, some advising to repel the intruders by force, others to give them an honourable reception. Montezuma chose a more impolitic course: he sent rich presents to Cortes, but forbade him to approach his capital. These rich gifts only excited the cupidity of the Spaniards, who had been suffering much from the heat,

but were well supplied with all necessaries by the natives. Cortes still insisted on visiting the court, but the ambassador firmly refused, and requested the strangers to return to their own land, and a second embassy to the emperor brought back a similar reply. Meantime disease and discontent had broken out in the camp, many of the soldiers insisting on an immediate return. This Cortes evaded on various grounds, and was confirmed in his refusal by an embassy from the Totanacs, a neighbouring nation recently conquered by the Mexicans, and bearing the yoke with impatience. They informed him of the discontent prevailing in the empire, and invited him to Cempoalla, their chief town. There he met with a kind reception, and moving his ships to a river in its vicinity, he laid the foundation of a city and fortress. Cortes used all his influence to excite the Totanacs against their rulers; and with such success, that when some Aztec nobles came to demand tribute, this was refused, and the messengers put into prison. Cortes contrived that they should escape, treated them kindly, and sent them to Montezuma with a message, in which the insult was ascribed entirely to the Totanacs. By this base duplicity, the Spaniard thought to secure in some measure the friendship of both parties, and he so far succeeded. The Totanacs became wholly subject to the foreigners, who could alone protect them from their incensed masters, and Montezuma sent a new embassy with costly gifts, and a promise to spare the rebels for the sake of the Spaniards. So much did this proof of his power increase the influence of Cortes, that when he soon after commanded his soldiers to violate the national temple, and destroy the images, not a hand was raised to protect them, but the whole people apparently adopted the faith of the foreigners, who set up an image of the Virgin and Child in the shrine from whence they had ejected the heathen idols.

Cortes was now meditating a bolder enterprise, even the conquest of the great empire of Montezuma. To this his force was utterly inadequate, but he trusted to the dissensions among the natives, and prepared for his attempt with remarkable skill and energy. The adverse part of his followers were won by gifts and promises, or silenced by stern punishment; the commission he had received from the governor of Cuba was resigned into the hands of the magistracy of the new city, only to be restored with more ample bounds, and a vessel, loaded with rich presents, was dispatched to Spain to secure the royal sanction to these proceedings. But fearing lest the timid hearts of some among his followers might still shrink from the desperate enterprise, he resolved to cut off all hope of retreat. He procured a report from the carpenters condemning the vessels as not seaworthy, and all of them were dismantled and sunk except one small bark. The army was filled with consternation, and loud murmurs rose against their general, who seemed thus for his own ambition to be leading 'them like cattle to be butchered in the shambles,' without means or hope of escape. But in an eloquent harangue, he soothed their fears and excited their cupidity anew, concluding in the stirring words—'As for me I have chosen my part. I will remain here while there is one to bear me company. If there be any so craven as to shrink from sharing the dangers of our glorious enterprise, let them go home in God's name. There is still one vessel left. Let them take that and return to Cuba. They can tell there how they deserted their commander and their comrades, and patiently wait till we return loaded with the spoils of the Aztecs.' When he thus concluded, all fear was gone, and the enthusiastic shout burst from the assembled multitude —'To Mexico! To Mexico!'

And for this city he set out on the 16th August, 1519,

with four hundred foot, fifteen horse, and seven pieces of artillery. He was accompanied by thirteen hundred Indian warriors, and a thousand porters to convey the artillery and baggage. In a few marches they traversed the warm region, and leaving its luxuriant groves, began to ascend the mountains. Pausing at Xalapa, they saw below them the plain over which they had passed, covered with meadows, woods, streams, and villages, and bounded as by a white streak by the ocean, beyond which was their native home. Behind was the steep ascent, crowned with its snowy mountains, to which they turned with renewed vigour as they felt the cool breeze from the upland regions. They then wound round the base of the Cofre de Perote, rising 13,000 feet above the sea, and suffered much from the cold winds, with driving rain and sleet, while toiling through the rugged and barren tracts of lava which encircle the volcano. Emerging on the plateau, the Spaniards found a more congenial climate, but the fields filled with plants previously unknown. They soon after reached a large city where they were very coolly received, but remained four days for rest and refreshment. They continued their route through the plain, then well wooded and crowded with villages, marching in regular order, 'as in the midst of a battle,' and never laying their weapons from their side. Cortes was advised by his Indian allies to proceed by the town of Tlascala, and sent some of them forward to ask permission from the warlike republicans. The embassy occasioned much diversity of opinion in that city, but the war party at last prevailed, and the ambassadors were detained on various pretences. Cortes continued to push forwards, and entered the Tlascalan territory, whose limits were marked by a strong rampart, but wholly without guards. He had not proceeded far, however, when he encountered an army of Tlascalans, whom he defeated,

though with the loss of two horses and one of his men. In the evening two of his ambassadors returned with a friendly message, on which he put little reliance; and next day his doubts were confirmed by the arrival of the other two, who had been retained as sacrifices, but contrived to escape. A body of Indians soon appeared, and having fought for some time, retired with precipitation. The Spaniards following incautiously, found themselves in the middle of a narrow pass defended by a vast army, which attacked them with great courage. With much difficulty the white men gained the open ground, where their artillery and cavalry soon drove back their foes. Cortes encamped on a hill, where he rested the next day, and on the second sent an embassy to the Tlascalans, who returned the fierce answer, that they would hew the flesh from their bones for sacrifice to the gods. This bold defiance, and the rumours of the number and prowess of the enemy, struck terror into the Spaniards, so that, as Bernal Diaz says, 'We feared death, for we were men.' But there was no retreat, and next day, after a long and dubious contest, the arms and discipline of the Europeans again prevailed. The priests having assured the Indians that the Spaniards, the children of the sun, would lose all their power when his beams were withdrawn, a night attack on the camp was next tried, but failed by the vigilance of Cortes.

These repeated victories of the strangers seem to have convinced the Tlascalans that further resistance was in vain. Their general, however, still delayed the embassy, and dispatched spies into the camp of Cortes, where they were discovered, and sent home with their hands cut off. This proof of Spanish sagacity broke the spirit of the chief, the embassy was allowed to proceed, and he soon followed in person to seek peace with the conquerors. This was readily granted by Cortes, whose troops were already

murmuring at the labour and danger to which they were subjected. After some delay to restore his own health, during which messengers again arrived with presents from Montezuma, and an offer of tribute, provided he would abstain from visiting the capital, Cortes proceeded to Tlascala. He was received with great kindness, and formed an alliance with that brave people, of the utmost importance to the success of his great enterprise. Whilst he remained in their city, another embassy arrived from Montezuma, who now invited him to his capital, and recommended the road by Cholula, which, notwithstanding the dissuasions of his new allies, he resolved to follow.

Cholula was the great emporium of commerce and centre of religion in the Mexican empire. There stood the greatest of the teocallis, or religious mounds, covering about forty-four acres with its square base, and rising to a height of 477 feet. On the top was a magnificent temple, and a splendid image of the 'god of the air.' Numerous other temples filled the city; pilgrims flocked to it from all quarters, and six thousand human victims are reported to have annually perished on its cruel altars. But its people were effeminate and treacherous, seeking to gain by cunning what they lost in open war. In this city, Cortes was at first received with kindness, but this soon changed to cool civility, and his mistress, Marina, discovered that they were plotting the destruction of him and his followers. His vengeance was quick and terrible. Seizing an opportunity when many of the chiefs and people were assembled in the square where he lodged, he ordered a general massacre, let loose his Indian allies to waste and plunder the devoted city, and consumed the great temple, its idols, and obstinate defenders, in one vast conflagration. Three, some say six, thousand of the people were slain, and the survivors reduced to the most complete subjection. The sur-

rounding cities, struck with the power, and dreading the cruel vengeance of the Spaniards, sent in their submission, and even Montezuma hastened to deny all participation in the conspiracy, and to soothe the conquerors with rich presents. Cortes remained a fortnight longer in the city, endeavouring to convert the natives to Christianity, and then resumed his march. He here parted with regret from his Totanac allies, who had followed him thus far from the coast, and stood by him faithfully in all difficulties, but feared to venture nearer to the capital of the great Montezuma.

The route of the Spaniards now led over the sierra that walls in the Mexican valley. The emperor had shut up the direct road, wishing to involve his unwished-for guests in another more dangerous. But his disaffected subjects revealed the deceit, and Cortes moved on between two of the loftiest mountains of the Cordillera. He paused till some of his followers ascended the highest, Popocatepetl, but it was then in a state of eruption, which prevented them reaching the summit, about 18,000 feet above the sea. Continuing their march, the troops at length reached the ridge of the sierra, when the glorious valley of Mexico, then richly wooded, and sprinkled with cultivated fields, silvery lakes, and shining cities, burst on their enraptured view, in the clear atmosphere of the tropics. At first his troops exclaimed—'It is the promised land!' but, in a moment, its wealth, its populous cities, its vast resources rose before them, and terror-struck by the prospect, they demanded to be led back to the ships. But the voice and eloquence of their undaunted leader had its customary effect, and with buoyant step they hastened down the sierra. Their progress was impeded by the admiring crowd who flocked from every quarter, and who did not fail to discover their discontent with the harsh rule of Montezuma. Again

an embassy from this monarch met them, and tried by entreaty and the offer of vast bribes to induce them to return. But all in vain: Cortes moved on towards the capital, whose sovereign, in a paroxysm of despair, sought counsel of his dumb idols, by fasting, prayers, and horrid sacrifices. Some of his councillors advised him to receive the Spaniards with courtesy; his more warlike brother, Cuitlahua, to summon his armies and drive them back to the ocean, or die nobly like a king. He chose the former, and his nephew, the Prince of Tezcuco, was sent to welcome Cortes to Mexico. Under his guidance the Spaniards were led safely amidst the winding lakes, where a bold enemy might have placed them at defiance. One night they lodged in a royal palace, whose stately architecture seemed to excel that of Europe; whilst its pleasure gardens, its aviaries and fish-ponds, filled their rude hearts with amazement. Next day they were led over the long causeway that unites the city of Mexico to the mainland, where the emperor met and welcomed them to his capital. He was clad with great magnificence, and waited on by his numerous attendants with the most reverential submission. One of the royal palaces was assigned to Cortes for an abode, whose numerous halls were amply sufficient to accommodate not only him and his European followers, but also the six thousand Tlascalans who had accompanied him into the very centre of their hereditary foes. All their wants were liberally supplied, and the emperor soon after paid Cortes a visit in person, and made many inquiries concerning the country whence he had come, and his motives for such a journey. Montezuma still regarded them as more than mortal, and the children of that fair-haired god who ages before had been driven from his land. Cortes next day returned the visit, and tried in vain to convert the emperor to Christianity. In his reply, Montezuma acknow-

ledged the superior power of the Christians, that their king was the rightful lord of all, and in his name he would rule. 'Rest now,' he concluded, 'from your labours. You are here in your own dwellings, and every thing shall be provided for your subsistence. I will see that your wishes shall be obeyed in the same manner as my own.' At these words tears filled his eyes, as the image of his ancient independence, of his vanished glory, flitted across his mind. Cortes took his departure, struck with the power and liberality of the emperor, having obtained leave to visit the various parts of the vast city.

Cortes set out at the head of his troops to inspect the city, and passing through its crowded streets, entered the market-place, frequented by strangers from all quarters, and at that time thronged, it is said, with forty thousand people. He then ascended the great temple, and entering the shrines beheld the horrid images of the gods, on whose polluted altars the hearts of human victims still reeked. Here he wished to erect the cross, but Montezuma, truer to his gods than to himself, refused; and Cortes returned home leaving the emperor to expiate the guilt incurred from the boldness of the strangers. Cortes was now aware of the power of his opponent, and saw clearly that Montezuma needed only to let loose the angry passions of his subjects, in order to involve the Spaniards and their allies in one common ruin. But he had gone too far to retreat, and determined to secure his safety by a bold stroke. In a council of his officers, it was resolved to seize the person of the emperor, and thus to enforce the submission of his people. An excuse for this was soon found. In a quarrel with the natives, the governor of Vera Cruz, with some of the troops left on the coast, had been slain, as the Spaniards asserted, at the instigation of Montezuma. Cortes requested an interview, charged the emperor with treachery,

and demanded that the murderers, as he named them, should be sent for. Montezuma denied any participation in the act, and ordered his officers immediately to appear in the capital. Cortes then demanded as a proof of his sincerity that he should accompany the Spaniards to their quarters, which the monarch at first indignantly refused; but at length, terrified by the stern demeanour of the Spaniards, ordered his royal litter, and was carried off apparently a voluntary prisoner. He with some difficulty restrained the rising indignation of his guards, and quieted a popular tumult, which, with courage to use it, might have freed him and his people from the yoke of the stranger.

Though treated with all the customary marks of respect, and surrounded by his usual attendants, Montezuma was in truth a prisoner in the camp of the Spaniards, who guarded him everywhere with jealous anxiety. Sometimes the conduct of the rude soldiery made him feel sensibly his altered condition, but Cortes, who feared nothing more than an open rupture, repressed all intentional insults with stern severity. The Spaniards, to favour their escape in case of extremity, had built some brigantines on the lake, whose powers of sailing struck wonder into the ignorant Mexicans, and in these Montezuma was taken to the neighbouring forests, where he occasionally enjoyed the pleasures of the chase. His nephew, the lord of Tezcuco, was meditating an insurrection, and openly defied the invaders, but Cortes, working on the fears of Montezuma, still supreme everywhere but in his own capital, had the bold chief seized by treachery and placed in irons, with his principal adherents. This was thought a lenient sentence from the Spaniards, who had lately shown their vindictive cruelty, by burning at the stake the Aztec chiefs whose successful resistance to foreign oppression had formed the first pretence for imprisoning the emperor.

Cortes next required Montezuma to swear allegiance to the King of Spain, and the emperor, in a full assembly of his caciques, submitted, though with tears in his eyes. This step seems to have been dictated to him, as much by superstition as fear, as he still believed the Spaniards to be the descendants of the fair-haired god, who had sent them to reclaim the superiority of the land. In token of submission he gave up to them the whole of his accumulated treasure of gold, estimated as worth £1,400,000 sterling of our present money. The fifth of this was set aside as the royal share, and the remainder divided, in proportion to their rank, among the conquerers, not without loud murmurs and disputes, which the general found some difficulty in allaying. Cortes next tried to convert the emperor, who firmly resisted, but after consulting with his priests, gave up one of the shrines of the great temple to the Christians, who turned it into a chapel with an altar, crucifix, and image of the Virgin. This open insult to their national religion roused the latent feeling of the Aztecs, who had borne all the former insults to their monarch and themselves with patience. The whole city was on the eve of insurrection, which the influence of Montezuma could hardly restrain. In an interview with Cortes he warned him to leave the city without delay, as the gods were highly offended, and that he had but to raise his finger and every Aztec in the land would be in arms against them. Cortes promised to comply, but delayed on various pretences, in expectation of aid from Spain.

The emissaries he had sent to that country with the news of his brillant discovery, found the emperor, Charles V., too much interested in his German politics to attend to the rich monarchy now laid at his disposal, and he postponed deciding between Cortes and his rival Velasquez. But the latter, stimulated to revenge by the rich prize which Cortes

seemed to have snatched from his grasp, prepared to avenge himself. He raised a force of about a thousand men in Cuba, and entrusted the command to an officer named Narvaez, with orders to depose Cortes. Narvaez landed on the coast, and taking up his quarters at Cempoalla, sent messengers to Vera Cruz, demanding the surrender of the fort. Sandoval, the governor, with prompt decision, seized the emissaries, packed them on the back of native porters, and hurried them off to Cortes in the capital. The general received them with customary politeness, won them to his cause by bribes, and then sent them back with a letter to Narvaez. Their accounts of the generosity of Cortes, and of the wealth he had conferred on his followers, were soon spread through the camp of his rival, and confirmed by friar Olmedo, sent nominally as an envoy to Narvaez, but in reality for the purpose of gaining information, and of securing adherents by liberal bribes, and still more liberal promises. Cortes was now in a position of extreme difficulty, with a small garrison in a vast city full of mutinous enemies, and with a dangerous rival supported by a superior force ready to attack him, and undermining all his influence on the mind of the natives. Leaving a portion of his troops in Mexico, he proceeded rapidly to the coast with the remainder, and on arriving within a short distance of Cempoalla, halted to refresh his men, 266 in number. Narvaez, aware of his approach, had moved out to attack him, but a storm coming on he returned, thinking Cortes still distant, and trusting to his vast superiority of numbers. He little knew the enterprising courage of his opponent, who, assembling his weary and hungry troops, proposed an immediate assault, which was received with enthusiasm. Fording a river swollen by the rain, they toiled onwards through the woods and muddy roads, till coming suddenly to a cross erected by them when

on their journey to Mexico, all fell on their knees, and the bold friar Olmedo absolved them of their sins and gave them his benediction. 'Wonderfully invigorated and refreshed,' they marched into the town, where all was silent, save the loud howl of the tempest, and their own measured tread. Narvaez, roused from his sleep, called his men to their posts, but the hardy veterans of Cortes were already among them, and Narvaez, severely wounded, was taken prisoner with his most resolute supporters, the remainder, nothing loath it would appear, giving in their submission to the conquerer. The morning sun first revealed the disparity of the troops; and those of Narvaez, chagrined at their defeat, began to murmur, but the ready eloquence, and the gifts and promises of Cortes, soon reconciled them to the change of their general.

Never was union more needed among the Spaniards. Messengers from the capital brought news that the whole city was in rebellion, and the garrison shut up in their quarters in instant danger of destruction. Cortes hastened thither to their relief, but everywhere on his journey was met by signs of alienation among the natives. The villages were deserted, and provisions furnished with difficulty. No rejoicing crowd now welcomed him to the city; the streets were lonely, or filled with dark and gloomy countenances. He was permitted, however, to join the garrison, who for some time had been kept in close blockade, and soon learned the cause of their unpopularity. Alvarado, whom he had left as governor, on some unfounded suspicion of an insurrection, had massacred six or eight hundred of the chiefs who had assembled unarmed for a religious festival, and then pillaged their bodies of their gold ornaments. Such atrocious cruelty and shameless avarice were too much even for Indian patience; a general attack was made on the Spanish quarters, and would probably have

been succcssful, had not Montezuma interfered. Out of a regard for his safety they desisted from the attack, and endeavoured to reduce the garrison by famine. Cortes sternly reproved the mad conduct of his governor, but inflicted no farther punishment. This in his condition was indeed scarcely possible, as his whole force was needed to oppose the rising storm. His troops now amounted to 1250 Europeans, and probably 8000 Indian allies.

Cortes, on his return, had treated Montezuma with marked disrespect, probably doubting his fidelity, and angry at the want of provisions. Somc of his attendants had requested an interview, but the Spaniard fiercely replied—'Go, tell your master and his people to open the markets, or we will do it for them at their cost.' Soon after, however, at his request he set free Cuitlahuac, the brother of Montezuma, and the heir of the throne, with the purpose of allaying the tumult. But this bold chief and experienced warrior chose another part. Assuming the authority his brother had virtually resigned, he called his followers to the field. The Spanish quarters were assaulted with desperate resolution; clouds of arrows and showers of stones were poured into them from all quarters, and though the murderous artillery mowed down the assailants in crowds, new warriors were ready to fill their place, till night put an end to the combat. Ncxt day Cortes sallied into the town at the head of his troops, but the streets were everywhere barricaded, and when onc defence was broken down by the cannon, another was immediately raised, while his followers were annoyed by arrows and stones from the roofs of the houses. Evening again closed the combat, but brought no rest to the Spaniards, who now feared an immediate attack. In the morning, Cortes requested Montezuma to interfere, but the indignant monarch refused: 'He desired only to die. It was of no use speaking to the

people, who would not believe him nor the false words and promises of Cortes.' At length, when Cortes promised to leave the city if permitted, he consented to interpose. Dressed in royal splendour he appeared on the battlements, and the assailants bowed in silent homage before their monarch. But when he counselled them to lay down their arms and allow the strangers to escape, a murmur ran through the multitude. 'Base Aztec,' they exclaimed, 'woman, coward! the white men have made you a coward—fit only to weave and spin.' At length a shower of missiles were directed towards him, and wounded by the arrows, struck down senseless by a stone, the unhappy monarch was borne to his apartments. Here, in gloomy silence, he refused to have his wounds dressed, tore off the bandages, determined not to survive his honour. He lived only a few days longer, having died on the 30th June, 1520, less than eight months from the day on which he had welcomed the strangers to his capital. He persisted in his faith to the last, notwithstanding the earnest endeavours of Cortes and father Olmeda for his conversion. Before the arrival of the Spaniards, he had the character of a bold, warlike, and cruel monarch; to them he was always kind, generous, and faithful—perhaps in consequence of his superstitious belief in their heavenly origin.

Meanwhile, Cortes in a desperate assault had stormed the great temple, and burned the shrines on its summit. He was now resolved to retreat, but the bridges over the canals were broken down, and he sallied from his fortress to restore them. The great street was cleared by repeated charges of cavalry, only to be filled anew by fresh combatants, and in the evening the Spaniards had to retire weary and disheartened. In a council of war retreat was fully resolved upon, and it was determined, partly on the recommendation of an astrologer, to make the attempt by night

A portable bridge was formed to pass the canals, and the soldiers, loading themselves with the most valuable part of the treasure, and formed into order by their leader, set out on their retreat. They passed in silence through the city, and had reached the end of the causeway joining it to the mainland before an enemy appeared. But the guards stationed there soon gave the alarm, the loud drums in the temples called the people to arms, and before the first gap in the dyke was passed, the Indians thronged thick upon them. The lake was covered with canoes, from which arrows and darts were poured on the Spaniards, now checked in their advance by the second opening. Well would it have been for Cortes had he prepared bridges for all the openings, but time would not permit, and he intended to have carried the one forward as it was successively required. But now it was wedged firmly among the stones and could not be moved, and the dark opening had to be crossed as they best might. This was not difficult for the horse, but the foot perished in great numbers; many weighed down by the weight of treasure with which they were loaded. Another opening still remained, and had not the Indians stopped to collect the spoil scattered on the dyke, not one perhaps of the Spaniards would have escaped. On the mainland Cortes collected the survivors, weary, wounded, and drenched in the salt water of the lake. Various accounts of the loss remain, but Prescott assumes the statement of Gomara, who makes it 450 of the Christians, with 4000 of their native allies. Well may this disastrous retreat be named the *noche triste*, 'the sad or melancholy night,' in the annals of the conquest.

The ensuing day Cortes remained in a teocalli, from which he had driven a body of the enemy in order to rest his men; and the Mexicans, busy perhaps with other matters, did not molest them. They then began their journey

in the night towards the friendly Tlascala, but had to take a circuitous route round some of the lakes. They suffered much from want of provisions, and from the crowds of enemies who now pressed upon them on all sides, cutting off the stragglers, but at length reached the mountain barrier near Otumba. In the plain beyond, they found an immense army ready to dispute their passage; and Cortes, with his weary forces, would gladly have shunned the contest. But there was no way of retreat; so forming his men into the best order, he attacked the Indian host. As usual, the skill and weapons of the white men prevailed over those of the natives; but though hundreds of the latter perished, new combatants pressed closer on the worn out Spaniards. Flight was utterly impossible, and nothing seemed left but to sell their lives dearly, when Cortes discerned at a little distance the leader of the Indian army. Calling some of the bravest to follow him, he forced his way up to the chief, and struck him through with his lance whilst one of his companions seized the standard. The death of their leader spread dismay through the Indians; they fled in confusion, pursued and cut down by the Spaniards and their Tlascalan allies. Delivered from instant destruction in this truly wonderful manner, Cortes soon entered the Tlascalan territory, and was kindly received by the chiefs of the republic.

The fidelity of his allies was put to a new test by an embassy from Mexico inviting them to conclude a peace, and unite in expelling the strangers from their land, which, after a warm debate, was rejected. A mutiny next arose among his own followers, many of whom insisted on returning to the coast, but the eloquence of Cortes, aided by his promises and presents, restored the troops to their fidelity. He then proceeded to punish the surrounding tribes who had shown their hostility to the Spaniards during

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their late adversity, and soon reduced them to obedience. His European force was at the same time increased by the arrival of troops from Cuba, sent by Velasquez to reinforce his opponent Narvaez, of whose fate he was still ignorant, but who made no scruple of transferring their services to the victor. These vessels also brought the small-pox into the New World, where it was formerly unknown, but over which it spread with frightful rapidity, cutting off the natives by thousands. Among other victims was Cuitlahuac, the warlike emperor of Mexico, who was succeeded by his nephew Guatemozin, a young but valiant prince well experienced in war.

Cortes having restored the health and courage of his followers, and acquired a sufficient body of allies among the Indians, resolved to avenge his late disaster. He had now about six hundred Europeans, of whom forty were cavalry, and with these and a large body of auxiliaries he marched to Tezcuco, on the shore of the great lake. The ruling prince fled on his approach, but Cortes procured the election of a brother, named Ixtlilxochitl, who became the firmest ally of the Spaniards. Before proceeding to the siege of the capital, Cortes reduced several of the inferior cities on the mainland. The first he attacked was Iztapalapan, which was taken by storm, plundered, and above six thousand of the inhabitants massacred by his savage followers. The enemy, in despair, broke the dykes by which it was defended from the waters of the lake, and a timely retreat alone saved the Spaniards from destruction, but with the loss of all their booty. The fate of this city, however, terrified many others around, who sent in their submission to the conquerors. Soon after, thirteen brigantines, which had been built at Tlascala under the direction of the Spaniards, were transported across the mountains, and preparations made for launching them on the great

lake. Meantime, Cortes continued his attacks on the Aztec cities situated on the mainland, which, often after a desperate resistance, were generally subdued and given up to be plundered by his followers. In this predatory warfare he marched round the whole Mexican valley, carrying fire and desolation into its fairest and most fertile regions. The story of the courageous but fruitless resistance of the natives, of the cruel massacres perpetrated by their ruthless invaders, is too revolting in character, and too monotonous in detail, to be repeated.

At length every thing was in order for the assault on the capital. The brigantines were afloat on the lake; reinforcements of Enropeans had arrived, and a vast army of Indian auxiliaries assembled. Even then a conspiracy, to assassinate the general and his chief supporters, and to abandon the enterprise, was discovered in his own camp. Cortes hung the ringleader, but allowed the subordinates to escape, pretending to be ignorant even of their names. He then divided his troops into three bodies under his most trusty followers, while he himself took command of his small fleet. On their march to their stations, Xicatencatl, the Tlascalan chief, who had offered so brave a resistance to the Spaniards on their first march to Mexico, left the army to return home. He was followed by messengers, but refused to return, detesting the Spaniards in his heart, as far more dangerous enemies to his native land than the Aztecs. Cortes then ordered him to be arrested, tried him for desertion, and hanged him in the great square of Tezcuco, glad perhaps to be freed from such a formidable foe.

In the end of May, 1521, the three divisions of the army had assumed their several positions, and the siege of the city began. The frail canoes of the natives could offer no effectual resistance to the Spanish brigantines armed with the thunders of the artillery. Cortes was soon master of

the lake, and pushed his forces along the causeway to the very gates of the city. He then ordered an assault from two points, and the party commanded by himself, after an obstinate resistance forced their way into the great square, the scene of their former disasters. Some of the party stormed the teocalli or temple, and hurled down the idol from its summit. This insult to their god roused the fury of the Mexicans to the wildest fanaticism. They sprung with a yell of horror on the Spaniards, forced them in disorder out of the square, and drove them, mingled in inextricable confusion with their allies, along the street. All seemed lost, when a party of cavalry emerged into the square from an adjoining street, drove back the enemy, and allowed Cortes to recover his ground and rally his men. As the evening was at hand, he however retired to his quarters without the walls. On a following day, Cortes again penetrated to the great square and burned some of the palaces by which it was surrounded; but the natives still continued their obstinate defence; and as Cortes had always to retire in the evening, their labours were to be renewed every morning. In this way the contest long continued with variable success, though the Spaniards were suffering much from the rains which now prevailed, and famine had begun to rage in the capital, as its supplies from the country were cut off. This was however less felt, as both the Aztecs and the Indian auxiliaries of Cortes made no scruple to feast on the victims who fell in the continual combats. Desirous to shorten the siege, Cortes again ordered a general assault, resolving to fix his quarters in a square in the centre of the hostile city. The Aztecs were driven back with customary facility, and the Spaniards moved on, leaving the canals open behind them. When they were deep enough entangled in the streets, the sacred horn of the emperor sounded from a neighbouring

temple; the fugitives turned fiercely on their pursuers, and the Spaniards were driven out of the city, while, besides the killed, sixty-two of their number remained captives—a fate more dreaded than death. Cortes himself had a narrow escape; six athletic Aztecs had seized him, and were bearing him off to their boats, when he was rescued by his followers. This sad reverse greatly disheartened the Spaniards, who saw their captive companions led up the fatal temples and sacrificed to the gods of the Aztecs. It also encouraged the latter in their resistance, their priests propnesying that in eight days the invaders would be utterly destroyed. This oracle even penetrated to the camp of Cortes, and many of his Indian allies retired to their homes.

The fatal day however passed over, and the Spaniards still hung around the devoted city, where famine was now added to the miseries of war. His auxiliaries returned ashamed of their desertion, and Cortes adopted a new plan of warfare, razing the buildings as he advanced, and filling up the canals. In this he was aided by his Indian allies, notwithstanding the warnings of their opponents, 'that the more they now destroyed, the more they would have to rebuild, either for them or the white men.' Cortes would gladly have spared the city, but Guatemozin would listen to no terms, and answered them only by renewed attacks. The most terrible famine now raged in the city, where the most loathsome substances were greedily consumed, and the miserable victims were no longer able to bury the dead. Yet there was no talk of surrender, and even the women encouraged their husbands to maintain the contest. At length the Spaniards took possession of the market-place, and shut up the Aztecs in one quarter of the city, which now resembled 'a vast charnel-house, in which all was hastening to decay and decomposition.' Cortes again at-

tempted to bring the Aztecs to terms, but Guatemozin, mindful of the fate of Montezuma, would not trust himself to the Spaniards. At length Cortes ordered an assault, but night compelled him to withdraw his troops from the work of murder before it was completed. It was renewed next day, the 15th August, and though the Aztecs were now too weak to offer any effectual resistance, yet the carnage was horrible. The Indian allies spared neither age nor sex; and Cortes himself affirms, that the piteous cries of the women and children were enough to break one's heart. At length Guatemozin, trying to escape across the lake, was captured by the brigantines and brought to Cortes, when even a shadow of resistance ceased. It is estimated that above 120,000 of the Aztecs perished in the siege; and when the city was ordered to be evacuated, thirty to seventy thousand famine-stricken wretches, besides women and children, wandered away from the desolate home of their ancestors. Such is the miserable reality of war; such the awful curse brought on this beautiful city by the cupidity of the invaders.

With the fall of the capital, the empire of the Aztecs was at an end. Nothing now remained but to divide the spoil, which proved far less than the conquerors had expected. The murmurs of the soldiers rose against their leader, whom they accused of conspiring with the Mexican emperor to deprive them of their due reward; and in an evil hour, Cortes resigned the brave Guatemozin into the hands of the torturers, to compel him to reveal his hidden wealth. The Indian bore all with heroic fortitude, reproving the groans of one of his companions by the remark—'Am I then taking my pleasure in my bath?' and the shame of their cruelty alone accrued to the Spaniards. The capital, purified from the dead, was rebuilt almost in its former magnificencc, and again inhabited by a busy population. Most

of the snrrounding tribes and cities sent in their submission, and a terrible vengeance was taken on all who dared to resist. Meantime Cortes had been acting wholly on his own authority, unaided and unrecognised by the Emperor Charles V. He now wrote an account of his proceedings, and sent it with the fifth of the spoil to Spain, but the vessel was captured by a French privateer, and only the letter reached its destination. Velasquez made another vain effort to deprive Cortes of his hard won conquest; but at length, in October, 1522, the acts of Cortes were ratified by the emperor, and he was appointed governor and captain-general of New Spain, with full power and authority. His troops were also thanked for their services, and liberal promises of land held out to them. These were subsequently granted, and the natives parcelled out among them as slaves, according to the Spanish system of repartimientos. Missionaries were sent over to convert the heathen to Christianity, and in a few years the bloody idolatry of the Aztecs had given place to a purer faith. Though often heavily oppressed, and greatly declined from their former numbers, the Indians have survived all the revolutions in the land, of which they still form more than half the population, and have even, at least in name, regained some political influence.

The subsequent career of Cortes exhibits the same ingratitude which formed the chief reward of Columbus for all his glorious discoveries. Agents from Spain sent out on various pretences, bnt in reality spies, watched and opposed him in the capital; whilst in the more distant provinces, his deputies revolted, or disputed his authority. Among others his old comrade, Olid, endeavoured to establish an independent jurisdiction in Honduras, where he had been sent to found a colony. Cortes resolved to chastise him in person, and marched thither with about 140

Spaniards and 3000 Indians, among whom was Guatemozin, the captive emperor, whom he durst not leave in Mexico. The army encountered great difficulties in marching through the thinly peopled country thickly covered with wood, dripping with constant moisture. About midway Cortes arrested Guatemozin and some other chiefs on the charge of a conspiracy, and hanged them on a tree, though asserting their innocence. Even the followers of Cortes thought the execution unjust and the accusation unfounded, whilst the heroic conduct of the Aztec emperor inspired even his enemies with respect. After a march in which he suffered greatly from famine, the climate, and the hostilities of the natives, and in which Robertson truly says, 'he exhibited greater personal courage, more fortitude of mind, more perseverance and patience, than in any other period or scene of his life,' Cortes reached the settlement, where he found Olid slain and his authority re-established. He returned to Mexico in June, 1526, about two years after he had left it, and was gladly received by the people; but his enemies had been busy calumniating him at court, a commission was sent out to supersede him, and he was requested to return home. In May, 1528, he landed at Palos, in Spain, and proceeded to the court, where suspicion being dispelled by his presence, he was honourably received, created Marquess of the valley of Oaxaca, and received large grants of land and vassals. He was, however, refused the government of the country he had conquered, though allowed to retain his military command. His first wife had joined him in Mexico soon after the conquest, but died suddenly in about three months. He now contracted a second marriage with a daughter of the Count de Aguilar. In 1530 he returned to New Spain, and resided some time in the capital, but soon quarrelled with the new government, and retired to his estates in the country. These he

managed with much prudence, introduced the sugar-cane, the cultivation of silk, and other valuable products. His restless spirit led him to engage in new projects of discovery along the north-west coast of America, which turned out unsuccessful, and involved him in much debt. His disputes with the government also continued, and in order to obtain redress, he returned to Spain in 1540, but found his services forgotten, and a cold ear turned to all his requests for justice. In 1541, he accompanied the expedition against Algiers, and when it was resolved to retreat, indignantly offered to storm the town in person if the army were intrusted to him. On his return to Castile, he found all his claims rejected with cold civility, and was about to return to Mexico, when he was taken ill at Seville, and died in a neighbouring village on the 2d December, 1547, in the sixty-third year of his age. He was buried in Seville, but his remains were removed in 1622 to Tezcuco, in New Spain. In 1629 they were taken to the church of St Francis in the capital; and in 1794 transferred to an hospital he had founded in that city. In 1823, 'the patriot mob' of the capital, the descendants not of the Indians, but of the conquerors, had prepared to break open the tomb and scatter his ashes to the winds in token of their detestation of the 'old Spaniards;' but the friends of his family removed the relics secretly by night, to some more secure resting place.

This change in the capricious favour of the multitude, with the ingratitude he experienced in life, shows the false foundation on which Cortes built his hopes of fame, of fortune, and of happiness. A man of blood, violence, and injustice, unscrupulous in the means of accomplishing his own ambitious designs, he had no right to expect others to forego theirs in his favour, and the falsehood and ingratitude he experienced were the due rewards of his previous

conduct. 'His character is marked by the most opposite traits; avaricious, yet liberal; magnanimous, and bold to desperation, yet cautious, calculating, cunning; courteous and affable in his deportment, yet inexorably stern; lax in his notions of morality, yet a sad bigot. The great feature in his character was constancy of purpose; a constancy not to be daunted by danger, nor baffled by disappointment, nor wearied out by impediments or delays.' The success and splendour of his enterprise has thrown a halo round his name, which his real merits seem scarcely to deserve. The weak superstition of Montezuma, and the defection of his subjects, secured success in an enterprise, which, had it failed, would have been viewed only as the mad attempt of a desperate freebooter. The progress of civilisation, the diffusion of Christian principles, has already destroyed much of the false lustre that attaches to successful war—to robbery and murder, conducted on a great scale; and there seems little doubt that in future ages his cruelty, his injustice, his avarice, will blot out the glory of his military achievements. He is but another proof that it is the benefactors of mankind, not their destroyers, who can alone look for a growing and enduring fame.

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The men who have most distinguished themselves in the annals of the world may be divided into three distinct classes, each class possessing its own sphere of action, its character, and degrees of genius. The first may be termed the moral regenerators and philanthropists, who, warmed by the aspirations of a benign religion, seek to mitigate the sufferings and extend the blessings of love to humanity. The second, or intellectual class, are those who, by the strength and originality of their speculative and knowing powers, extend the sphere of thought, and add to the mental opulence and actual capital of the world; and the third class are they who, possessed of strong perceptions and desires, act upon their unrestrained impulses, and energetically consummate their undertakings. The first class numbers amongst its immortals Wilberforce, Romilly, Howard, and Mrs Fry; the second is procreant with the names of Newton, Shakspeare, and Watt; while Alexander, Napoleon, and Bajazet, are amongst the most glorious names of the third. To this latter class also belong the early European adventurers and conquerors of America. It is not

necessary that one of this class should possess either high moral or mental qualifications, and consequently we find the Spanish gold-seekers and conquerors destitute of either moral sentiment or intellectual refinement, but superlatively false in their dealings with the aboriginal Americans and each other, cruel in their actions, and indomitable in their brute courage and energy.

M. de Lamartine says that there are three aspects under which the people may be taught history—the aspect of glory, of patriotism, and of truth—and it is dependent upon the particular interpreter of the past through which medium the current of knowledge will flow. The truth of the above aphorism is evident upon the merest comparison. Rival factions invariably present distorted and diverse transcripts of identical circumstances, and historical accounts are almost always coloured according to the temperament or opinions of the narrator. We shall premise our account of the conquest of Peru by simply re-stating, that an author's reflections may be biassed by his sentiments, but that facts can always be denuded of extraneous verbiage by a reflective reader, and, if fairly stated, are equal to each other, no matter through what medium they may pass.

The conquerors of Peru have been termed heroes, and their names have been enshrined in glory by their countrymen. They have been viewed through two mediums by the poets and people of Spain; it remains for the impartial to view them through the third. Conquest, like the tiger's first taste of human blood, has always whetted the appetite of the conqueror and sought to extend its dominions. Mexico had fallen before the disciplined forces of Herman Cortes and his coadjutors, and, like the Macedonian of old, the fierce veterans looked around for another theatre of murder and plunder. They had

anticipated boundless wealth and luxurious dignity from the subjugation and spoliation of the Mexican nations, but their inordinate desires had not been satisfied, and they therefore determined to brave future dangers and cut down every obstacle that might step between them and that gold which was the abstraction upon which they lavished their fierce idolatry. Various expeditions were accordingly engaged in by adventurers who sought for themselves paths of wealth and fame; and although the results anticipated did not accrue from the majority of these undertakings, yet colonies were planted by their means on various parts of the western continent, from whence future expeditions of exploration emanated, in order that they might know and subjugate that *terra incognita* which their imaginations filled with gold.

In 1513, Vasco Nunez de Bilboa, penetrating the Isthmus of Darien, first came in view of the great Pacific Ocean, and from that moment the Spaniards who had settled in Panama turned their thoughts towards the wealth of the regions which might lie beyond it. Numerous unsuccessful attempts were made to explore the countries east of Panama, and various armaments were successively fitted out and sacrificed to the Moloch of conquest without any return to the adventurers, until the zeal of many began to slacken and the hopes of many to become extinct. There were a few, however, whose determination to find a country was stronger than their reasons for believing that such existed, and amongst these was Francis Pizarro. This famous adventurer was born in Trujillo, a town in Estramadura; he was the illegitimate son of a Spanish nobleman and a woman of the peasant class. The child was totally neglected in his earlier years, but his father, as soon as he had attained the first stage of manhood, made him a hog-driver. He soon quitted this occupation, how-

ever, for that of a soldier; and, having served in Italy, eventually followed Alonso de Hojeda to America in 1513. He accompanied this adventurer in his conquest of and in the foundation of the settlement of Uraba, where he was left as lieutenant. He was engaged in the expedition of Cortes, who seemed to esteem him highly for his distinguished courage and endurance. He was with Vasco Nunez de Bilboa in his expedition to discover the Southern Ocean, and was one of the most prominent companions of Pedro Arias de Avila in the conquest of Nombre de Dios and Panama. The distinguishing characteristics of Pizarro were iron strength of frame and perseverance of purpose, and he was consequently esteemed in proportion to the value placed upon these qualifications by those with whom he was associated. Pizarro was determined to discover and conquer a great empire; and believing such to be perfectly practicable with certain means, he entered into a combination with two of the most influential men in Panama in order to prosecute his favourite design. Diego de Almagro, the first of these, was of an origin as obscure as that of Pizarro; he is supposed to have been born either in Malaga or Almagro, but it is probable, as he bore its name, that the latter was really his birth-place. He was a soldier of fortune, bred in camps, and intimate with battle; he was as unscrupulous as Pizarro in seizing upon the produce of the industrious Peruvians, but he was frank and intrepid, and less crafty and cruel than the former. He was more of the soldier than the politician, and knew less of men's feelings and ideas than of fighting. The third associate was Hernando Luque, an ecclesiastic, who acted as parish priest and schoolmaster to the colony. He was wealthy, and was ambitious to become more so by means of that opulence which he had already acquired. These three men, conjuring up ideas of glory and luxurious grandeur,

bound themselves by a solemn oath to act together for the promotion of their scheme of mutual interest. They obtained the consent of the governor, Pedro Arias de Avila, to prosecute their projects, and for this purpose placed all their property in a common fund, unhesitatingly agreeing to equally share the profits of their adventurous enterprises. Pizarro possessed less wealth than either of his companions, but he was better endowed than either with all the requisites of a conqueror and commander, and consequently the active and primary operations of discovery and initiatory invasion were awarded to him. Almagro was to follow the first armament with reinforcements and supplies, while Luque was to remain at Panama as agent, whose duty was to raise future supplies and arrange matters with the governor.

After performing a solemn religious rite, in conjunction with Almagro and Luque, Pizarro departed from Panama on the 14th November, 1525, with a force of one hundred and fourteen men, embarked in a single vessel; and after buffeting about for some time, the adventurers landed upon a swampy shore, where dark mountains scowled, and disease circulated in the fetid miasma that floated over the face of the country. The natives of this part of America were as fierce as the climate was unhealthy, and the combined attacks of each destroyed the energies and thinned the ranks of the Spaniards. Unable to obtain any advantage in this gloomy region, and finding it daily more difficult to support the drooping courage of his soldiers, Pizarro reluctantly led his band to Chuchama, where he resolved to wait upon supplies from Panama. Almagro in the mean time had set off to join his companion with seventy men, and having landed upon the same coast, and endured the same dangers and calamities, he wandered about with his broken and dispirited followers until they acci-

dentally united themselves with the soldiers of Pizarro. So powerful, however, are the promptings of ambition, and so determined were the characters of the Spanish leaders, that they resolved to prosecute their designs despite of all that they had endured. One hundred and thirty men had, in nine months, fallen victims to fatigue and disease, and now only about fifty remained to consummate the designs and realise the glowing expectations of Pizarro and Almagro. The latter, after sundry consultations, and in compliance with the resolutions of the most dauntless of the band, set out for Panama to raise fresh levies; but the failure of the expedition, and the sacrifice of so many lives, had damped the ardour of the colonists, and all that the efforts of Luque and Almagro could induce to enlist under their standard was eighty men. With these he joined Pizarro at Chuchama, and after a series of disappointments the two chiefs touched at Tacamez, on the coast of Quito. Here the more fertile aspect of the country, and the incontestable signs of wealth, created a revival of the hopes of the piratical white men. But the spirit and numbers of the people induced the meagre band to retreat to the island of Gallo, which lies off the coast. The Spaniards who followed the confederates, being unsupported by the sustaining ideas of religion or duty, readily gave way to despair, and neither the inflated harangues of their leaders regarding glory, nor their promises of rewards, which were yet to be won, could rouse them to action. Almagro again returned to Panama, in order to recruit their shattered forces, but the new governor, Los Rios, refused to countenance the expedition, and sent a vessel to recall Pizarro from Gallo. In accordance with the advice of Luque and Almagro, and agreeably to his own stubborn will, Pizarro refused to obey the mandate of the governor, supported by only thirteen of his followers, the rest hav-

ing taken advantage of this opportunity to return to Panama. It is to this hand that the honour of discovering Peru helongs, and to them also is due the disgrace of having commenced that catalogue of ahominahle cruelties and mean acts of falsehood which characterised the conquest of that ill-fated country, and will yet hring the blush to the cheek of posterity. The fourteen martial fanatics passed over from Gallo to Gorgona, a most pestilential island, which had nothing to recommend it as a station in preference to the former save its greater distance from the coast, and here they determined to remain until levies could arrive from Panama. The sympathies of the residents in favour of the adventurers, and the exertions of Almagro and Luqne, ultimately induced the governor to allow assistance to be sent to the wretched hand; and when Pizarro's followers were on the point of committing themselves to the deep in despair, aid arrived. The hopes of the Spaniards were easily rekindled, and forgetting what they had suffered in anticipation of what they might acquire, they emharked, and sailing towards the southeast from Gorgona, after a few weeks arrived at the vale of Tumhez, a place of some importance to the natives, from its possessing a palace of the inca and a temple, and of considerahle interest to the Spanish marauders, from the incontestahle signs of wealth which it presented. The people were considerahly advanced in agricultural pursuits, and their social condition evidenced a progressive state of civilisation. They were dressed in their own manufactures, and articles of domestic use were formed from the metals which were at their command. Yet the Spaniards, historians and conquerors, have the effrontery to term them savages, as if that term were sufficient to justify all the atrocities committed by the powerful upon the weak under the assumption of superior civilisation.

Pizarro felt that his band would he inadcquate to the conquest of so populous a nation as this evidently was; he therefore restrained his hurning cupidity, and contented himself with cunningly maintaining friendly relations with the natives, and deriving from them as much information as possihle concerning the internal aspect and resources of the country.

Having obtained specimens of the products and articles of worship used in Peru, Pizarro and eleven of his followers, after an absence of three years, returned to Panama. We could honour the courage and constancy which supported these men in their protracted and arduous undertaking, did not the motives which governed them obtrude themselves upon our recollection, and fill us with pity for the unnatural union of heroic endurance with perverted principles.

The governor still remained firm in his opposition to the projects of the companions; and neither the descriptions nor actual tokens of Peruvian riches could induce him to alter his determination. Pizarro was accordingly dispatched to Spain, where his confident assertions and tangihle specimens of metallic plenitude soon induced the less scrupulous monarch to give his royal sanction to all the prospective plunder of, and a gratuitous jurisdiction over, regions possessed of governments and people, whose rights to their nations were at least as inviolable as his to Spain. Pizarro's sclfishness strongly demonstrated itself in this emhassy; for he neglected the pretensions of Almagro, and thus laid the foundation of future enmity between them. He ohtained an independent title to his prospective eonquests, and induced his maternal uncle, Francisco de Alcantara, his three brothers, and several others, to embark with him; but he forgot to ask any governmental dignity for Amalgro, and that soldier

bitterly resented the neglect as an affront. Fernando Pizarro, whose temper was fierce and violent, encouraged his brother to treat Almagro's assumption with contempt, but Francisco, more politically, made concessions, which soothed the irritated chief; and accordingly Pizarro left Panama in February, 1531, upon the terms of the original compact between himself, Almagro, and Luque. He first landed on the coast about one hundred leagues north of Tumbez, and after suffering a repetition of the casualties already enumerated, he arrived in the district of Coaque on the 14th of April. The mask was at once thrown off now, and, falling upon the inhabitants, the adventurers robbed them of all their utensils and ornaments of gold and silver. Dispatching a large amount of the spoils to the colony, in order to quicken the zeal of the two associates, Luque and Almagro, and to incite the colonists to follow his standard, Pizarro prosecuted his bloody progress. His brutal antagonism received free and unchecked action now. The Indians were of a peaceful and simple nature, and conciliation might have bound them to the warriors whom they looked upon with a terrified veneration; but the pent-up passions of the Spaniards now exercised a licentiousness of destruction that it is mournful to contemplate, and the poor natives were either slain, subjected to slavery, or forced to flee to the interior. At the island of Puna, however, the people resisted, and six months were required for its reduction; this protracted struggle, and three months' subjection to the noxious vapours of Tumbez, once more reduced the inflated courage of the Spaniards to despondency.

Reinforced by sixty men from Nicaragua, under Fernando de Soto and Sebastian Benalcazar, Pizarro left Tumbez on the 16th May, 1532, and, arriving without molestation at the river Piura, he laid the foundation of St

Michael, the first Spanish colony in Peru. Here he endeavoured to inform himself regarding the people whose destruction he meditated, and unfortunately internal jealousies offered too many facilities for Spanish aggression. In 1526, when the Spaniards first landed on their coast, the Peruvians were governed by their twelfth inca, whose race they regarded with peculiar veneration as of celestial origin. This prince, Huana Capac, being of a warlike disposition, had conquered the kingdom of Quito, and eventually manifested a marked partiality for its capital. Here, in defiance of the imperious and inflexible laws of the incas, which forbade marriage with any save of that sacred race, he united himself to the princess of Quito, by whom he had a son, the famous and unfortunate Atahualpa. Huana Capac died in 1529, dividing his vast territories between Huascar, a son of the pure race of the incas, and Atahualpa. This arrangement fired the religious zeal of the Peruvians, and the inhabitants of the district of Cuzco openly declared their opposition to Atahualpa's elevation. These demonstrations led to demands and refusals between the brothers, which ultimately produced the first civil war in the nation; and Atahualpa, being possessed of more talent and energy than Huascar, vanquished him, leaving him almost alone of all the legitimate descendants of the Sun. Atahualpa preserved his brother for none other than purposes favourable to his own political views. He was afraid to extinguish in him the last of the uncontaminated incas, lest by so doing he might drive the Peruvians into a frenzy of horror and revenge, and be assumed the sanction of his name for acts to which he wished the partisans of Huascar to yield a facile obedience. It was in this state of jealous antagonism that the Spaniards found the Peruvians, and in the relation of tyrant and prisoner that they beheld the unbrotherly brother princes.

Pizarro saw with delight that the rich country he gloated over possessed in its own bosom the elements of destruction, and he accordingly pushed into the disunited interior with confidence and alacrity, having only one hundred and two foot-soldiers and sixty-two horsemen under his command, a garrison being left at St Michael in order to keep the country open in case of retreat. Atahualpa lay with a powerful force at Caxamalca, and thither the bold Pizarro directed his course. Instead of being opposed, however, the inca sent a messenger of note to welcome him, and present him with a gift, in token of amity. The crafty adventurer received the ambassador with apparent cordiality, and declared his object in visiting the country to be its internal welfare; at the same time he assured him that he would lend the aid of his arms to Atahualpa. The duplicity of Pizarro opened for his soldiers an unmolested path to Caxamalca, where, having arrived, he immediately converted a square into a place of defence, and sent his brother Ferdinand and Hernando de Soto to play upon the credulity of the inca, who was unsuspiciously celebrating a festival in his camp, about a league from the city. It was the intention of Pizarro to seize upon Atahualpa as Cortes had done Montezuma in Mexico; and, once possessed of the inca, he anticipated that the venerative and disorganised Peruvians would easily be forced to any terms which he might dictate; accordingly he disposed his forces in readiness for action, when, on the 16th of November, 1532, Atahualpa, attended by a magnificent host, set out to visit the Spanish camp. The interview between the native prince and his false friends is extremely characteristic of the whole tenor of American conquest. Immediately on his arrival at the Spanish headquarters, a friar, by violent gestures and vehement declamation, sought to enlighten the inca in the tenets of his religious faith, and threatened

him with dreadful pains if he refused to instantly adopt them; but he declared that, in the event of his becoming a Christian, the King of Spain would protect him from his enemies. A debate, which was extremely irksome to the soldiers, whose fingers itched to despoil the rich Peruvians, now ensued; and Atahualpa having at last thrown a breviary contemptuously to the ground, which the friar had presented to him as an evidence of Christianity, the indignant priest immediately commanded the soldiers to revenge the profanation. A considerable number of the surprised Peruvians were instantly slain; others, with devoted courage, threw themselves around their inca, and died to preserve him; and it was only when Pizarro had seized the prince and borne him away a prisoner that they fled before their steel-clad foes. Historians variously estimate the slaughter of the natives at 7000, 5000, and 2000, while not a Spaniard was even wounded, save Pizarro alone. In order to procure his release from his unjust imprisonment, Atahualpa offered to fill the room in which he was confined as high as he could reach with golden vessels, as a ransom; and the bewildering proposal being accepted, messengers, attended by crafty Spanish spies, were sent to all the principal cities in order to raise the subsidy. The unprincipled conquerors stripped the temples of their rich ornaments without opposition from the natives, who bore their oppressors from place to place in palanquins.

Almagro arrived at St Michael in December, 1533, with a force equal to Pizarro's, and this circumstance increased the insolence and confidence of the Spaniards. Hernando Soto obtained an interview with the Inca Huascar at Sausa, where his brother had confined him; and the prince, having heard of the capture of Atahualpa and of the extent of his proffered ransom, eagerly sought to gain his own release through Soto, by offering an enormous

amount of gold if the Spaniards would assist him to recover his throne. The assassination of Huascar, shortly afterwards, furnished the Spaniards with a pretext for refusing to grant liberty to Atahualpa, and opened the door to one of the most flagrant murders on record. Pizarro and Almagro constituted themselves judges over the wretched inca, and arraigned him upon a multitude of most insolently gratuitous charges. They accused him of the murder of his brother, which they were as likely to have perpetrated, and condemned him to be buried alive. This atrocious sentence excited the horror of even some of the Spaniards, but the judges were inexorable. With a refinement of cruelty which is perhaps unparalleled in history, Valverde, the friar, was sent to convert the condemned inca, who, eagerly yielding to the priest-incited idea of escaping death through this means, allowed himself to be baptised. No sooner had the rite been performed, however, than he was led to the stake and strangled—which was considered a mitigation and privilege, it having been intended to burn him at a stake. After this event, Pizzaro, with disgusting effrontery, pretended to mourn for the death of Atahualpa, but his crocodile tears were soon dried. He had consummated a complete disorganisation of the Peruvians, and he had greatly destroyed their belief in the celestial nature of the race of the incas: taking advantage of this state of things, he accordingly led his followers on in their crusade of murder and plunder, and allowed no opportunity to intermit of adding to his own and companions' aggrandisement. Ferdinand Pizarro was, in the meantime, dispatched to the court of Madrid with immense treasures. Francisco was created a marquis by the delighted monarch; Almagro was named adelantado over an independent territory; and many persons of rank returned to Peru with Ferdinand, who was made a knight

of Santiago, and bore back those titles of promotion to his brother and comrade.

Disputes, however, soon broke out amongst the ambitious and unprincipled Spaniards; and the crafty Francisco Pizarro only prevented a violent rupture with Almagro and his partisans by inciting them to attempt the conquest of Chili, and solemnly promising to share the spoils of Peru with them, should the southern expedition prove a failure. The hardihood of the Chilians was superior to that of the Peruvians; and Almagro soon found himself compelled to return to the scenes of his former contentions and jealousies.

The Pizarros had named Manco Capac, a brother of Huascar, as their man-of-straw inca, and they retained him in their power with jealous watchfulness, compelling him to reside at Cuzco. Although repeatedly urged, Francisco Pizarro always refused to listen to the remonstrances or pleadings for independence advanced by Manco, and consequently the native prince watched anxiously for some opportunity to forcibly justify his claim to liberty and sovereignty. Lulling their suspicions by apparent submission, Manco, upon the pretext of visiting some gardens, effected his escape from Cuzco, when, immediately, the whole country rose against the invaders. The devotion, courage, and energy evinced by the natives were worthy of a better return than that which they met. They no doubt reduced the Spaniards to the utmost distress, and had every appearance of extirpating them; but when the remnant of their distressed foes were pent up in Cuzco and Lima, when Juan Pizarro had fallen, and the bands of the brothers were divided, Almagro appeared before Cuzco. Knowing what jealousy existed among the Spanish leaders, Manco sought to prevent Almagro from communicating with those in Cuzco, and sought to gain his co-operation in the destruction of his countrymen. Almagro, who

really intended to render himself master of Cuzco, found himself irresolute what course to pursue. Several days were consumed among the three parties in attempts at corruption—the Pizarros seeking to bribe the officers of Almagro, and Almagro alternately trying to make terms with the inca and the partisans of Pizarro. Tired with futile negociation, Manco Capac attempted compulsion, when he was repulsed by Almagro's forces with great slaughter. Almagro now summoned Ferdinand and Gonzalo Pizarro to yield up Cuzco; but the brothers, declaring themselves to be merely the lieutenants of their brother, Don Francisco, prevailed upon their late companion to promise to suspend hostilities until the authority of Francisco arrived for either resistance or submission. Treaties were, however, lightly made and as lightly broken. Cuzco was attacked during a period mutually conceded to peace, and the Pizarros and their principal men were thrown into prison. Francisco Pizarro, who had obstinately defended Lima against the natives, upon hearing of the position of Almagro, immediately hastened to place himself in a position to punish his rival. His brother Gonzalo, who escaped from the power of Almagro, had given him information sufficient to create undying enmity against his old companion; but his inadeqnate force and the captivity of Ferdinand induced him to protract the period of punishment by a show of amity and concession.

Almagro easily fell into the toils of Pizarro; he emancipated Ferdinand from prison, and otherwise performed the stipulations of the treaty; but Pizarro was no sooner freed from anxiety regarding his brother than he collected his forces, attacked, routed, and massacred the followers of Almagro, and finally, under the show of justice, tried, condemned, and executed his old friend. He was strangled in prison in his sixty-fifth year, leaving an only son, who

was a prisoner at Lima. Thus did the Pizarros render themselves apparently sole arbiters of the fate of Peru, and destroy all appearance of formidable rivalry.

The death of Almagro seemed to restore tranquillity among the rival factions of Spaniards, and to establish upon an unquestionable basis the authority of Francisco Pizarro. Yet there seems to have been a dread mingled with the base triumph of the governor, for he sent his brother Ferdinand with rich presents to the King of Spain, in order to justify his conduct and subvert the influence which the friends of the deceased adelantado might otherwise gain to his disadvantage at court. Diego de Alvarado, a partisan of Almagro, had however anticipated him, and when Ferdinand arrived in his native country, in 1539, he found a strong prejudice existing against him and his brothers. The energy of Ferdinand's representations, and Charles's dread of losing the probable advantages of Francisco Pizarro's conquering zeal, prevented for some time, however, the adoption of decided measures. At last a commission of investigation was sent out to Peru under Vaca de Castro, who was ordered to transmit a faithful account of the conduct of the Pizarros towards Almagro, and Ferdinand, as a concession to the Almagrians, was cast into prison, where he lingered for twenty-three years, being only liberated when age and infirmity had rendered life burdensome, and the poverty of his condition added to the bitterness of his reflections upon the tardiness of his liberation. Meanwhile Francisco Pizarro devoted himself to the extension of his territory and the acquisition of gold and silver. These spoils he seldom divided with impartiality, always taking care to reserve for himself and brothers the lion's share, and consequently his followers, who had as warm desires concerning the less glorious incentives to conquest as himself, murmured and became

rebellious. The politic Pizarro always sent the more turbulent spirits of his bands to vent their passions upon the defenceless natives, thus adding to his own territories and engaging in active aggression the fiercer and more impatiently avaricious soldiers.

An expedition to Canela, or the Land of Cinnamon, under the direction of Gonzalo Pizarro, was undertaken in 1539, which in its incidents strikingly brings into bold relief all the characteristics of these Spanish conquerors—the courage and endurance of the leaders, the impulsive exertions and alternate prostration of the soldiers, and the selfish and dishonourable alacrity with which all took advantage of every opportunity for self-aggrandisement. In these plundering expeditions the poor natives were made to suffer evils unaccountable; they were robbed, and then doomed to bear, in passive misery and hopeless toil, their wealth to the colonies of their oppressors. Sometimes, in their despair, they would rise against their conquerors, but the disciplined cavaliers of Spain trampled them down beneath their horses' hoofs and shot them into submission with their arquebusses. Thousands perished in following the Spaniards upon their marches as sutlers, thousands fell beneath the burdens imposed upon them, and multitudes perished by the unscrupulous blades of Pizarro's soldiers. It is almost a pity to think that we owe several important discoveries in physical science to men possessing sentiments such as these adventurers possessed; yet the phantom pursuit of the philosopher's stone led to many important results in chemistry, and the search after Eldorado led to an extension of geographical knowledge. The expedition of Gonzalo to Canela was productive of nothing save pestilence, fatigue, and death to the majority of those who accompanied him; their two years' sufferings, if endured in a noble cause, might have

canonised their names; as it is, we can only admire the abstract strength of the survivors' constitutions. While in a most miserable plight, and when all save Pizarro were hopeless of reaching the colony again, Orellana, a young officer, embarked in a hastily constructed vessel upon the Maranon or Amazon; and leaving his leader and companions with promises of speedily returning with succour, he sailed down the mighty river, intent only on winning wealth and fame, and reached the ocean, after seven months' voyage, in August, 1541, being the first European who ever floated over this mighty fresh-water sea. After tremendous suffering and fatigue, Gonzalo Pizarro reached Quito with the remnant of his army; two thousand Indians had perished out of less than four thousand, and only eighty squalid Spaniards, out of three hundred and fifty, returned from the exploration of the Land of Cinnamon.

In the mean time, the discontent which these collateral expeditions although they dissipated could not extinguish, had been organising against the Pizarros. The young Almagro, who had been detained a prisoner at Lima, had become the ostensible head of a cabal, and the partisans of his father were active in their endeavours to constitute him governor of Peru, in place of that stern Francisco who had caused his friend to be strangled. Young Almagro possessed all the necessary constitutives of a leader; he was graceful, accomplished, and generous in his deportment, and brave in the field. Pizarro strove to circumscribe the growing influence of the young man, and degrade him as much as possible by subtracting from his wealth, trusting by this means to deprive him of the life-blood of conspiracy, but his partisans only became the more virulent towards Pizarro and devoted to their chief. It is wonderful to contrast the murderous promptitude of Francisco Pizarro's conduct on every occasion save in con-

nexion with this conspiracy. A remarkable fatuity seems to have possessed him, for although warned of an intention to destroy him on the part of Almagro's friends, he merely assumed a position of passive caution instead of his wonted celerity of action, and thus fell a victim to his temerity. On Sunday, June 26, 1541, the Almagrians broke into the palace of the governor at Lima, and after a determined defence on the part of Pizarro and a few surprised adherents, slew the discoverer of Peru and proclaimed Almagro governor. This conspiracy and its catastrophe, instead of producing unity, drove the two factions into active antagonism, and the fierce partisans of the dead Pizarro and the living Almagro determined to decide their superiority by the arbitrement of the sword. It was at this juncture that the king's commissioner, Vaca de Castro arrived in Peru, and, supported by the king's authority and his own good fame, he soon found himself in a position to interfere in the discordant affairs of his countrymen. All the followers of the late Pizarro sought for their leader one who was commissioned by their sovereign, conscious that although he might not crush Almagro for the deed of assassination, yet it was certain that he must come into collision with that usurper in the assertion of his own position. Gonzalo Pizarro, although only arrived from the Land of Cinnamon, and worn out with suffering, immediately sent from Quito an offer of his services to De Castro. This, however, the latter courteously declined, assuring the veteran that he required him to remain at Quito that he might preserve the loyalty of his followers and recruit his own strength. At last, after various futile attempts at a peaceful arrangement of differences, the armies of Vaca de Castro and Almagro engaged in sanguinary battle on the plain of Chupas, about two hundred miles from Cuzco. The combat was conducted with un-

usual fury and slaughter; but although Almagro and his followers fought with the energy and fury of despair, they were almost all destroyed by the soldiers of De Castro; and Almagro, after a vain attempt to escape, was tried, condemned, and executed at Cuzco, upon the very spot where his father had suffered.

Amidst all those contentions and suicidal reactionary movements amongst the Spaniards, however, the poor Peruvians knew no mitigation of their wrongs and woes. They were allotted in bands to the various leaders, that they might be used as agents in the production of wealth, or as beasts of burden to bear it to the various entrepots. With a refinement of cruelty only paralleled in the anomalous social economy of a modern republic, the poor natives were toiled to death in order to minister to the aggrandisement of the barbarians who trampled them, together with religion and humanity, under foot. Less robust than their conquerors, and born in a climate where even European exertion had never been demanded of them by nature, they sunk in fearful numbers beneath the unhallowed yoke of their brutal and avaricious masters. So dreadful was the mortality of the natives, and so plain was the approach of their extinction, that it hardly required the remonstrances of the celebrated ecclesiastic, Las Casas, to rouse the court of Madrid to a sense of the consequences likely to flow from the intolerable yet court-tolerated licentiousness of the adventurers in Peru. It is pleasing to turn from the wo-stained annals of the destructionist to a contemplation of the principle of conservatism; and the exertions of Las Casas to mitigate the horrors which his vicious countrymen had entailed upon a once flourishing and happy people, are certainly a series of redeeming accidents to the all but universal baseness manifested by the Spaniards at this period, from king and pre-

late to friar and peasant. At last a code of laws was drawn up; Blasco Nunez Vela was appointed governor of Peru, with the title of viceroy, and he and several other functionaries departed for the colony in the year 1543. As might have been expected, and in strict accordance with modern experience, the laws, which sought to give the Indians personality and a species of individual independence, were received with marked disapprobation by the Spaniards. So perfectly rivetted to their iron hearts were egotistic cupidity and aggrandisement, that they cared not for the woes of their victims, but viewed the sacrifice of their own luxurious indolence and voluptuous ease as too great an alternative to the misery and death of a nation. So strenuous and fierce was the opposition to the new code, that all the exertions of Vaca de Castro could hardly prevail upon the excited Spaniards to receive the viceroy with respect. That functionary, who was as firm as the malcontents were angry, landed at Tumbez on the 4th of March, 1543, and regarding himself as an executor of the royal will more than an independent diplomatist, he refused to listen to the remonstrances of the rebels. He summoned the civil authorities to accede to all the provisions of the new laws, and determined to employ force if compliance was refused. Vaca de Castro had striven to preserve tranquillity by holding out the prospect of a probable modification of the statutes, but the temper of the governor soon undeceived him, and his conscientious adherence to the instructions of the king, and his unyielding endeavours to free the natives from their dreadful bondage, ultimately caused the Spaniards to rise in arms against Nunez Vela.

It was at this point of affairs that the name of Pizarro was again destined to blaze in the annals of Peru. The recollection of his brother Ferdinand, a prisoner in Spain, and of the children of Francisco, who were also kept in

bondage by Nunez Vela at Lima, were sufficient incentives to produce rebellion in the heart of the brother Gonzalo. Accordingly, when protestations of adherence through life to his fortunes, and appeals to become the leader of the insurgent Spaniards, were sent to him from all quarters, he at once allowed himself to be elected general-in-chief of the forces in Peru. He speedily raised an army, seized upon the royal treasure, appointed civic functionaries, levied contributions, issued decrees, and, in short, assumed all the functions of an independent monarch. Gonzalo now advanced with a well appointed army from Cuzco to Lima, where Nunez Vela in vain strove to raise an opposing force. Indeed, the civil authorities were at first so apathetic in his cause, and then so actively antagonistic, that they defied his authority, and constrained him to barricade himself in his palace in order to escape from their violence. He was eventually seized, however, and ordered back to Spain, while the military judges of Lima proclaimed the suspension of the obnoxious statutes, thus dooming the Peruvians again to inevitable extinction. Although rebels to the mandates of the king, and contemners of the authority of Nunez Vela, the judges of Lima still did not wish to succumb to Gonzalo Pizarro. They made a show of independent action, and upon being summoned by the general to recognise his title to chief power, they hesitated, were arrested, thrown into prison, and on the morrow three were hanged on a tree by Carvajal, one of Pizarro's most active partisans, who, although nearly eighty years of age, was so inhuman as to taunt his victims in their dying throes. This execution struck terror into the minds of the other judges, and accordingly, upon the entrance of Gonzalo into Lima, on the 28th October, 1544, he was solemnly recognised as governor of Peru. The conduct of Pizarro was consistent with the whole tenor

of Spanish rule in America; tournaments and bull-fights, it is true, hailed his advent to power, while reckless murders and cruel oppressions received no check from that circumstance. Old Carvajal, his prime agent and counsellor, presents a most disgusting picture of atrocious cruelty, combined with extreme senility. The very hypocrisies of cruelty were disregarded by this inhuman octagenarian, for he scrupled not to indulge in buffoonery and indecent levity at an execution, and grimaced and chuckled over the bleeding corpse of a butchered countryman. Such conduct was not calculated to establish the authority of Pizarro upon a very permanent basis, and scarcely had he been placed upon the elevation of supremacy than the very height of his position enabled him better to discern the elements of discord that circulated around him.

Nunez Vela, instead of returning to the eastern continent, was landed again in Peru by Juan Alvarez, who had been deputed to convey him to Spain. Fear of incurring the displeasure of the monarch, from a full sense of the illegality of the whole procedure against Nunez Vela, seemed to actuate Alvarez in the course he pursued, for no sooner was he at sea, and freed from the influence of his associates, than he recognised the paramount authority vested in the viceroy. Nunez Vela, immediately upon landing at Tumbez, took active measures for the re-establishment of his power, and the licentious acts of cruelty perpetrated by Pizarro and his associates induced many to join his standard. Pizarro immediately adopted measures to crush the viceroy; he raised an army and marched towards Tumbez to meet him. Aware of the inability of his forces to contend with the superior numbers of Pizarro, Nunez, in order to gain time that he might recruit his ranks, commenced to retreat towards Quito. The sufferings and toil of the two armies in this pursuit of nearly

three thousand miles, were equal to those endured by Pizarro in his expedition to Canela. The activity and vigilance of Vela and Pizarro seemed to have been singularly well balanced; the former, although his rearward troops were sometimes seized and butchered by the cruel Carvajal, who led the advance, yet eluded every attempt of Pizarro to bring him to battle. He arrived at Quito only to find himself driven forth by the rapid advance of Pizarro to Ponpayan; yet he still managed to recruit his army and protract actual hostilities. At last, by a stratagem which proved successful, Pizarro placed Vela in a position which forced on a battle, when, after a long and malignant struggle, the forces of the viceroy were routed and Nunez Vela himself slain, on the 18th of January, 1546.

The lenient course pursued by the general towards the adherents of Vela, and the respect which he apparently paid to the remains of that gallant and firm Spaniard, contributed more to consolidate the power of Pizarro than the force of his arms. Pizarro, by his rebellion and the discomfiture of Nunez Vela, had placed himself beyond the pale of royal pardon; he had come prominently forward as a despiser of the decrees of his sovereign, and as the murderer of those who maintained his authority, consequently it required few arguments and adjurations in order to induce him to assume independent sovereignty in Peru. Dazzled and delighted with the prospect of a bauble crown, Pizarro, like a child who timidly yet fondly gazes on a new toy, delayed to proclaim himself king. There was an awe in the name of sovereign that excited the exaggerative reverence of the soldier, and yet there was an influence in it that produced a feverish desire to clutch at regality. The uncertainty of Pizarro's mind produced delay in action, and finally he resolved to send a messenger

to the court of Madrid, in the vague hope that a knowledge of his power would induce the king to give to his position and mandates the sanction of his authority. He accordingly sent one of his adherents, Alvarez Maldonado, to Spain, and in the mean time took up his residence, with all the pomp and circumstance of royalty, in the palace of his late brother Francisco at Lima. It was evident to the home government, even despite of the one-sided statements of Maldonado, that Pizarro had been active in promoting anarchy in Peru, and the king was both shocked, scandalised, and indignant when he heard of the death of Nunez Vela. He declared Pizarro and his adherents to be rebels and traitors, and resolved to treat them with the utmost rigour, but his inability to execute what his mind impelled him to, forced him to temporise with his now powerful subject. It was therefore resolved to make concessions to Pizarro, rather than provoke him to throw off his allegiance, by seeking to forcibly bind him to it; and consequently, instead of an iron-minded soldier like Nunez Vela, Pedro de Lagasca, a supple priest, was appointed to visit Peru as the ambassador of Charles.

Lagasca landed at Nombre de Dios on the 27th July, 1546, and although his humble demeanour and priestly character at first provoked the contemptuous laughter of the soldiery, yet he soon gained a powerful influence over several of the leaders, and by his insinuations and arguments induced them to place themselves under his command as the legate of Spain. After winning a strong force to the royal standard by the effect of his persuasions and appeals, Lagasca sent the king's letters to Pizarro, demanding of him to acknowledge Pedro's superiority. In answer to these letters, Pizarro sent back a tissue of semi-loyal protestations and querulous complaints of royal ingratitude to his family, which, although they manifested

a disposition for peace, did not manifest any strong desire to avoid war. The truth is, Pizarro beheld in Lagasca one authorised to supersede him in his government and to redress the grievanccs of the people. Pizarro's prudence seemed now to forsake him, and without any justifiable cause he determined to oppose Lagasca with force, and at the same time, with preposterous audacity, sent a messenger to Spain to insist upon the confirmation of his governmental authority in Peru. The position which Pizarro had so unprovokedly assumed towards Lagasca was highly detrimental to his cause, and he soon found that the foundation of his power was melting away from him like sand; his courage, however, and the determination of his followers, were sufficient to impel him to meet the president, but that wily old man had drawn forces from all the colonies true to the mother country, and while the governor's soldiers were deserting, reinforcements by sea were coming to Lagasca. Fortune seemed for a time to smile upon the falling Pizarro, and if by the baptism of his cause in blood it could be rendered honourable and glorious, the issue of the battle of Huarina, and the discomfiture of Centeno, were sufficient to have done so. The cause of Lagasca was rather advanced than otherwise by this battle, however, and Pizarro soon found, by the declarations of various cities, that his downfall was approaching. His only hope lay in his army, and therefore, rejecting the advice of his former advisers and friends to peaceably accommodate matters, he resolved to brave the president to the last, and encamped with his soldiers at Cuzco. Lagasca was too well practised in diplomacy to allow any opportunity to intermit of subtracting from the power of his opponent; he had consequently succeeded in corrupting the adherents of Pizarro, and therefore marched against him with the utmost confidence. The armies of Lagasca

and the governor drew near to each other and began to skirmish on 9th April, 1548, but suddenly almost all the rebels deserted, and Pizarro, instead of boldly following the advice of old Carvajal, to rush upon the enemies' swords and die, pusillanimously exclaimed, 'Since my soldiers go over to the king, I will follow their example!' and he accordingly rode over and delivered himself up to Lagasca. The president immediately cast him into prison, and next day he and his principal partisans, Carvajal, Acosto, and Maldonada were publicly slain as an earnest of Lagasca's desire to tranquillise Peru. Pizarro was beheaded, and buried beside the two Almagros, in Cuzco. Thus died the last of the brothers who swayed the destinies of Peru.

The measures of Lagasca were eventually productive of apparent unity amongst the Spaniards in Peru, but the land of the incas continued to be a scene of sorrow to the unhappy people. There are many dark and terrific pictures of invasion and rapacious conquest staining the annals of almost every European people, but foulest, darkest, and most debasing are those which start into terrible existence at the name of Pizarro and Peru.

VASCO DE GAMA

AND THE

CONQUEST OF HINDOSTAN.

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While Spain directed her attention to the exploration and subjugation of the West, Portugal, her sister nation and maritime rival, sought dominion and wealth in the East. While the cruel and immoral adventurers of the former nation carried havoc and ruin into the hearts of the islands and countries of the new world, the equally iron-hearted and gold-worshipping navigators of the latter blighted almost as soon as they discovered the *terræ incognitæ* of Asia. The motive which induced the chivalry of Spain and Portugal to forsake the barbed steed, and its theatre of operations, the land, for the sea, was the same—the desire of acquiring wealth, not by the most honourable but in the most rapid way. Portugal, if it does not occupy so prominent a position in the annals of discovery as Spain, can still claim a priority in the path of exploration. It was from the fame of her discoveries in the east that all Europe became imbued with a passion for marine adventure, and consequently it was from her that Spain received the impulse of navigation. Under the energetic and foster-

ing auspices of Prince Henry of Portugal, the idea of circumnavigating the continent of Africa, in order to open a path to India, was pursued with much zeal and success India was looked upon as the grand source of wealth and commerce; and keeping their eyes steadily fixed upon the probable results of every new discovery, the Portuguese pursued their researches along the African coast until they doubled its southernmost promontory and opened the path to the countries and islands of Eastern Asia.

The grand object of Portuguese exploration—that of rounding the Cape—was said to be attained in 1486 by Bartholomew Diaz, who discovered it, although generally attributed to Covilham and Vasco De Gama. To De Gama, however, belongs the undoubted honour of having applied the knowledge of Covilham to the extension of eastern discovery, and of having led the first fleet to the rich shores of India—an event which, by exciting the cupidity of adventurers and the speculation of geographers, led also to the extension of American discovery. It was the idea of finding a western passage to India which sent Columbus across the Atlantic Ocean, and when he landed upon San Salvador the belief that he had come upon one of the extreme islands of Asia caused him to give the name of West Indies to those islands in the Gulf of Mexico which have no relation to India whatever. It was not until eleven years after the passage of the Cape by Diaz, and when Covilham, a Portuguese resident in Abyssinia, had repeatedly pointed out the practicability of a passage by this route to India, that Emanuel, king of Portugal, determined to send a fleet thither. Kings have never shown themselves to be very scrupulous in the choice of those upon whom they sought to shower those nominal favours called titles, but when any serious business was to be done they have in a great many instances given indications of judgment and prudence

in their choice. It is a well known truth that obscure merit, although despised and treated with indifference, is always placed in its legitimate position when required, and accordingly Vasco De Gama, although no great courtier, but well known for his prudence, courage, and skill in navigation, was chosen commander of the expedition that was to visit India. When we contrast the vessels which are fitted out for modern exploration with those of the fifteenth century, and when we compare the relativo skill of the mariners of that period with ours, we wonder at the courage and perseverance of the early discoverers, as well as at the dangers which they must have encountered from the smallness and weakness of their vessels and the paucity of hands to work them. This expedition, which was to proceed upon so long and hazardous a voyage, consisted of three ships, carrying in all about sixty men.

Vasco De Gama set sail on the 8th of July, 1497, five years after Columbus had discovered America, and he steered direct for the Cape Verd Isles. From thence he bore directly to St Helena, in the South Atlantic Ocean, and only comparatively a little to the north of the southern point of Africa, which in two days he reached and doubled, despite of the strong south-east winds which blow there continuously during summer. In addition to the opposition which he met with from the weather, De Gama, like every commander of his times, had to contend with the arrant epidemical cowardice of his crews. Gross superstition and instability of courage seem to have been the most prominent elements in the characters of the Spaniards and Portuguese of those times, if we except cupidity; and while their commanders were sometimes constrained to check their cruel avarice, they were as often obliged to expostulate and threaten in order to overcome the most trifling obstacles. By firmness and address De Gama

subdued the fears of his men, and induced them to proceed upon the voyage. Steering to the east, along the southern shore of Africa, the expedition arrived at the bay of St Blaise, and shortly after at the islet of La Cruz, where, according to several narrators, the discoveries of Diaz terminated. Here the African coast begins its northern inclination, and, consequently, when it was passed the Portuguese had entered the Indian Ocean. Vasco De Gama had not proceeded upon this voyage on mere speculation. Pedro De Covilham, a Portuguese nobleman, had undertaken an overland journey to India, at the instance of John of Portugal, in search of the dominions of one Ogané, a prince whose dominions were reputed to be as extensive as they were rich. Covilham penetrated into Arabia Petræa, where he received some valuable information regarding the trade of Calicut, which place he visited, together with Cananor and Goa; he then crossed over to Sofala, anciently Ophir, on the coast of Africa, in order to examine the celebrated gold mines of that country; there he got the first distinct account of the island of the Moon or Madagascar. Satisfied with his discoveries, he intended to return to Portugal, but he was met by two Jews at Cairo, who informed him of the murder of his companion Payva, who had intended to go in quest of the kingdom of Ogané. Upon the receipt of this intelligence Covilham sent his journal, together with a map which had been presented to him by a Moor, to Portugal, and abandoning the idea of returning home, he journeyed to Abyssinia, accompanied by one of the Jews. Here he was most hospitably entertained by the king, who, appreciating and taking advantage of his superior knowledge, constrained him, it is said, to take up his permanent residence in Abyssinia. Covilham remained; but whether he was induced to do so by persuasion or constraint does not matter; he married, and attained the highest offices

in the state, but still kept up a correspondence with his native country, and it was his representations and advice that had led to the undertaking of De Gama. In order, therefore, that he might find all the countries which Covilham had visited, Vasco De Gama kept sailing along shore, invariably keeping within sight of land. Wherever he saw symptoms of a settled population, he always sent on shore or went himself, in order that he might become acquainted with the character and productions of the country, and to discover whether it had been previously visited by Covilham. In this tedious and almost uninteresting manner he crawled along shore, until at last, in the beginning of March, 1498, he anchored before the city of Mozambique, situated on the island of that name, which at that time was inhabited by Mahomedan Arabs, who were governed by a prince professing their own faith, and who carried on a great trade with the cities on either shore of the Red Sea and with the Indies.

The idea of deriving advantage from a trade with the strangers, induced the Mozambique Mussulmans to give them a favourable reception; but as soon as it was discovered that the Portuguese were professing Christians, the Moslems sought to destroy them. De Gama was constrained to fly from these treacherous people, and he then steered northwards and reached Mombasa. This city was built in a superior style to Mozambique, and carried on a still more extensive trade; but the inhabitants were of the same stock and faith with the Mozambiquians, whose hospitality was also assumed in order to hide their purpose to destroy the adventurers. Obtaining no information from these crafty Mussulman merchants, the Portuguese squadron proceeded eighteen leagues further on their voyage, next touching at Melinda, where the influence of commerce seemed to have softened the austere manners of the

Mahomedans. The sovereign of Melinda received Gama with every mark of favour, visiting his ships and inviting him on shore. The Portuguese commander was unwilling, however, to run the risk of exciting the bigotry of the people, and he therefore declined the invitation. Several of his officers, whom he allowed to visit the king, were treated with every mark of hospitality and respect. Melinda is situated in 2½ degrees of south latitude, between the rivers Quilimanchi and the Great River. The soil was generally fertile, and finely interspersed with trees yielding a great variety of fruits. Flowers and esculents were also very abundant. The town of Melinda gave indications of a busy, thriving, commercial city. It was built upon a plain, and presented a very pleasant and picturesque appearance. The houses were built of stone, as if the Arab merchants had no intention of again returning to the wandering habits of their people, and they were very richly furnished with manufactured articles, indicating the security and encouragement which were given for the accumulation of wealth, and a high state of advancement in art. The access to the harbour of Melinda was intercepted by rocks and other submarine obstructions, so that the adventurers were constrained to cast anchor at some distance from the town; but here Vasco De Gama found many ships from India, the owners of which carried on a brisk trade with the merchants of Melinda in gold, copper, quicksilver, ivory, and wax, and who gave them silks, cottons, linen-cloth, corn, and other commodities, in exchange. To the northward of Melinda there is a large and commodious bay, which the adventurers designated Bahia Formosa, and which is the ancient Tarshish of Scripture. Its coast is difficult of access, being dotted with many rocks and shoals, but, formed by the mouths of Great River, were three fertile and populous islands which were ultimately

subjected to the Portuguese sway. While at Melinda, Gama was warned by some Christians of that country to be on his guard, and not to trust too much to hospitable appearances. This advice harmonised too well with De Gama's own opinions and experiences for him to neglect it; he therefore kept a strict watch upon all the movements of the Melindans, and left their shores without injury. On the contrary, the king presented to him several rich presents, the most important of which was Malemo Cana, an Indian of Guzerat, who was the most experienced navigator of the Indian seas. This mariner did not evince the least surprise when he saw the astrolabe with which the European navigators observed the sun's meridian altitude, and when questioned npon the subject, he said that the pilots of the Red Sea used instruments of a similar construction for the same purpose.

From Melinda, Vasco De Gama tnrned the prows of his vessels towards the north-east, and, sailing amongst the islands of the Indian Ocean during twenty-three days, he arrived at Calicut, on the Malabar coast, which was then the grand mercantile or commercial emporium of India. This proud and wealthy city was then free from the domination of the European stranger, and was governed by a native prince who bore the title of Zamorin. The messengers of the voyager landed, and found means to introduce themselves to the ministers of this ruler, and so successful were their first negociations, that they were immediately allowed to enter the port, and the Zamorin consented that Vasco should be presented to him and received with all the honours usually shown to the ambassadors of powerful monarchs. The want of reciprocal good faith, however, marred all the attempts at friendly intercourse between the voyagers and Indians. The Portuguese were suspicious of the Mahomedans, and they therefore advised their

commander not to expose himself to danger by going on shore.

In a council which was held previous to his landing, his brother Paul importuned him to remain on ship-board; but Vasco still maintained his resolution of going on shore, and ordered that his brother should take command of the fleet during his absence. He disregarded danger, supposing that he might be able to form a commercial alliance with the Zamorin, and thus conducc to the glory and exaltation of his country. To prove, however, that he was not dead to the danger which his officers declared menaced him, he ordered that in case of his death Paul should immediately depart and inform the king that India was discovered, and also that Vasco de Gama had died in his endeavours to aggrandise his country.

Next morning after his arrival in the harbour of Calicut, the mariner, accompanied by twelve resolute men as a body-guard, landed, and proceeded to the palace of the Zamorin. The residence of the prince was situated some miles in the interior, so that, after having been received with great pomp at their landing, the strangers had to pass through the city on their way to the country-residence of the monarch. As they passed along, they were greeted by a wondering multitude of people from all the trading nations of Asia, whose admiration of the pale-faced strangers was no doubt heightened by their singular costume, so unlike anything Indian. Upon his arrival at the country-residence of the Zamorin, De Gama was so well received that he entertained the most sanguine hopes of being able to negociate a treaty of commerce between his native country and this splendid and richest of Asiatic cities; but the intrigues of the Mahomedans had followed him from Mambosa and Mozambique to Calicut, so that when he imagined himself upon the point of forming an alliance

advantageous to his country, the representations of the Arab traders induced the Zamorin to believe that the Portuguese were mere pirates, who had found their way into the Indian seas for no other purpose than to promote commotion and turmoil, in order that they might pillage and destroy. These insinuations, supported by the apparent poverty of the adventurers, produced the desired effect. The magnificent presents which De Gama offered to the ministers of the Zamorin were so contemptible in their estimation, that they indignantly rejected them; and this cause of estrangement being followed by others, De Gama began to fear that he would either be detained a prisoner, or put to death along with his twelve companions.

At length De Gama received private information, that, under the pretence of a reconciliation, it was intended to bring his fleet into a position convenient for its destruction. Vasco found means to convey this intelligence to his brother, who conducted measures so firmly, and at the same time prudently, that he frustrated the designs of the conspirators. The firmness and address of Vasco, on the other hand, enabled him to secure the respect of the prince, and to convince him that he was indeed the representative of a great commercial nation, with which an alliance would be to the Zamorin's advantage; and while the prince was in this belief, he obtained leave to return to his ships.

As soon as De Gama was free, he bore away from Calicut to the Angedive Islands, a little to the north, whence, having repaired his ships, he steered directly for Europe. In passing Melinda, which is situated on the west coast of Africa, and only a little to the south of the equator, De Gama took on board an ambassador from the king of that country, the only one of the eastern princes who had manifested anything like sincere friendship for the Por-

tuguese. In March, 1499, the navigator doubled the Cape of Good Hope, and arrived at Lisbon on the September following, having been absent two years. Emanuel received De Gama with great pomp and rejoicing, lavishing titles upon him, and causing his return to be celebrated with great festivities.

This voyage of Vasco De Gama may with confidence be termed the precursor of that system of spoliation and flagrant injustice which disgraces the history of every European nation which has sent its ships to India. Emanuel no sooner heard of the wealth of the Asiatic cities than he desired to appropriate it to his own uses, and as he knew that force was necessary to consummate his designs, he fitted out a fleet of thirteen sail, and dispatched them to India under the command of Don Pedro Alvarez Cabral. There had been a great outcry raised against the expenses required to equip the three small vessels of De Gama, because the profits of his voyage were as problematical as the issue of the voyage itself; but no sooner did he bring home the news of his success than the nobility embarked with avidity in the expedition of Cabral, anticipating a rich return in the spoils of the territories which they should subjugate. The Arab merchants had no doubt reasoned hypothetically when they called the Portuguese pirates, or they had done so upon no other grounds than their own suppositions. Subsequent events, however, verified the fact and wrote it deep into the heart of sacked and plundered India. Alvarez carried with him a number of Franciscan monks to teach the nations of the east Christianity, and, as if in utter mockery of the mandate of the Saviour, he had 1200 fighting men to support the priests in the propagation of the precepts of the Prince of Peace. In order to avoid the storms of the Cape of Good Hope, Cabral steered boldly to the south-west, and thus fortui-

tously discovered Brazil. Although meeting with severe storms, and losing a portion of his armament, he still pursued his voyage, and, arriving at Calicut, was received with much deference by the king of that region, who, in order to dissipate the impression which his equivooal conduct to De Gama might have produced upon the minds of his conntrymen, gave to Cabral a right of settlement in his territory, and allowed him to appoint a trading factor or consul for his nation. This amicable feeling did not long exist, however, for the Portuguese, eager to acquire the wealth of the Indians, did not scruple to use the most unjust means to attain it, and having begun to treat the people of Calicnt more as conquerors than as friendly traders, they were set upon and slain to the number of fifty. Cabral visited Cochin, Coilan, and Cananore, lading his vessels with rich cargoes, and bearing home ambassadors from the chiefs of these comparatively feeble states.

Every subsequent voyage tended to increase the avaricious propensities of the Portuguese, and accordingly rendered the fitting out of fleets for India a work of easy attainment. In 1502, therefore, they fitted out a fleet of twenty sail, and Vasco De Gama was induced to take the command of it. Almost the first of De Gama's acts, when he arrived on the east coast of Africa, was one of essential piracy. He set upon the King of Quiloa, and compelled him to become tributary to the King of Portugal, forcing him to promise to pay two thousand crowns of gold annually. Leaving Quiloa, and steering across the Indian Ocean, he came upon a group of islands, which, in remembrance of his title of Admiral of India, he called Admiral Isles. Upon his arrival on the Malabar, or western coast of Hindostan, with his increased force, the sovereigns of Cananore and Cochin hastened to congratulate him, and the Christians of St Thomas claimed his protection, which

he granted, leaving a part of his squadron to act with or for them. Remembering his own usage at Calicut, and hearing of the massacre of the Portuguese left by Cabral, Vasco approached this territory not in a very friendly aspect, and the Zamorin, who knew what he might expect, fitted out a fleet to oppose him. The Portuguese gained an easy victory, capturing two ships which contained immense riches. In addition to a vast quantity of gold and silver plate, there was on board one of these ships a golden image which weighed sixty pounds. Its eyes were emeralds of great size, and in its breast was a ruby as large as a chesnut. Laden with the spoils of this purely piratical excursion, De Gama returned home, and landed at Lisbon without a single accident. Here the plaudits of his countrymen and the praises of his king awaited him. Cheers and every demonstration of popular joy greeted his landing, and, to swell his triumph, and convey a right sense of the value of his services to Portugal, the tribute of the King of Quiloa was borne before him in a silver basin. Vasco De Gama is no more heard of in the annals of voyaging. He retired to enjoy in seclusion the fruits of his toils and the honours conferred upon him by his king.

Elated by success, and strengthened in their appetite for gold by their repeated acquisitions, the Portuguese gradually extended their geographical discoveries even to the islands of Japan. Fleet after fleet was sent out, under sanction of the government, to the East, and the only compensation of those who fitted them out was the plunder which they might gain from the Indians. Their voyages, from that of Vasco De Gama, became gradually more and more voyages of conquest, until they at last appeared in their worst aspect of rapacious tyranny. By their warlike energy, the Portuguese became masters of

Arabia-Persia, the two peninsulas of Hindostan and Malacca, together with the Moluccas, Ceylon, and the islands of Sunda. But the voluptuousness which their ill-acquired wealth produced soon rendered them incapable of supporting themselves in the position of masters of India. Wherever they ruled there was a division of the state into factions, and the governors of the several settlements so abandoned themselves to those excesses which render men hateful and contemptible, that even their power ceased to intimidate the conquered natives. The voyage of Vasco De Gama opened up an extensive field for discovery, but it was the path which eventually led to the effeminacy, degeneracy, and decay of his country; and now, of all their vast territories in Asia, they can claim but a little decayed settlement at Macao, with some inconsiderable trading port on the coast of Malabar. It has ever been thus with nations who superseded commerce by the impolitic and cruel policy of war; and Portugal, like Spain, stands a monument to the nations, of the punishment that invariably follows national dishonour and cruelty.

LA PEROUSE.

LA PEROUSE.

If any other causes beyond her commercial status could warrant Britain in claiming to be mistress of the seas, they would be her discoveries during the middle and end of the last century. The explorations of Captain Cook were in some respects neither so extensive nor so important as those of the Spaniards and Portuguese during the fifteenth century; but the motive of his expedition, and the character of the men engaged in it with him, present it in a moral and consequently far more dignified aspect. Personal aggrandisement and conquest were the prime inducements to Spanish and Portuguese discovery. To add to the stores of geographical knowledge, and to throw light on other of the sciences, were the higher although less active inducements which impelled British exploration. The war of 1778-83, a five years' trial of murderous rivalry between France and Britain, had scarcely ceased, when the French, in a spirit of noble and exalted emulation, fitted out a squadron in order to elucidate those geographical obscurities which Captain Cook had left unsolved. The command of this sqnadron was given to Francis Galaup de la Perouse, an officer whose experience, skill, and talents peculiarly fitted him to practically conduct such an enterprise as that contemplated, and whose manly

generosity of character was well calculated to win the love and esteem of all who would engage in it with him.

The object of La Perouse's expedition was purely one of scientific research, but too much was expected of it. A plan of operations, sufficient to have occupied almost the lifetime of any man in its execution, was drawn up for La Perouse's guidance—a plan, however, which a succession of the most lamentable misfortunes was destined to render a dead letter, and a melancholy evidence of the short-sightedness of man. La Perouse had instructions to complete the survey of the coasts of Sandwich Land and New Georgia, left unfinished by Cook. He was to fix the precise position of Pitcairn's Island, in order more accurately to indicate the track of Caterel across the Pacific Ocean and the positions of his various discoveries. He was to make particular observations of Quiro's Island and the Santa Cruz of Mendana; he was to complete the survey of New Caledonia, the eastern side of which had only been traced by Cook. The great Gulf of Carpentaria, to the north of New Holland, was to be explored; after which he was to visit the Japan and other islands on the east coast of Asia. He was to touch at Kamtschatka, examine the north-western coast of America, and, after refreshing and refitting, the expedition was to proceed to explore the eastern coast of Tatary, which was almost unknown to European geographers. After touching at Kamtschatka a second time, the squadron was to return home, accurately surveying the Ladrones, the New Carolinas, and Moluccas, and also fixing the position of every coast at which they arrived. To carry out so extensive a plan, the preparations were in every way commensurate. The Bonsole and Astrolabe, two of the finest frigates in the French navy, were selected for the service, and several of the most eminent scientific men in France were induced to enter into it. The mag-

nificence of the contemplated work, the preparations which had been made to consummate it, and the zeal and talents of those engaged in it, conduced to render this one of the most hopeful expeditions that had ever been undertaken for a like purpose, and the disappointment consequent on its failure was as great as the anticipations of its success had been sanguine. The voyage commenced under very auspicious circumstances. The ships took in refreshments at the island of St Catharine, on the coast of Brazil, and then steering south doubled Cape Horn with ease. The voyage had been tedious and distressing enough, however, to render it inexpedient to launch at once across the Pacific, so La Perouse steered for Easter Island, in order to recruit his crews and repair his ships. With the manners of the inhabitants of this island the French became more accurately acquainted than the British had been. The great statues which they had erected, and which those who accompanied Captain Cook supposed to be formed from some sort of composition, were discovered to be moulded of that light volcanic substance called capillo; their grounds were very highly cultivated, and gave great proofs of skill and ingenuity. The social compact seemed to be strong amongst them, for the inhabitants of a whole district lived in many cases under the same roof. Their great houses were formed like an inverted canoe, and were commonly upwards of three hundred feet in length. Their advancement in social comforts and the arts was very high when compared with their means; indeed the French came to regard them as a comparatively happy and very wonderful people.

Leaving Easter Island, the squadron proceeded to the Sandwich Islands, where they procured a stock of fresh provisions, and surveyed Mowee, one of the group which Cook had not visited. La Perouse next proceeded to exa-

mine the north-west coast of America, which was indubitably the most arduous part of his undertaking. He arrived on the American coast, near Mount Elias, in June, 1786, and as only two or three months remained to him before he should be constrained by his instructions to proceed to China, he resolved not to follow in the track of his great predecessor Cook, but to attempt the exploration of what he had left untouched. From St Elias, therefore, the French expedition bore south along the coast towards the Spanish settlement of Monterey. Shortly after they had approached the shore they discovered a harbour with a narrow entrance, whioh they resolved to enter. Proceeding cautiously, they found a safe anchorage, but such was the force of the current at the entrance that they very narrowly escaped being thrown on the rocks. After they had effected a safe passage into the bay, the French commenced to examine its scenery, for it seemed to them one of the most extraordinary places in the world. It was a basin of placid, still water, bordered by lofty pinnacled mountains, towering abruptly from their base, and covered with snow. The silence of this northern solitude was such that the voice of a man might be heard for half a league, and the falling of ice-blocks and the scream of birds come with startling force upon the mariners who may chance to visit its lifeless, barren, silent shores. In this bay was a little island, of which the French took possession, having purchased it from the natives, that upon it they might erect an observatory, and, if subsequent events might be favourable, a station for the fur trade, as it was sufficiently distant from the factories of the Russians, English, and Spaniards, to prevent any complaints of interference with the trade of these nations, and very favourably situated for oommunication with the mainland Indians. Here, however, the misfortunes of La Perouse's expedition may be

said to have begun; there was not a single invalid in the whole squadron, nor had there hitherto been any material sickness or other circumstance to affect the success of the expedition; but the foolhardy temerity of an inferior officer produced a misfortune sufficient to cloud the prospects of all their subsequent undertakings, and materially retard researches that promised to benefit the world.

Three boats, under the command of M. d'Escures, were sent to sound the entrance of the harbour, which was very difficult of access from the violence of the tides. La Perouse enjoined this officer and those under his command to proceed with the greatest caution; but the vain man, thinking that rashness was the measure of courage, approached the rocks, with the danger of which manœuvre he was not acquainted, and two of the boats were immediately drawn into the surf and overwhelmed, while it was with the utmost difficulty that the third escaped. By this melancholy occurrence twenty-one persons lost their lives, an event which threw a gloom over all the ships' crews. This bay, which is situated in 58 degrees 37 minutes north latitude, and west longitude 139 degrees 50 minutes, La Perouse named *Port des François.*

From this place the frigates proceeded southward to Monterey, making observations on the coast, but adding nothing material to previous discoveries. At Monterey, the ships were repaired, after which they proceeded directly across the Pacific Ocean, and arrived at Macao, in China, on the 2d of January, 1787. Here the arrangements for the second voyage were completed, and La Perouse immediately proceeded to Manilla, and then he sailed thence, in the beginning of April, in order to proceed with his observations of the coast of Tatary. He touched at Pescadore and the Loochoo islands on his passage, but he had no intercourse with the natives. He next made the

island of Quelpaert, and coasted the peninsula of Corea. The observations which La Perouse made during this expedition were of great advantage to science, as they were made with ampler and more improved means than any of his predecessors had possessed, and consequently were taken with every advantage to render them accurate.

In the middle of June the Bonsole and Astrolabe reached that part of the coast of Tatary situated in north latitude 42 degrees. They ran along shore for some distance without seeing the least indication of inhabitants, and entering a harbour in 45 degrees 13 minutes of north latitude, which they named *Baie de Ternai*, they were astonished to find a fertile and richly wooded country destitute of any appearance of population. Here in pristine luxuriance and uncultured wildness grew roses and lilies of almost every hue. The mountains were clad to their very summits with lofty forests of pine and oak, gradually rising from the borders of the sea to a great height. The brooks, lakes, and rivers were overhung with maple, birch, and other trees and shrubs, and the tall rank grass waved on the flats which extended along their margins or surrounded them. Apples, medlars, and hazels grew in luxuriant abundance; indeed, everything around seemed as if inviting man to assert his dominion over its latent capabilities of production, but no one save the lonely shipwrecked mariner, or the passing voyager, had ever been here to leave traces of his path. Trees that had been cut with edge-tools were observed, and burial-places with several relics were found, but otherwise it was a lonely and tenantless shore. On proceeding to the eastward, however, they discovered a land which proved to be that of Sagaleen, where they had the fortune to meet with an intelligent, peaceable, and hospitable people, from whom they received some important communications concerning the

coast which they were exploring. On desiring a native to give them a linear representation of the countries which he knew, he drew a line to represent the Tatarian coast or the country of the Mandchoos. On the west, he described an island of great length and vast dimensions, calling it *Choka,* and signifying by signs that it was his native country. He divided this island from Tatary by a narrow channel, and near its northern and narrowest extremity he placed the mouth of the river Sagaleen, which was only seven days' voyage in a canoe from his own village. Anxious to investigate the truth of the native's representations, they attempted to explore the whole channel to the north; but the dangerous nature of the seas, the prevalence of south winds, and a heavy fog, rendered it dangerous and difficult either to proceed or to return, so that they deemed it prudent to keep to the south. After a very tedious passage southward the ships reached the strait which separates the island of Sagaleen or Choka from that of Ycsso; to this strait has been given the name of *La Perouse.* His fresh intercourse with the natives further induced La Perouse to believe the accounts which he had already obtained regarding the channel in which he had been sailing. On leaving the straits which bear his name, the navigator recognised the coasts which had been described by the Dutch commander of the ship Castricum, whose accounts had hitherto been considered more fabulous than real. The Kamtschatdales manifested the same kindness to the French that they had shown to the British navigators, and here La Perouse had the pleasure of performing one of those acts of brotherly attention which it so well becomes great men to show towards the memory of each other. A French gentleman named De Lisle, brother of the celebrated astronomer, had accompanied the Russian expedition to Behring as astronomer, and he had there died.

Captain Clerke, an English navigator, had subseqnently searched out and marked the burial-place of this martyr to science. Captain Clerke, when on a later voyage, had died at Kamtschatka also, and it now became the French mariner's privilege of marking with a monument and inscription upon copper the tomb of the English captain. This little act shows us that the rivalry of discovery in science, if it be a rivalry, does not make enemies, but rather tends to make brethren of men, while the rivalry of war impregnates even the best hearts with the worst and bitterest of passions.

When La Perouse was about to leave Kamtschatka to proceed on his voyage, he prevailed on the governor to allow M. Lesseps, who had accompanied the expedition as Russian interpreter, to make an overland journey to Europe. He carried to France the journals and surveys of the voyage up to the period of his departure, and luckily arrived safely with these records of this unfortunate expedition. M. Lesseps was the first who made an overland journey to the old world, and being a young man of ability and observant habits, he brought an amount of important information from the countries which he visited, and which had been previously but very little known.

After looking in vain for land marked in the Spanish charts as situated in these seas about the thirty-seventh parallel, La Perouse for the third time crossed the line and arrived at Navigators' Isles, coming to anchor off the island of Maonna, where he hoped to find supplies of fresh provisions and water. The familiarity of the natives of these islands with the sea, and the skill which they evinced in the management of their numerous and large canoes, well entitled them to the appellation of navigators. The natives of Maonna were generally of lofty stature and athletic form, being about six feet two inches in height,

and proportionably robust; they looked upon the French with much contempt on account of their low stature, and ultimately evinced an insolent audacity which led to a fatal issue. The French, by conducting themselves with the utmost caution and forbearance towards these people, obtained from them a supply of water and provisions, and La Perouse, who did not feel at all easy in his present circumstances, was anxious after this to leave this dangerous place; but the commander of the Astrolabe having discovered what he supposed to be a secure little harbour, into which ran a fresh-water stream, it was determined to anchor in this cove and fill all the water casks previous to departure. The boats, having on board sixty-three well armed men, proceeded to the shore, commanded by M. de Langle, when it was found that the beautiful harbour was so filled with coral reefs as to render it difficult to approach the beach. By cautious perseverance, however, the French succeeded in landing and commenced their watering operations, the few natives who were there lending their aid. Gradually, however, the natives increased in numbers and also in insolence, until the precipitate retreat of the women and children from the crowd showed that they meditated hostilities. Upon this warlike demonstration the French retreated to their boats, but from the smallest of these being lying in-shore—the others being unable to approach it in consequence of the shallowness of the water—they became so overcrowded that the French could neither push them conveniently off nor use their weapons, so that the large stones, which the natives threw with great force and unerring aim, struck down the sailors and rendered them so confused that they became comparatively easy objects of massacre. The small boats were quickly destroyed, and those who did not throw themselves into the sea and swim to the cutters were quickly dispatched and cruelly

mangled, the savages dragging their bodies ashore and horridly mutilating them. Captain De Langle was the first who fell a victim to his ill-advised delay, and M. Lamanon, the naturalist, and nineteen other persons, were murdered in this cruel affray. When the news of this melancholy catastrophe was carried to the ships the fury of the crews became almost ungovernable, and they vehemently sought for revenge, but the enlightened and generous La Perouse succeeded in appeasing the force of their indignation, and averted the sad consequences which must have resulted from retaliation. This second misfortune rendered the French commander more cautious in his future intercourse with the natives and chary in allowing his people to land. This laudable caution, however, by circumscribing the observations of the naturalists, prevented any extended investigation of either the flora or zoology of the places subsequently visited. La Perouse hardly paused to survey the Friendly Islands of Cook, and did not attempt to communicate with their inhabitants. He was suspicious now from experience; and as the last catastrophe had thrown a gloom over his crews, he was unwilling to risk the deepening of that sadness, by placing himself in a position where a similar accident might occur.

From the Friendly Islands he sailed to Norfolk Island, but here his naturalists could not effect a landing, and so he bore directly for Botany Bay. At the very period when La Perouse arrived at this station some British war-ships were lying off at anchor, being engaged in the foundation of a colony, and the removal of a settlement from this part of New Holland to Port Jackson, which is situated a few miles to the north. Every attention was shown by the British to the exploring squadron, and as the settlement was only ten miles distant overland from where the French frigates were laid up to refit for their third voyage, La

Perouse, who kept up a constant intercourse with them, was enabled to receive the kind attentions of the governor and settlers of the new colony. By the ships which he met here he sent home the remainder of his journal and the charts which he had made since leaving Kamtschatka, and also the last communication that ever reached Europe from the brave, the talented, the indefatigable, but the unfortunate La Perouse. In a letter dated February 7, 1787, he details his plan of future operations, a plan which he was never destined to consummate. 'I shall proceed to the Friendly Isles,' he says, 'and do everything enjoined in my instructions relative to the southern part of New Caledonia, next to the island of Santa Cruz of Mendana, the southern coast of the land of the Arsacides of Surville, and the land of Louisiade of Borgainville, and I shall endeavour to ascertain whether the latter constitutes a part of New Guinea or is separated from it by a strait. Towards the end of July, 1788, I shall pass between New Guinea and New Holland by another channel than Endeavour Strait, if any such exist; and during the month of September and part of October I shall visit the Gulf of Carpentaria and all the coast of New Holland as far as Van Dieman's Land, but in such a manner as that it may be possible for me to stretch northward time enough for me to arrive at the Isle of France in the beginning of December, 1788.'

Shortly after the date of this letter La Perouse sailed from Botany Bay, and then the curtain of oblivion falls over his future course. Time sped away, and many a tearful and anxious eye looked from the sunny shores of France towards the ocean, vainly hoping for those they loved who had gone away with La Perouse, but they came not. There were many and fond regrets expressed for the fate of the missionaries of science, and aspirations were

often breathed that they might be alive. They had not gone away to carry wo, and want, and bloodshed into the countries and homes of quiet people, but to let the men in the civilised part of the world know that they had benighted brethren dwelling in hitherto unknown places, and to point the way to missionaries of art, and social progress, and of the gospel, to where these naked ignorant brethren dwelt. Theirs had been a good, and humanising, and elevating purpose, and consequently the sympathy expressed for their fate was pure and unalloyed with any sense of their expedition having superinduced such a fate as it was often feared they had suffered. It was sometimes supposed, too, in the expiring agony of hope, that some of the party might be cast away and living upon some lonely isle of the ocean, perhaps tormented by the natives who had bent them to their yoke. Prompted by considerations of this nature, the National Assembly, by a decree of February, 1791, besought the King of France to communicate with the governments of all European nations, imploring them in the name of humanity to urge upon their subjects, trading in all parts of the world, and particularly those navigating the South Seas, to collect whatever information they could respecting the unfortunate French squadron. At the same time two ships were equipped and dispatched under the command of Admiral d'Entrecasteaux. This expedition was also unfortunate in its issue, its chief being first induced by the representations of a Dutch captain to visit the Admiralty Isles in hopes to find some trace of the adventurers. He found that he wasted precious time, however, only to prove that the Dutchman's story was chimerical. Finding nothing to induce him to believe that any French ships had ever been lost at the Admiralty Isles, he resumed his original course and steered directly for New Holland, round which great island he sailed by

west and south, and then set out from Botany Bay to pursue the track which La Perouse in his last letter had indicated. No traces of the unfortunate expedition could be fonnd, however, and D'Entrecasteaux was satisfied that it had never visited the Friendly Isles. On his return home he observed at a distance an island of the Queen Charlotte group, which he called *L'Isle de Recherche*, and strangely and unfortunately he omitted to explore this island as intimately as he had done every other which he had seen. D'Entrecasteaux died soon after the discovery of *L'Isle de Recherche;* the next in command lived only a short time; and when the depressed mariners of the expedition arrived at Java it was to find themselves prisoners to the Dutch, to see their ships seized as prizes, and to hear that the evcnts of the French Revolution had changed the political aspect of their country and deprived them of their commission.

Time still sped away, and the mystery that involved the fate of La Perouse and his ships' crews becáme deeper and more difficult of unravelment, as the reports which had floated about regarding the expedition became one by one disproved. It is curious, however, to trace the fortuitous and unlikely circumstances which often lead to great and important discoveries. Captain Robson, of the Bengal ship Hunter, touched, in September, 1813, at the Feejee Islands, in order to trade with the natives and procure if possible a cargo of sandal wood. The natives of these islands were very fierce, and in addition to their natural ferocity they were cannibals. Instead of seeking to convert these poor islanders from their evil dispositions, the European traders, in order to conduce to their own again, assisted one tribe of natives in its wars against another, and if they did not join in their feasts they helped to supply them, and conscqncntly exposcd themselves to the deadly enmity

of one tribe while they gained the favour of another. While the Hunter was at Feejee, the natives set upon the Europeans who lived on shore, and who were profligate deserters from ships that had touched there, and they massacred them all and ate them. Martin Bushart, a Prussian, and his wife, a Feejee woman, together with one Achowlia, a Lascar, took refuge on board the Hunter, and were put on shore, at their own solicitation, on *Tucopia* or Barwell Island, in south latitude 12 degrees 15 minutes, east longitude 169 degrees, where the natives kindly received them.

Captain Dillon, who had been on board of the Hunter in 1813, when the massacre of the Europeans took place at the Feejee Islands, was returning from Valparaiso to Pondicherry in the St Patrick, in May, 1826, and coming in sight of Barwell Island, the recollection of Martin Bushart and the Lascar who had been put on shore there induced him to draw near to the island, in order that he might if possible ascertain the fate of these two persons. Captain Dillon's surprise may be imagined when the very individuals for whom he felt an interest were the first to step on board of his ship from a canoe. From the Lascar the gunner of the ship bought a silver sword-guard, and being questioned how it had come into the possession of the Indians, Bushart stated that, on his arrival in 1813, he found several iron bolts, axes, knives, teacups, and various articles of French manufacture. When Bushart had acquired the language he learned from the natives that all these articles had been brought from Manicolo, the very island which D'Entrecasteaux had called *Recherche*. The history given of them was, that many years ago two ships had been thrown away on the shores of Manicolo, that the crew of one had perished, but that the people of the other had got safe to land. Those who landed had built from the fragments of the large ships a smaller one, with which

the majority departed, leaving a few of their number, who became very serviceable to the warrior chiefs. The Lascar had seen two of these Europeans, but he could not be induced to visit Manicolo again. Bushart, however, was willing to assist Captain Dillon in his researches. Dillon thought that on the silver sword-guard, already mentioned, he had traced the initials of La Perouse, and he was accordingly most anxions to prosecute the long lost track of the expedition, to which he thonght he had found a clue. Calms and shortness of provisions forced him to abandon the project for the present, however; but on his arrival in India, he hastened to lay a memorial before the government, stating the grounds he had for believing that he had at last found the means of throwing some light npon this unfortunate expedition. Captain Dillon's application was immediately acceded to, and a ship, named the Research, was placed under his command, with which he immediately proceeded to Barwell Island, providing himself with a native interpreter, and then he sailed to Manicolo. By an accurate survey he found this island to be entirely surrounded by coral reefs and only approachable by a few openings. From the natives Captain Dillon learned that one of the ships had sunk in deep water at a place called Whannow, and the other had struck on the rocks near Paion, from which the strangers came on shore, where, after remaining five months, they departed with a ship which they had built. The strangers, they said, were spirits of the sea, who talked with the sun and moon by means of a long stick, and who in form and bearing were not like common men. Their noses, which it is supposed meant their cocked hats, were said to be a yard long, and in describing the scntinels who had guarded the camp of the shipwrecked mariners, they reprcsented them as men standing on one leg and holding an iron bar in their

hands. Captain Dillon assiduously collected every relic to be found of the expedition; he raised several brass guns from the reef, and having obtained other fragments of philosophical instruments, &c., he returned to Calcutta; from thence he proceeded to Paris, and arrived in February, 1828, where it was fully established that the several articles he had found had belonged to La Perouse's expedition. This is all that ever the world knew or is likely to know of the fate of the French navigator, whose misfortunes were assuredly the result not of his want of all the requisites for his command, but of the incautious temerity of those who sailed as his subordinates.

ALONZO DE OJEDA.

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Of all the companions and successors of Columbus in those enterprises which so materially affected the western continent and exercised such an influence upon the character and condition of Spain, none deserves more to be noticed than Alonzo de Ojeda. In our rescripts of these Spanish and Portuguese discoverers and adventurers, we have endeavoured to separate as it were their constituent parts, and to let the reader behold them in their true aspect. We have given them every credit for that determination of will and recklessness of consequences so necessary to the consummating of any great enterprise; but at the same time we have shown that one of the most debasing although one of the most active impulses, the love of riches, was the prime motive of their actions. The history of Alonzo de Ojeda's adventures in America are more like romance than fact. He was an example of all the reckless warlike idiosyncrasy so finely illustrated in Don Quixote. He possessed all the martial accomplishments of the Cid, and was as ignorant as Sancho Panza without possessing his common sense.

Alonzo de Ojeda was born in Cuenca, in New Castile, and was the scion of what is termed a noble house. He was trained to all the warlike accomplishments of his times

in the household of the Duke of Medina Celi, one of the most powerful nobles of Spain, whom he served as page or esquire. The wars of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries between the licentious nobility and the crown, and their constant battles with the Moors, fostered the ferocious passions of the Spanish hidalgoes and people, and rendered the service of every nobleman a probationary course to the battle-field. Ojeda, although diminutive in stature, surpassed almost all his cotemporaries in feats of horsemanship and arms, and was so possessed with the furor of brute courage that he became the admiration of all who knew him. His well formed frame, hardened by constant exercise and animated by an indomitable spirit, became capable of the most surprising actions considering its smallness, and made him dreaded by those who were apparently vastly his superiors in physical strength. Like Napoleon, Alexander, Francis I. of France, and Kosciusko, all men of diminutive size, Ojeda was esteemed a most accomplished warrior and daring leader, proving that the perverted mind is more fruitful of warlike deeds than size of bodily frame. When quite a youth, he accompanied Columbus in his second voyage, during which he doubtless imbibed his ambitious notions of aggrandisement and conquest, and being the cousin-german of a Dominican friar of his own name, who was one of the first inquisitors of Spain and a great favourite with the Catholic sovereigns, he did not accompany Columbus in his third voyage, but set about intriguing for an independent command. His cousin the inquisitor was the intimate friend of Bishop Don Juan Rodriguez Fonseca, who was chief manager of the affairs of the Indies. Introduced to the notice of the bishop by his cousin, Ojeda soon became a great favourite with the ecclesiastic, who presented him with a small Flemish painting of the Virgin, which the youth set a great

value upon, constantly wearing it about his person and viewing it as a talismanic protector. Alonzo lingered about court, dancing attendance upon his friend Fonseca for some time, but at last news arrived from Columbus of his having discovered the coast of Paria, which he described as a terrestrial paradise, abounding with precious stones and rich ores. Ojeda had full admission to the charts and letters which Fonseca received from Columbus, and the news of this discovery fired his cupidity and zeal. The bishop, who was an enemy to Columbus, was ready to enter into any scheme to molest the great discoverer; he accordingly granted Ojeda a commission to fit out a fleet and proceed upon a voyage of discovery, which commission interfered with the privileges granted to Columbus by the King of Spain, but which was so cunningly worded that it appeared to respect these. Ojeda was poor and a young adventurer, but he had a vast reputation for courage and energy, and there were too many monied men in those days willing to risk their means in speculations of plunder and pillage, if they saw the least prospect of a speedy return of their capital. Backed by rich merchants, Ojeda soon equipped a fleet of four ships at Port St Mary. He obtained the co-operation and services of one of the most famous mariners of his time, Juan de la Cosa, who accompanied him as chief mate; and having also engaged several of the old sailors of Columbus, he set out on his first voyage. In this fleet, but in what capacity we do not know, sailed Amerigo Vespucci, a Florentine merchant of good education but broken fortune, who eventually gave his name to the whole of that vast continent which stretches from Cape Horn to the North Pole.

On the 20th of May, 1499, the fleet of Ojeda sailed from Port St Mary, touching at the Canaries for supplies, and then stretching across the Atlantic, reached the New World

in twenty-four days. The expedition merely passed over the track which Columbus had already explored, and consequently observed nothing novel until it arrived at the island of Trinidad. The people of that island, who were of Carib origin, lived in the same promiscuous way in which the people of Easter Island did when visited by Cook and La Perouse. Their habitations were of large construction, in which many hundreds of people dwelt. They seemed to have no religious rites; their wealth consisted in beads and other ornaments made of the bones of fishes. Feathers and stones strung upon thongs adorned their persons, and with these simple trifles, at which the Spaniards smiled, the natives were content, while they doubtless viewed the Spanish cupidity for gold with surprise, as to them it was valueless. Ojeda sailed about in quest of discoveries until he arrived at Maracapana, where finding a convenient harbour he landed; and having repaired his vessels and built a brigantine, he felt himself prepared once more for a long voyage. During the time occupied in repairing and building his fleet, the natives visited Ojeda in great numbers, bearing presents to him of venison, fish, and cassara bread, and also assisting the sailors in their labours. These offerings and this assistance were propitiatory oblations to what the simple Indians believed to be superior beings, and when they supposed that they had sufficiently ingratiated themselves with the strangers, they informed them of a race of savages who landed on their island, slaying them and destroying their property, while at the same time they bore off captives to their own island that they might devour them. These cannibals the natives of Maracapana besought Ojeda to punish; and as nothing was more consonant with his active destructivencss than the idea of killing these anthropophagi, he took seven Indians on board of his ships as guides, and immediately proceeded

to destroy the warlike Caribs. After seven days' sailing, he arrived at the Caribbee Islands, one of which was pointed out as the land of the man-eaters. On approaching the shore, the Spaniards observed it to be crowded by warriors, who wore coronas of feathers and had their bodies painted with gaudy colours. They were armed with all the missile weapons of primitive warfare, and brandished lances and bucklers at the threatened invaders. This demonstration aroused the fury of the Spanish commander, and ordering out his boats with a cannon or patereroes in each, he pulled for the shore. Showers of arrows and javelins fell around the boats, but still they approached the land. Throwing themselves into the sea, the Caribs, like our own forefathers at the landing of the Romans in Britain, brandished their spears and clubs to prevent the landing of the Spaniards; but disciplined combativeness, as in the former instance, overcame the unschooled valour of the poor creatures who sought to defend their homes. Firing their guns amongst their naked bands, and then rushing upon them with sword and buckler, the followers of Ojeda shot them down and slew and dispersed them despite their desperate resistance. They were routed, and driven with great slaughter to the forest, after which their houses were despoiled and burned, and many of their people borne away to Maracapana as captives. In this expedition Ojeda had one man killed and several wounded, which latter circumstance caused him to lie inactive for twenty days until they recovered. His next visit was to the island of Carazoa, whose inhabitants became Brobdignagians in the imaginative eyes of Amerigo Vespucci, but whom subsequent navigators found to be in dimensions like other people. Sailing along the coast, he came into a beautiful and tranquil lake or bay, upon which stood a village. The houses were built upon piles driven in the

bottom of the lake, and they were connected by a system of drawbridges, while canoes for distant excursions lay moored to every dwelling. The appearance of this bay and village so struck Ojeda as resembling the position of Venice upon the Adriatic that he named the lake the Gulf of Venice, and to this day it retains the name of Venezuela. On the first appearance of the ships, the inhabitants fled to their houses and drew up their drawbridges, and while the delighted Spaniards were gazing upon the beautiful and tranquil scene, a fleet of canoes also pulled into the harbour, and seeing the strange ships attempting to approach them, they pulled precipitately for the land and hid themselves in the forest. They soon returned, however, with a peace-offering of sixteen young maidens, and these being received, four on board each ship, as tokens of amity and confidence, the people came swarming from their aquatic homes and from the shore to examine the wonderful ships of the wonderful strangers. This was a delusive truce, however, for suddenly some old women uttered piercing shrieks as a signal for hostilities. The captive maidens plunged into the sea, and the warriors showered darts and spears upon the surprised Spaniards. Ojeda was too much in his element in an affair of this kind to be taken much aback, so, immediately ordering out his boats, he charged like a fury into the midst of the thickest of the Indians, sinking many canoes and killing and wounding many people. He then visited the houses of this city of the waters in search of booty, but he found none of any considerable amount; he spared the village, however, that he might not causelessly irritate the natives, and then coming to a harbour which he called St Bartholomew, but which the natives named Maracaibo, he again cast anchor. His reception at this place was a regular ovation. A band of twenty-seven men landed in

compliance with the desires of the natives, and were conducted inland from village to village and feasted and feted during nine days. Native games and dances were performed before them; they were borne about in litters and on the people's shoulders lest they should feel tired. They loaded themselves with dresses, war-weapons, rich plumes, and the skins of birds and beasts; and these they carried before their visiters and then conveyed in their canoes to their ships. This race of Indians were the most beautiful and graceful that the Spaniards had yet seen on the American continent, and the simplicity and openness of their manners produced a very favourable impression on the minds of their European visiters. Leaving these friendly people, some of whose women accompanied them, the Spaniards coasted along the western shores of the Gulf of Venezuela until they arrived at the Cape de la Vela. The state of his vessels, and the disappointment of not meeting with immediate stores of gold and other wealth, induced Ojeda to bring his coasting voyage to a conclusion at this point, and to steer right for the island of Hispaniola, although his commission forbade such a course of procedure. Alonzo knew that this island abounded with dyewood, and the desire of obtaining a cargo of this valuable wood was a great deal stronger than his scruples regarding the legality of obtaining it, so he bore towards Yaquimo, where he cast anchor in September 1499. Columbus was governor of the island at this period, and Ojeda soon brought himself into collision with the admiral. The agent of Columbus was successful in forcing Ojeda to give up his intended invasion of the admiral's territory and to resume his wandering voyage, which became a regular succession of kidnapping excursions, resulting, however, on his arrival at Cadiz, early in the year 1500, in having only 500 ducats to divide

amongst himself and crew after the payment of all expenses.

This, the first voyage of Alonzo de Ojeda, did not add much to his wealth nor to that of any of his coadjutors, at the same time its meagre proceeds did not detract from the young adventurer's fame. Those who had accompanied him loudly sounded his praises as a bold and dauntless warrior, whose physical prowess and activity were almost supernatural, considering the smallness of his body. The qualifications so industriously ascribed to Ojeda were popular virtues in Spain in those days, and it was not long therefore before, through the influence of the Bishop Fonseca and his own fame, he had a commission in his pocket and a fleet of four ships under his command. He had no money of his own, but the prospect of a rich and speedy reimbursement induced Juan de Vergara and Garcia de Campos to enter into a confederacy with him, they advancing the necessary means to fit out an armament, and Ojeda procuring the commission and conducting the expedition. The king granted to the young hidalgo a track of the American continent as a province, and commanded him to prevent the voyagers of England from sailing near these recent discoveries; an act of presumption and exclusiveness which can only find a parallel in the robber who awards a portion of his plunder to an inferior confederate in order to induce him to keep better people from seeing or sharing it.

In 1502 this second expedition set sail, and crossing the ocean arrived at Margarita or Pearl Island. The country granted by the king to Ojeda lay farther south than that part of the coast where he first arrived, he therefore coasted along foraging for plunder; and recollecting that he would require household articles in the foundation of his colony, he judged it politic to steal these things from

people whom he would only see as a passing visiter rather than provoke the enmity of those in whose country he intended to settle. He gave orders therefore to plunder as effectually and extensively as possible, but not to destroy. The major or affirmative proposition was carried out to the very letter, for everything of value that his followers could lay their hands upon became theirs according to the law of force; the negative part of the order was a mere dead letter, however, for the Spaniards slew and burned those whom they did not make captives or the property which they could not carry away. The part of the American coast which these pirates ravished was called Valfermosa by Ojeda, on account of its beauty and fertility; he changed its aspect, however, wherever he went, and made it, instead of a 'lovely' coast, a scene of desolation and tears. Many cotton hammocks and various household utensils fell into the hands of the marauders in these forays, and they obtained some gold from the poor Indians as ransom for their women and chief men. Many of the females were detained, however, and distributed among the ships. Ojeda, it is said, retained nothing of all these spoils save a single hammock. Although they found plenty of household stuffs in these attacks, the Spaniards could not find those necessary things provisions. Ojeda therefore dispatched Vergara with a caravel to Jamaica on a foraging expedition, with orders to join him at Maracaibo or Cape de la Vela. The main part of the expedition arrived at last at Coquibacoa, but, the country being bare and sterile, Ojeda determined to found his capital at the bay of Santa Cruz, now named Bahia Honda. The natives opposed the landing of the Spaniards, which led to hostilities, in which the former were slain in great numbers, and were thus inspired with what in the jargon of the terrorists is called a 'salutary terror.' Peace-offerings of gold were brought to the

conquerors and graciously accepted, but no sooner had they begun to fell trees and build their settlement than a neighbouring cacique led his forces against them and obliged them to fight as well as work. In this way a fortress was built, which was defended by lombards, and contained the magazine of provisions and the treasures amassed in the expedition. This, like all the expeditions which had been undertaken by these unprincipled Spaniards, was pregnant with the elements of disruption. Each of the leaders fixed his eyes upon the strong-box which contained the gold; and the provisions having run short, and Vergara not having made his appearance from Jamaica, there was neither unity amongst the chiefs nor contentment amongst the subordinates. When Vergara did at last arrive at the colony, the spirit of faction was rampant. Ocampo's anger was excited against the governor, who had dispossessed him of the key of the strong-box, and he immediately enlisted Vergara in a plot to seize Alonzo and break up the settlement. Inviting him on board of the caravel to see the provisions which had been procured, the two confederates immediately seized him, and accusing him of having needlessly provoked the hostility of the Indians, together with having transgressed the limits of his power, they informed him of their determination to carry him a prisoner to Hispaniola. After thirteen days of negotiation and finesse, Ojeda was thrown into chains and carried on board of a caravel which sailed for Hispaniola. During the voyage, trusting to his strength and skill as a swimmer, he slid over the side of the vessel and tried to reach the land, but the weight of his fetters almost sunk him, and although his hands were free he had to shout out for help from his captor partners, who took him from the sea almost drowned. Ojeda was delivered to Gallego, the commander at Hispaniola, but the box, which

seems to have been the *magnum bonum* of the whole affair, Ocampa and Vergara retained in their own possession, doing what they pleased with its contents. About the end of September, 1502, the whole of the belligerent parties were sent to San Domingo, when the chief judge of the island, after hearing the whole cause, gave judgment against Alonzo de Ojeda. From this verdict the governor appealed to the king, and a complete revision of the sentence was given by the royal council in 1503, who ordered restitution of his property. This property, so far as regarded Ojeda, was a pleasant fiction, however, for the law had swallowed it all, leaving him nothing after his campaign of litigation save the triumph of a nominal victory.

The shades of obscurity close around the fate of Ojeda for several years after this lawsuit; indeed notice is taken of his having made a voyage to Coquibacoa in 1505, but he was in Hispaniola in 1508, as poor as ever, so that his gains had probably been as scanty as on his previous adventures, or he had managed, like an accomplished spendthrift as he was, to dispose quickly of them.

While Ojeda was roving about in his obscurity and poverty, without employment and without the prospect of obtaining it, King Ferdinand began to feel an active increase of his avaricious desires. These mainsprings of this mean and selfish monarch's nature began to vibrate immediately upon his hearing Columbus's account of the gold mines of Veragua, which the great discoverer supposed to indicate the *Aurea Chersonesus* of the ancients, from which the gold nsed in the building of Solomon's Temple was said to be obtained. Succeeding voyagers had borne home improved and multiplied praises concerning this land of gold, and so Ferdinand became desirous of founding settlements along the coast of Terra Firma under the dominion of some able commander. This position the king felt to belong of

right to Don Bartholomew, the brother of the deceased admiral; but he was not inclined to do acts of justice when these militated against his own interests, and so, lest he should be constrained to reward the brother of Columbus upon terms somewhat equivalent with his deservings and the respect due to his family, he determined to find more pliable and less expensive tools. The likeliest for his purpose, of all the companions of Columbus, was Alonzo de Ojeda, at least such was the supposition of partial friends, but Alonzo was distant from court, and could not thus prefer his suit to the bishops; and again, he was so poor that he could not propose to equip even a gunboat for the expedition. An unexpected windfall, however, conduced to set this roving adventurer once more upon the troubled waters of ambition. Juan de la Cosa, who was reckoned to be the most accomplished mariner of his times next to Columbus, and who was looked up to as a nautical oracle by the Spaniards, was also at Hispaniola while Ojeda was there, and having acquired some gold, he proposed to place it at the disposal of his old commander, and to assist him in his undertakings should he procure Ferdinand's commission. Ojeda gladly accepted La Cosa's proposal, and in compliance with their arrangements, the veteran immediately set out for Spain, in order to procure Ojeda's appointment as commander of Terra Firma.

La Cosa visited Alonzo's old patron the bishop Fonseca, and soon interested him in the affairs of his former protegée. Fonseca had great influence in Indian affairs, and he therefore urged the mean and bigot king to appoint Ojeda his viceroy. A rival, the complete counterpart of Alonzo, had just stepped forward to claim the coveted command. Don Diego de Nicuesa was, like his rival, small in stature, handsome, ferociously and foolhardily brave, and in every way fitted to take the place of Ojeda, but in two points he

surpassed him, and these were in coolness and refinement of manners. In order to displease the friends of neither candidate, and that he might advantage himself as much as possible, Ferdinand divided the governorship of Terra Firma between these two doughty leaders, and gave to them the island of Jamaica in common, from whence they might draw supplies of provisions. Juan de la Cosa was appointed lieutenant to Ojeda in the government, with the post of alguazil mayor in the province. With two brigantines and one ship, containing about two hundred men, Cosa set out to join his commander, Nicuesa following with four large ships and two brigantines, well manned, armed, and provisioned. Ojeda welcomed with joy his trusty friend and lieutenant, but his proud spirit was not a little chagrined at the comparative appearance of the two fleets which now lay in the bay of San Domingo; and as he saw that his armament was insufficient for his contemplated enterprises, he prevailed upon a lawyer to invest all his fortune, amounting to two thousand castillanos, in the project, and to leave a remunerative and established situation for the prospective position of alcalde mayor of the contemplated colony. Martin Fernandez de Enciso risked his money, and, in order that he might the sooner enjoy his chief-judgeship, he was induced to remain at Hispaniola and beat up for recruits to the expedition, while Ojeda proceeded to found the settlement. The conjoint right to Jamaica, which had been given by the king to Ojeda and Nicuesa, led these two commanders into a quarrel. There was an assertion of right on the one hand and a negation of it on the other, which produced intemperate words and a challenge on the part of Ojeda; but the polished Nicuesa and the politic Juan de la Cosa prevented any bad personal consequences from the fury of Alonzo. While the rival commanders contended regarding their respective

rights to Jamaica, Don Diego Columbus, who considered himself wronged and aggrieved by the unwarrantable assignment of this island to any one while it was assured to him, sent a representative with an armament to dispossess them both. Ojeda was furious, and threatened to strike off the head of the representative of the adelantado, but, although he was loud in his bravado, he nevertheless departed without doing anything to bring him into collision with Don Diego Columbus.

On the 10th of November, 1509, Ojeda sailed from San Domingo with four vessels and about three hundred men, among whom were Francisco Pizarro, the future scourge of Peru. Hernando Cortes was prevented by inflammation in one of his knees from joining the expedition. After a rapid and prosperous voyage, the fleet anchored in the harbour of Carthagena. Juan de la Cosa was well acquainted with this coast, and also with the character of its inhabitants, against whose fierce courage, prowess, and poisoned weapons, he warned Ojeda to be on his guard. The women joined the men in battle, and threw the lance with much force and expertness. There was nothing to be gained from contending with the warlike natives of this coast, and everything to lose, and as all La Cosa's wealth was staked in this adventure, he advised Ojeda to leave this unfriendly shore, but the proud and bellicose governor was not inclined to succumb to this necessity, and he therefore determined to land, hoping at least to seize as many captives as would serve to discharge the debts which he had contracted at Hispaniola. The naked savages were soon routed by the steel-clad and more disciplined ones, who, taking several prisoners, upon whom they found plates of gold, followed the fugitives for four leagues into the country. La Cosa protested against the dangerous ardour of his commander, but finding his remonstrances unheeded,

he zealously seconded Ojeda in his most foolhardy attacks. Penetrating far into the woods, the Spaniards at last found themselves before an encampment of the Indians, where a numerous band, armed with bows and arrows, lances, and clubs, were ready to contend with them. Raising his buckler and waving his bloody brand, the furious leader gave forth the old Spanish war-cry of 'Santiago,' and dashed madly on the foe; all the Indians fled save eight of the most dauntless, who threw themselves into a lodge and plied their bows and arrows with deadly aim. For some time they kept the practised Spaniards at bay, but the furious Ojeda having infused his own daring into his band, they rushed upon the lodge, and having set fire to it, its eight defenders were roasted alive and perished in horrible agonies. Seventy prisoners were sent to the ships, and still the insatiable governor, followed by his valiant monitor, continued the pursuit until they arrived about nightfall at a village called Yurbaco. The inhabitants had evacuated this place and fled to the fastnesses of the mountains, bearing away their most valuable goods. Believing that the Indians were completely terrified, the conquerors dispersed to plunder; but they paid dearly for their temerity. Suddenly great numbers of warriors rushed from the woods, uttering appalling cries, and falling upon the invaders with great fury. Helmet and corslet availed not now to defend their wearers from the blows which they had provoked; they fell beneath the ponderous clubs of their numerous antagonists, and died in dreadful agonies from the wounds which they received from poisoned darts. Ojeda had collected a few soldiers and thrown himself within a pallisaded enclosure, but his men fell thick around him, and his own activity and the well-tempered buckler which he threw over his small body, alone protected him from the fate of all his band. At

this critical juncture La Cosa brought a few followers to the rescue of his leader and friend. Standing sentinel over the gate of the pallisades, the veteran fought in Ojeda's defence until almost all his men had fallen and he himself had been severely wounded. With all the frenzy of desperation quickening his furious and impetuous temper, Ojeda at this moment rushed forth alone upon the enemy, shouting the cry that had often rung in his ears when he charged with the chivalry of Saville upon the Moors, and sweeping his foes from his path with his bloody sword, he cut his way clear through the Indians and escaped into the forest. La Cosa saw his leader fighting furiously amongst the natives, and much as he had deprecated the rashness which had produced this fearful end to their adventure, he would have followed him, but the poison was rankling in his wounds, and he felt himself gradually losing strength. At last sinking to the ground, he ordered the only Spaniard who survived, of seventy that had accompanied Ojeda in this expedition, to fly, and if he saw Alonzo de Ojeda to tell him of his fate. Alarmed at the protracted absence of their friends, those who had been left on board of the ships sailed along the shore in boats, making signals and using every means to discover their lost companions, if any of them survived; it was in vain; there was no response to the sound of their trumpets nor to the report of their guns, and hour after hour found the searchers growing more dispirited and gloomy. At length, when despair had almost destroyed their hopes and paralysed their energies, they came to a clump of mangrove trees which grew on the margin of the sea. In this bosky thicket, which seemed to be impervious, they saw a man in Spanish attire, whom, upon rescuing from its bosom, they found to be Alonzo de Ojeda. Stretched upon the mangrove roots, in a state of such emaciated exhaustion

that he could not speak, but unwounded, lay this fighting desperado, with his buckler on his left shoulder and his blood-encrusted blade in his right hand. When his followers had recovered him with cordials and warmth, he began to lament the rashness that had cost him the lives of so many men and of his friend La Cosa. His own escape he attributed to the miraculous interference of the Virgin. After having escaped into the forest, he travelled on in the darkness until the yells of the natives, and the sound of their conchs, died upon his ear, and then he felt that he was alone. When day broke, he hid himself in the most lonely parts of the mountains, and then, with the light of the stars, he journeyed on through rocks, precipices, and tangled woods, until, exhausted and worn out, he sunk down npon the couch of mangrove roots where his friends had found him. Ojeda and the man who bore to him La Cosa's dying message, were the only two who returned from that cruel foray. Upon his shield were the dints of more than three hundred arrows, which may be said to have been three hundred witnesses of his dexterity as well as danger.

Ojeda was not yet recovered from the effects of his fasting and fatigue when Nicuesa, his rival governor and enemy, appeared in the harbour with his fleet. Ojeda dreading vengeance for the manner in which he had treated Nicuesa at Jamaica, hid himself, and ordered his people to tell Don Diego that he had gone upon an unfortunate expedition and had not yet returned, at the same time entreating Nicuesa to give his word as a cavalier that he would not take advantage of Ojeda's misfortunes to revenge their former quarrel. Nicuesa indignantly repudiated the idea of enmity nnder such circumstances, and ordering the men to go and bring Ojeda, he received him with open arms, offering him his assistance in any way

he might consider he required it. Revenge was the first impulse of the bloodthirsty Ojeda, and Nicuesa was ready to second him with heart and hand. Landing four hundred men and several horses, the two leaders proceeded towards the homes of their victims, and arriving in the dead of night, when all the natives were buried in sleep, they surrounded the silent dwellings of the unsuspicious Indians, and then rushing on from every point, they raised their war-cries and ferociously stabbed and struck down every one whom they met. The flames from the blazing houses rose high over head, illuminating the foul carnage that was going on within its compass. Fathers, mothers, sons, and brothers, infants in their mothers' arms, and maidens in their helpless youth, were struck down by the steel-clad Spaniards and tossed upon the crackling piles of wood and thatch. In vain the bewildered naked people tried to escape; they were aroused from their couches by the wild yells of revenge and of despair, and when they flew to the doors of their burning homes they were met with the points of bloody swords. The remembrance of La Cosa's self-sought death added bitterness to the already virulent hatred of Ojeda and his allies, so that, sparing neither age nor sex, they left the village, when the morning dawned, a smoking Golgotha. From the sack of this village Ojeda and Nicuesa bore away gold and other precious stuffs to a great amount, the share of Nicuesa and his men being equivalent to £7456 sterling. Having settled accounts and praised each other's fighting qualities, Ojeda and Nicuesa parted, each declaring that the other was a great hero, and also that they were very fond of each other, and would be henceforth fast friends.

Now, when his men were disheartened and rendered numerically weak through his own foolish and cruel impetuosity of temper, Ojeda determined to found his colony. It

seemed to be the fatality of this man to neglect his duty when means of doing it were at his disposal, and then to attempt to repair his remissness by seeking to perform, with perfectly inadequate means, what he should, and could at the right time, have previously executed. Sailing along the borders of the Gulf of Uraba, Ojeda endeavoured to discover the river Darien, famed in Indian story for its golden sands; but failing in this attempt, he landed on the east side of the gulf, and chose a height for the site of his town, which he called San Sebastian. This settlement was founded, however, under the most gloomy and unfavourable auspices. The men began to dread the prowess and courage of the fierce and unfriendly Indians; the howls of wild beasts came echoing from the depth of the forest; serpents hissed from all the rocks and thickets; and alligators dragged their horses into the river. Poisoned arrows flew amongst them by day, and howls and war-whoops kept them awake at night; so that, worn out and dispirited, Ojeda's colonists began to turn their eyes to the more settled provinces. Ojeda, who was aware of the inadequacy of his means to render his settlement permanent, dispatched a ship to Martin Fernandez de Enciso, his prospective alcalde mayor, with all his captives and gold, at the same time urging his confederate to send recruits and provisions to San Sebastian.

In the mean time the Indians seemed determined to give the garrison, for so it only was, no rest. They made attacks and provoked sallies, which always ended in the agonising deaths of some of the poison-wounded Spaniards. At length, after many hairbreadth escapes, Ojeda and many of his men were led into an ambush, and the ferocious hidalgo, who believed himself to bear a charmed life, and whom the Indians also supposed to be a supernatural being, was wounded in the thigh with an arrow. The na-

tives, satisfied that they had sealed his fate, set up a shout of triumph, and the governor was borne to his fort, wounded in body and crushed in spirit. This circumstance, operating upon his superstition, made him believe that the Virgin was angry with him; he therefore vowed that if she vouchsafed his recovery he would build a chapel, and dedicate the picture which he had received from Bishop Fonseca to her as an offering. Ojeda then adopted the following desperate means of cure. He caused two iron plates to be heated red hot, and applied to each orifice of the wound; and then, being swaddled in cotton steeped in vinegar, he had the satisfaction of believing that his vows and remedies had succeeded in propitiating the Virgin and effecting his desires, for he recovered. During this period of inaction and despair a sail appeared in view, and then, to the joy of the Spaniards, who supposed it to be from the alcalde mayor with succours, it anchored at San Sebastian. This turned out to be a ship, however, which a desperate fellow named Talavera, and a gang of less scrupulous robbers than the Spaniards in general, had stolen from some Genoese in San Domingo, and with which they were wandering about erratically in their ignorance of seamanship and of the seas which they navigated. Chance sent them most opportunely to San Sebastian, when the garrison was in great strait for provisions. This ship and its stores had become Talavera's by the hand of force, but he determined not to part with it or any of its contents except in regular mercantile barter; he therefore demanded gold from Ojeda for every particle of food which he conceded to him.

After gazing in vain upon the lonely ocean for the anticipated stores from San Domingo, the Spaniards, their patience being at last worn out, determined to seize one of the vessels and return to Hispaniola. This decision, of which Ojeda became cognisant, reduced him almost to de-

spair. Upon the settlement of this colony and the retention of his present command, depended all his future prospects of aggrandisement. Should he be forced to abandon San Sebastian, he must inevitably become a broken and ruined man, for he had exhausted both his means and credit, and had not the most distant hopes of prosecuting another voyage, even supposing which, it was also extremely unlikely that he should obtain another commission. He therefore proposed that he should leave Francisco Pizarro as his lieutenant, and go himself to San Domingo in quest of stores. The settlers, who had every confidence in his zeal and energy, at once agreed to this proposal; and Talavera, who had become tired of his desultory voyagings, agreed to return to Hispaniola with Ojeda, hoping that the services which he had done to the colony would induce the governor to obtain his pardon for the theft of the Genoese vessel.

Ojeda had scarcely put to sea in the private ship, ere, upon his attempting to command her, Talavera put him in irons. The impetuous little warrior raved and stormed at this insult, and, demanding them to unchain him, engaged to fight the whole ship's crew, if they would meet him two at a time. But they knew him too well to attempt such a dangerous trial, and so they allowed him to rave in his shackles. A storm, however, induced the ignorant pirates to do what the threats of the chief were unable to accomplish. They were about to be wrecked, when, like Gessler on the lake of Uri with the captive Tell, they remembered that Ojeda was a sailor, and, to save their own lives, they gave him the command of the ship. Despite of the exertions and spirit of the governor, however, he was not able to reach Hispaniola, but was constrained to run the brigantine upon the southern shore of Cuba, where the now destitute and desperate crew of Talavera landed, and then

began a march which only finds a parallel in that of Pizarro from the land of Cinnamon to Quito.

Cuba was as yet a wilderness where the white man had not attempted to settle, and thither fugitives from the oppressions of the Spaniards fled. Parties of these furious creatures opposed the shipwrecked band. Seeing that he was unable to contend with these fugitives and the natives, he climbed the mountains of the island, and wandered through the green savannahs and forests, and across morasses, in order to avoid the necessity of battle. Hunger, thirst, extreme heat, musquitoes, and incessant exertion, all conduced to torment this broken-spirited band. For thirty days they dragged their weary limbs through a long continuous quagmire, dying upon the roots of mangrove trees, and leaving their bodies to be soddened by the ardent sunbeams. Of seventy that had set out from the vessel, only thirty-five came through the morass, and even a number of these lay down in despair when near its termination, that they might die and end their sufferings. The volatile and energetic Ojeda, however, continued to lead forward a few of the most active, and to their unutterable joy they reached firm ground, and a path which led to the village of a cacique named Cueybas, which they reached, and then sank down exhausted. How different was the spirit manifested by these poor Indians to that which characterised the Spaniards in their intercourse with their kindred people. They gathered round the wayworn men, and when they had heard their story, they raised them gently from the ground, and, bearing them in their arms and on their shoulders, took them to their dwellings, where they placed meat and drink before them, and exhibited all the pity and humanity which would have been beautifully compatible with the faith which their protegées professed but did not feel. When he heard that there were others

lying dying on the mangrove c umps of the marsh, the cacique immediately dispatched a party of Indians with provisions to them, and ordered them to carry to the village such as were unable to walk.

When the Spaniards had recovered from their fatigues, the cacique sent a band of Indians to conduct them to the province of Macaca, and to carry their knapsacks and provisions; indeed, wherever they went they were most hospitably treated, kindness being a characteristic of all these islanders previous to their intercourse with the cruel and rapacious white men. The province of Macaca was situated on that part of Cuba which lies nearest to Jamaica. Ojeda, on his arrival at Macaca, learned that Don Juan de Esquibel, the representative of Don Diego Columbus, had established a settlement on the island of Jamaica; and although Ojeda had declared that he would strike Esquibel's head off if he found him at any time on that island, the latter received him in a most kindly manner at his settlement, and facilitated his passage to San Domingo.

Talavera and his rabble crew, dreading the vengeance of the law, remained in Jamaica; but Diego Columbus shortly afterwards caused them to be apprehended, and it being clearly proven that they had stolen the Genoese vessel, Talavera and his principal accomplices were condemned and executed. Verily, justice in these Spaniards had only one eye. Talavera and all the sweepings of Spain might have robbed and murdered the Indians without censure or punishment, but the 'honour among thieves' was supported most jealously with sword and gibbet. Ojeda, on his arrival at Hispaniola, immediately set about making inquiries for his confederate, the alcalde mayor. He was informed that he had sailed some time previously, amply provided with stores for the colony. Ojeda lingered in San Domingo, anxiously waiting for either news from San

Sebastian, or his friend the lawyer; but neither came, and, as men now regarded him as a broken man and needy adventurer, he walked the streets of Hispaniola a shunned and neglected unit. He was no longer Alonzo de Ojeda, the brave and chivalrous knight, whom fortune loved and gallant men were proud to associate with; he was now poor Ojeda the visionary, the chimerical dreamer, whom it was necessary for his pseudo friends to cut, least he should borrow money from them. In addition to his pecuniary misfortunes and the coldness of his wealthy countrymen, he bore the bitter hatred of those of Talavera's friends who had escaped the gibbet. He had been a principal witness at the trial, and was believed by the pirates to have materially conduced to the death of their associates; they therefore set upon him one evening as he was returning home, with the determination to kill him. Misfortune and neglect, however, had neither weakened his arm nor subdued his spirit. He placed his back to a wall, and not only defended himself from harm, but drove the assassins in rapid flight before him.

The sun of Ojeda had set, and the clouds of misfortune were fast gathering around him. He lingered about San Domingo, but his spirit having no congenial air to live in, fed upon his body, until death dissolved the mysterious union. This man, who had been the representative of a king, and had strode over hecatombs of dead men, sacrificed to his lust of power and egotistical pride, died so poor that he left not wherewithal to purchase for his corpse a coffin. His last request was perhaps the most humble of all the wishes of his eventful life—he begged to be buried at the portal of the monastery of San Francisco, that every one who entered might trample on his grave, and thus read to poor humanity a lesson on the vanity of pride.

DON DIEGO NICUESA.

DON DIEGO NICUESA.

THIS accomplished cavalier first came prominently into notice as the rival of Alonzo de Ojeda for the command of the provinces which Ferdinand king of Spain contemplated to found in Terra Firma in the year 1509. Nicuesa was of high lineage, and he was very rich, in addition to which he was one of the most celebrated warriors and energetic leaders of his time. Like Ojeda, he was very small in stature, but he was most symmetrical in his form, and capable of great physical endurance. To settle the dispute in an amicable manner which had sprung up between Nicuesa and Ojeda, the King of Spain divided between these cavaliers that part of the South American continent which lies along the isthmus of Panama, making the boundary-line to run through the Gulf of Darien. To Ojeda he gave the province stretching eastward as far as Cape de la Vela; the western part he assigned to Nicuesa. The latter, with seven hundred men well provided, proceeded to assume command of the country assigned him. He arrived at San Domingo with his fine fleet at the same time with Juan de la Cosa and the comparatively insignificant armament of Ojeda. Between these rival commanders there existed a predisposition to quarrel; and they had scarcely met when their anger showed itself; their dispute regarding the joint government of Jamaica led to a challenge on

the part of the more fiery Ojeda, which the policy of Nicuesa prevented him from accepting.

In our sketch of Ojeda we have mentioned the circumstance that led to the reconciliation of these two fighting Spaniards, and we detailed at some length the horrid carnage of the natives in which they joined previous to their final parting; we shall therefore take up the narrative of Nicuesa at that part which immediately succeeds the massacre at Carthagena. Nicuesa sailed along shore towards the west, in search of some favourable spot on which to found his colony, and in order that he might the better be able to discover a proper situation, he went himself on board of a light caravel, commanding the two brigantines to keep as near him as possible as he ran along shore, while the larger ships stood more out to sea.

Separated from all his other vessels by a storm, Nicuesa continued to coast along the shores near to Veragua in search of them, until he entered the mouth of a river. Here the sudden subsidence of the waters landed his caravel upon a muddy bottom, and threw it over on its broadside, while the rapid current strained the timbers of the little bark, so that she appeared ready to go to pieces. At this critical juncture a sailor adventured to carry a rope to the shore; but, being drowned, another, undeterred by his death, sprung into the water and succeeded in making fast a rope to a tree, by means of which Nicuesa and his crew safely reached the shore. A more desolate or terrible situation can hardly be conceived than that of this party; for they had scarcely landed when their vessel, with all their provisions, clothes, and arms, was swept away with the current; and, to further increase their anxiety, they were tormented with a suspicion that Lope de Olano, who was an unprincipled profligate, had deserted them intentionally with the brigantines. Nicuesa, who partook of

the general suspicion, concealed it from his men, however; and, cheering them with hopeful words and his own example of lightheartedness, he proposed to set out on foot for Veragua, where, if they had survived the storm which had parted them, the brigantines, in all likelihood, would now be lying. With bare feet and scanty habiliments, the depressed mariners set out on their painful march; they had neither arms to kill animals for food nor to repel the natives should they be attacked, so that, to men of their dispositions, their situation was one of hopeless despair. They were constrained to wade through marshes and streams, and to tear their way amongst dense woods, where the thorns and prickle-shrubs lacerated their flesh and wounded their feet. Their food consisted of roots and wild herbs, together with shellfish, which they gathered along shore; for such had been the cruel conduct of the Spaniards towards the natives that these shipwrecked men dared not to apply to them for food, lest, in revenge for former injuries, the Indians might set upon and slay them. In addition to all their other sources of fear was the dread that they had been driven past Veragua in the storm, and that they were wandering from instead of approaching the haven of their hopes. Such were the dangers, toils, and fears which these men encountered in their blind and avaricious eagerness for gold. Nicuesa, however, inspirited them with his words and his example; he helped the most weary on his way, he cheerfully partook of the coarsest food, and he did not exact the lion's share.

Nicuesa had contrived to save one of the boats from the wreck of the caravel, and while the greater part of the crew walked along the tangled woody shore, this little bark was pulled along the margin of the waters. At last the weary travellers arrived at the point of an inland bay, and were conveyed, a few at a time, to what they believed to be the

opposite shore; but, on making a short survey of this unknown land, they found it to be an island, cut off from the mainland by a neck of the sea. Too weary to think of returning that evening to the point whence they had come, the shipwrecked crew lay down to sleep until the morning. When the morning broke and they looked around them for the means of leaving this island, they found that the boat and four of their companions were gone. Whichever way they turned in their despair they beheld nothing but the bleak expanse of waters and the dull dark outline of lonely shores. They were alone, pent within the limits of a barren desert island, without the means of escape from their sea-girt prison, and without the means of preserving life by either the chase or labour. A few shellfish scattered along its shores was all the food that the niggard sea offered to the starving adventurers, and a few pools of brackish water was all their drink. In the fulness of fear some of them implored God for succour, others sat down in the listless apathy of sullen despair and gloomily awaited their fate. But as the sun bursts through the darkest clouds, so, when the clouds that warp the human soul in dark despair are densest, hope, like a sunburst, comes to drive them away. When these unhappy Spaniards were calling on death as a grateful release from their miseries, they beheld upon the horizon the white wings of a life-bringing ship, until at last one of the lost brigantines, with their own four deserters in it, cast anchor by their island and took them on board. The deserters explained to Nicuesa the reason and manner of their flight. They had become convinced that, instead of nearing their friends, they were every day leaving them to the eastward; and that, rather than encounter the opposition of the commander, they determined to follow their own course in secret. Accordingly, when their companions were all

asleep, they had deserted with the boat, and had, as they anticipated, found the brigantines of Lope de Olano after they had retraced their course several days. Olano's conduct in this affair is regarded with some suspicion; he had sheltered himself under the lea of an island from the storm which had driven the ships asunder, and when it had abated he persuaded the crews that Nicuesa had perished, because his caravel was not to be seen. He had never made any search for his commander, however, but had immediately proceeded towards the river Chagres, where he found the ships anchored. Assuming command of these as Nicuesa's lieutenant, he next sailed for the river Belen, by which he landed all the stores and commenced to found a colony. It was here that the boat's crew had found him and informed him of the condition of Nicuesa, upon which Olano, whatever might be his former intentions, immediately dispatched the brigantine to his rescue.

The expedition, whether as regarded the command of Nicuesa or Olano, had been but a succession of disasters; and when the cavalier arrived in the brigantine and took command of his armament, he found it a broken one indeed. His ships were completely destroyed by the storm, and of his gallant crew of seven hundred men, nearly four hundred had perished by disease, storms, hunger, the arrows of the Indians, and their own thirst for gold. Nicuesa's first impulse, upon his arrival at Belen, was to hang Olano for his perfidy and remissness in not sending in quest of the caravel, but the pleadings of the other captains, and the state of his command, rendered such a proceeding neither politic nor safe; he therefore swallowed his choler as he best might, determining, however, to send Olano to Spain on the first opportunity, that he might be tried as a traitor.

Nicuesa now applied himself to the restoration in some degree of the efficiency of his spiritless followers; so he in

the first place selected the strongest of them, and, forming them into foraging parties, seized upon the property of the natives wherever he could find it, and slew the proprietors if they attempted to defend it. The Indians were very fierce, however—which fierceness, let it be remembered, was only the reaction caused by the cruelty of the whites—and they fought with such desperation that for every meal they won the Spaniards sacrificed a number of lives. Disheartened by these self-sought misfortunes, Nicuesa at last embarked the remnant of his people in the two brigantines, and a caravel which had been built by Olano, and, leaving what these small vessels were unable to contain under the care of Alonzo Nunez, he sailed along the shore, with no very bright anticipations for the future. His crews seemed to be suffering under a species of paralysis, for they were unable to conduct their expeditions with anything like their former energy, and in their affrays with the Indians many were slain and wounded. Arriving at last at the harbour which Columbus had called Provision Port, the governor determined to finish his peregrinations and set up his standard. 'Here, in the name of God,' said he, 'let us stop;' and his followers, who believed that there was something auspicious in the ejaculation, called the spot *Nombre de Dios*, which it yet retains. The country was fertile and beautiful, but food did not grow in it spontaneously, and the Spaniards, who had now to work in despite of their scanty sustenance, forgot the name of their location in the toils they underwent and the hunger they endured, and they cursed their commander, who chained them, as it were, to this condition of intransitive toil, and of certain death. The courage of these adventurers consisted wholly in the energy of action; they were the veriest cowards when endurance was required of them. They could fight with fury, but they suffered not like men but

children. Truly courage has its gradations and proportions. The courage of one martyr, for principle's sake, sublimely towers above the bravery of all the hosts of chivalry.

The privations which these Spaniards brought upon themselves were of the most fearful description. The followers of Nicuesa were constrained to eat of human flesh, so destitute were they of provisions; and when he brought to this station the people he had left at Belen, he found that they too had been feeding on reptiles and the flesh of alligators. Again the emaciated Spaniards sought to find stores of provisions from their robbery of the Indians; but the rapine of the whites had made the natives abandon their homes and the cultivation of their fields, and betake themselves to the woods and morasses of their country, where, subsisting upon roots and wild fruit, they exchanged their rude hoes for the spear, and their mattocks for bows and arrows; and, instead of providing food to supply the robbery of the Spaniards, they fashioned darts with which to slay the robbers. At last Nicuesa's bands were so worn out with hunger and fatigue that there were not men sufficient to mount guard at night. Thus did Providence seem to punish these warriors for the purpose which prompted their invasion. Unlike the Christian missionary, who now goes to the islands of the Pacific and Indian Oceans with the Bible in his right hand and the arts of peace and comfort in his left, these savages of Spain carried havock wherever they went, and brought upon the name of Christian the execrations of the untutored heathen.

In the meantime events were hastening to a crisis with the once gay and brilliant Nicuesa, and his eventful career was not destined to be of long duration. Succeeding adventurers had arrived at the settlement of Darien, and they had determined to take up their residence there; but,

knowing that Nicuesa claimed it as a portion of his government, they resolved to find the cavalier if possible, and invite him to assume command over the colony, thus legitimately establishing their settlement. Accordingly Roderigo de Colmenares was dispatched in quest of the unfortunate hidalgo, whom, after a patient search, he found in the wretched plight already mentioned.

Colmenares was welcomed with tears of joy by his famishing countrymen; and so much were they reduced that he could scarcely recognise Nicuesa, he was so changed with want; and of the seven hundred followers who had left San Domingo in their pride and power, with their ambitious and vainglorious commander, only sixty famished creatures now remained. To these Colmenares distributed food; and he cheered their drooping spirits by telling them that he had come to take them to a land of plenty.

As soon as Nicuesa heard of the settlement of Darien, he seemed to become a new man, and all his former aspirations of aggrandisement were at once revived. Visions of state and dominion floated before him like the fire-flashes of a dream; and that he might realise as soon as possible a portion of his anticipated magnificence, he invited Colmenares and his officers, as ambassadors, to eat at his table the provisions which their own arrival had supplied. But he overshot the mark; for, in his conversations with these envoys, he assumed all the dictatorial tones and airs of majesty, and freely descanted on the policy by which he meant to govern that settlement before he had yet set foot in it. Hearing that great quantities of gold had been collected and retained by private individuals, he became enraged, and threatened to make them disgorge their wealth, while, at the same time, he would punish them for an infraction of the royal prerogative.

This threat was treasured up in the memory of two who sat at his table, and who were amenable to the vengeance which he meditated. They accordingly lost no time in taking measures of defence. Lope de Olano, who was one of the survivors of Nicuesa's expedition, but who was still retained a prisoner, also contrived to find access to these envoys, and to prejudice their minds still more against Nicuesa. '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.' Laying these matters up in their hearts, the Bachelor Corral and his companion envoy set sail for the colony previous to the departure of Nicuesa, and, arriving at Darien before the expected governor, they soon prepared, instead of a welcome, captivity and hatred for him.

When the unsuspecting governor arrived at Darien, and was about to land, the first salute with which he was met was the loud voice of the public attorney, warning him not to come ashore, but to return forthwith to his former government of Nombre de Dios. Nicuesa was thunderstruck at this reception; and, reminding the Dariens that he had come at their request, and not of his own spontaneous will, begged to be allowed to land that he might hear an explanation of this sudden revolution of their sentiments. He was obliged to put to sea that evening, however, without coming to any settlement on the subject of landing; but, returning to the harbour next morning, a change seemed to have taken place in the minds of the settlers, for they invited him to land. No sooner was he on shore, however, than the rabble rushed upon him, and would have taken him, but, being one of the fleetest and most agile of all the knights of Spain, he ran from his pursuers,

and took refuge amongst the wild beasts of the forest, whence he escaped to his brigantinc. In the meantime, the alcalde, Vasco Nunez, tried to mollify the rage which existed in the minds of the people against Nicuesa, but, finding his exertions vain, he advised his brother cavalier to keep his brigantine, and on no acoount to trust himself on land. Nicuesa, however, was of an open and unsuspicious character, and he allowed himself, under some pretext or other, to be drawn on shore, when he was immediately set upon by armed men, and compelled, by threats of immediate death, to abjure all authority over the settlement; and was also forced to declare upon oath that he would depart for Spain, touching at no intermediate port until he presented himself before the king at Castile. Allotting to him the worst old worn-out brigantine in the port, they also ignominiously drove him from their shores, with only seventeen followers in his train, who were chiefly of his household, and much attached to him. This frail vessel, with the poor and now totally ruined governor, set sail on the 1st of March, 1511, and steered across the Caribbean Sea towards Hispaniola; but the dark waters of the ocean blot the future records of her fate, and in the bottom of the sea did poor Nicuesa and his crew find their last earthly heritage. For this had ambition spun her airy web! So frail were all his hopes that here, upon the lonely sea, their sun went down for ever!

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