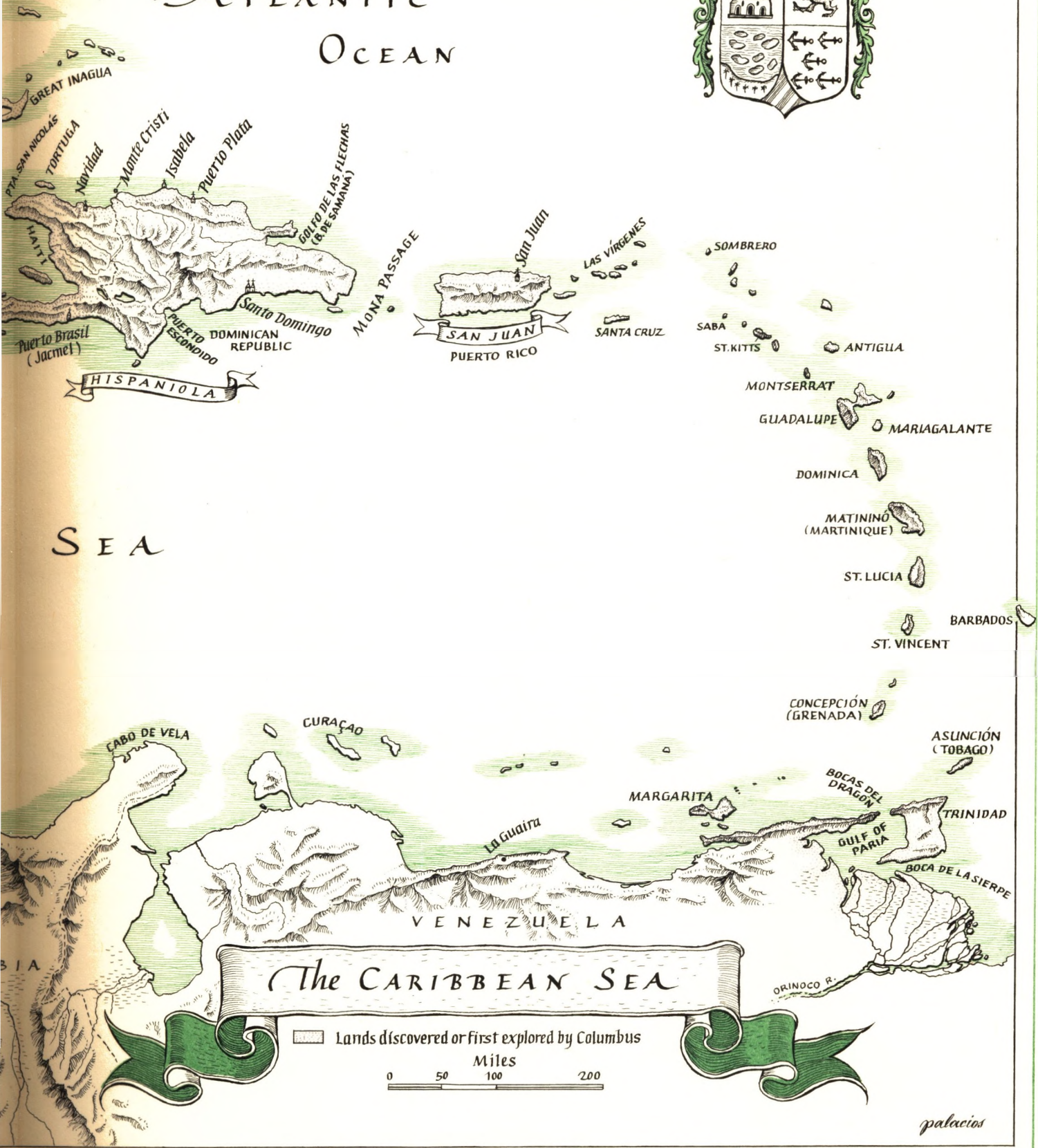


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1492

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Landfall
OCT. 12, 1492

ATLANTIC OCEAN



The CARIBBEAN SEA

Legend: Lands discovered or first explored by Columbus

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palacios

Journals and Other Documents

on the Life and Voyages of

CHRISTOPHER

COLUMBUS

Journals and Other Documents

CHRISTOPHER



on the Life and Voyages of

TOPHER
COLUMBUS

Translated and Edited by SAMUEL ELIOT MORISON

Illustrated by LIMA DE FREITAS

New York: THE HERITAGE PRESS

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Preface

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS, the discoverer of America, is an historical personage who needs no introduction. His four voyages—the first in 1492–93; the second, in which the Lesser Antilles and southern Cuba were discovered, in 1493–94; the third, in which he first touched the mainland, in 1497–98; and the fourth, 1502–04, in which he discovered unknown shores of the western Caribbean—are the most important in modern history.

I have done my best to make his character and voyages more widely known; in my *Admiral of the Ocean Sea* (two volumes, 1942), in the one-volume abridgment with the same title, and in a briefer biography, *Christopher Columbus, Mariner* (1955). During the research for these books I found that almost all translations of Columbian documents were untrustworthy, and in consequence I made, or caused to be made, fresh ones for my own use. It seemed odd that no trustworthy translation of the momentous First Voyage Journal had yet appeared; but none had, nor has to this day.

My original intention was to publish these translations as a companion volume to *Admiral of the Ocean Sea*. Work on it was about finished when Pearl Harbor forced me to stow it in a safe, where it long remained. Then The George Macy Companies showed a keen interest in publishing my translations, well annotated; so here they are, some twenty years overdue.

Since the Italian government's official collection of documents on Columbus and his voyages runs to fourteen stout tomes, it will be appreciated that this volume has to be a selection; but it is the most extensive selection yet made in the English language. My principle of choice has been to translate those narratives and other documents that seemed to be the most informing, interesting, and significant during the many years of my Columbian studies. Thus we start off with documents that establish the date of Columbus's birth, and definitely connect him with the Colombo family of Genoese woolweavers, to the confusion of those who try to prove him

to have been a Corsican, a Spaniard, a Portuguese, a Greek, or a Catalan Jew. Next come a sheaf of letters, official orders, and depositions which trace Columbus's movements after he left Portugal in 1485. These include his agreements with Ferdinand and Isabella, and their orders and proclamations about collecting and organizing the fleet.

A few of the above are in the Olson-Bourne volume in the *Original Narratives* series, but none are in Cecil Jane's two-volume *Select Documents Illustrating the Four Voyages of Columbus*. Jane unaccountably omits the all-important Journal of the First Voyage, but I present here a new translation of the *Diario*—the Las Casas abstract of Columbus's 1492–93 Journal—the most important document in the entire history of American discovery. In order to do justice to the Pinzón brothers (which I am afraid Columbus could not do), I have included some of the *Pleitos*—the later depositions—which attribute to Martín Alonso the slogan "Sail on! Sail on!" And a fresh translation of the 1493 Letter of Columbus to the Sovereigns is added.

In selecting sources for the Second Voyage, Bourne chose Dr. Chanca's Letter and the Torres Memorandum, to which Jane added Andrés Bernaldez. All three are very dull, only the first is an original source, and they tell nothing not found elsewhere but minor details. My choice, following the Sovereigns' orders for this voyage, includes the long letter of merry Michael Cuneo of Savona, the jolliest account of any of Columbus's voyages; the Syllacio tract, pedantic, to be sure, but incorporating many interesting data sent to him by Columbus's shipmate; and Fer-

dinand Columbus's unique account of the return passage.

On the Third Voyage, I agree with Jane to the extent of including Columbus's Letter to the Sovereigns and his anguished missive to Doña Juana, but have added the much more important Las Casas Abstract of the Journal, the most detailed account in existence of the discovery of the American continent and the "Terrestrial Paradise." This has been translated before, but from a garbled text.

For the Fourth Voyage, the most interesting of all for adventure and navigation, I have the most complete selection to be found anywhere in translation. In addition to those hardy perennials, the *Lettera Rarissima* and Diego Méndez's Will, we print the Royal Instructions for this Voyage; the Roster and Payroll, giving the name, rating and pay of every member of the crews; and Ferdinand Columbus's narrative, in his biography of the Admiral. Except for Cuneo's Letter, this is the most vivid account of any Columbian voyage.

My translations, and those made for me, are intentionally literal. The temptation to which every translator is subjected—to "improve" the style of the original—has been firmly resisted. Columbus did not write good Castilian (as Las Casas more than once complains) and the Italian texts of Cuneo, Syllacio, and Ferdinand are pretty rough. Ferdinand's was an Italian translation from the Spanish. Thus, if readers find some of the matter herein contained to be ungrammatical, repetitive, or obscure, that is how the original text is.

In the matter of spelling proper names, I have generally followed the system of printing each name, the first time that it occurs in a given document, in

italics and exactly as it appears in the original; for it is of considerable interest to know the variety of ways in which the names of Columbus and his principal shipmates were spelled at the time. But in second or subsequent mentions I use the standardized English form of the proper names.

Pursuit of Columbus has carried me over wide waters, past gorgeous islands and coasts of the New World, and into

Boston, Massachusetts
April, 1963

many pleasant places of Europe, Africa, and America. En route I and my shipmates made many friends—in Spain, Portugal, Italy and France, and in the countries bordering on the Caribbean. My hope is that the translations in this volume will make new friends for Columbus and impart to English-speaking readers some of the thrill and wonder felt by those old navigators when the New World was new indeed.

S. E. MORISON

Acknowledgments

My thanks are due to Dr. Milton Anastos, whose penetrating scholarship helped me over many a linguistic hurdle; to the late Professor Jeremiah D. M. Ford, who checked the entire First Voyage with me; to the men of science (to be mentioned in due course) who helped me to identify Columbus's flora, fauna, and fishes; and to Dr. Carlos Sanz of Madrid, the world's leading bibliographer of early Americana.

My beloved wife Priscilla Barton Morison followed the Italian texts while I read the English, and corrected me, as well as supporting my Columbian studies in countless ways.

Florence Berlin, my secretary when a large part of the work was being done; Diana Hadgis, who took it up in 1961; and Antha E. Card, who made the Index, have all contributed beyond the call of duty. So many ladies, from Queen Isabella to Helen Macy, have had a part in this work that the Virgilian motto *Dux femina facti* would therefore seem appropriate.

And I must also pay a tribute to a

lady not least on the list, Alice Bache Gould (1868–1953), whose “Nueva Lista Documentada de los Tripulantes de Colón en 1492” (New Documented List of Columbus's Crews in 1492), which runs through nine different volumes of the *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia de Madrid*, between 1924 and 1944, constitutes the most valuable piece of Columbian research in the present century.

In 1911, when looking something up in the Archives of the Indies at Seville, Miss Gould came across the record of a supposed companion of Columbus, and this record proved him not to have been on the voyage. This gave her the idea of compiling a true list of Columbus's shipmates, and that became her hobby for the rest of her life. The successive articles in which the fruits of this research appeared in the *Boletín* contain much more than biographical data. Her interest in navigation, for instance, enabled her to pick up many important items about the ships and their sailing qualities.

Nothing could stop Miss Gould; she would not take "no" for an answer. Wishing to examine the municipal archives of Moguer, the home of several members of Columbus's crew, she refused to be put off with the information that the archives were in the town jail, and persuaded the authorities to lock her up there during the day. She found the prisoners very helpful in opening and sorting the documents, and, incidentally, dissuaded them from drawing on the archives for a supply of toilet paper, which the municipality did not provide.

I remember her as a distinguished

gray-haired lady, dressed usually in black bombazine with a vintage hat, striding resolutely into the Archives of the Indies to find some document for me that the Archivist insisted did not exist. She died, aged 85, at Simancas in 1953. Her work on Columbus's shipmates was then complete, except for Juan de la Cosa and Vicente Yáñez Pinzón; notes for them were left to the Archivist of the Indies, D. José de la Peña, to complete and publish; but as yet they have not appeared. Some day, it is hoped, all the installments will be put together in a book, and translated into English.

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Abbreviations Used in Introductions to Documents and in Footnotes

BRAH: *Boletín de la Real Academia de Historia* (Madrid).

Ferdinand Historie: Ferdinand Columbus *Historie della vita e de' fatti dell' Ammiraglio D. Christoforo Colombo* (Venice 1571). The page numbers refer to Benjamin Keen's translation, entitled *The Life of the Admiral Christopher Columbus by His Son Ferdinand* (1959).

Jane: Cecil Jane (ed.) *Select Documents Illustrating the Four Voyages of Columbus*, 2 vols. (London, The Hakluyt Society, 1930-1933).

Las Casas Historia: Bartolomé de Las Casas *Historia de las Indias*; the chapters quoted, all of which are in Libro I, are the same in all editions; page numbers refer to the Agustín Millares Carlo and Lewis Hanke edition, Fondo de Cultura Económica (Mexico D.F. & Buenos Aires 1951).

Morison A.O.S.: S. E. Morison *Admiral of the Ocean Sea*, 2 vols. (1942). This edition alone contains the footnotes. References to the one-volume edition are added, as it is still in print.

Navarrete: Martín Fernández de Navarrete

Colección de los Viages y Descubrimientos Vols. I-III (1825-29).

Oviedo: Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés *Historia General y Natural de las Indias* (1535). Volume and page numbers refer to the 1851 edition.

Pleitos I and II: *Pleitos de Colón* Vols. I-II, C. Fernández Duro ed.

Raccolta: *Raccolta di Documenti e Studi pubblicati dalla R. Commissione Colombiana* (1892-94) in six Parts, divided into 14 Volumes and a Supplement. For instance, *Raccolta* I ii 366 means Part I, Volume ii, page 366.

Thacher: John Boyd Thacher *Christopher Columbus: His Life, His Work, His Remains* (3 vols., New York 1903-04).

Ultramar: These are Vols. VII-VIII of 2d series *Colección de Documentos Inéditos relativos al Descubrimiento . . . Ultramar* (1892-94).



This symbol is used to signalize the beginning of a document or of a continuous series of documents or journal entries.

PART II

Preliminaries

I45I-I492





Documents on Columbus's Early Life

IN ALL LATIN COUNTRIES OF EUROPE THE NOTARY PUBLIC WAS AN IMPORTANT PUBLIC OFFICIAL, combining the functions of a justice of the peace, notary, and family lawyer in English speaking countries. In the Middle Ages and Renaissance, most of the people, being illiterate, resorted to a Notary not only for drafting and witnessing a will, but for business contracts, debts, and settling quarrels and minor litigation. The "acts" recording these transactions were drafted by the Notary, generally in Latin: and although the parties to them seldom even made their mark, the Notary's standing was such that his statements and documents had the force of law. The office was generally hereditary, so that notarial archives remained intact in private hands for centuries. If and when a notarial family died or went out of business, their archives went to the municipality.

Consequently notarial records are a mine of information about persons, families, real estate, and the economic and social life of past centuries. Those of Genoa and neighboring cities have been thoroughly combed for information on Columbus and his family and have yielded a surprising amount of information; they have been printed in a massive volume by the City of Genoa called *Cristoforo Colombo; documenti & prove della sua appartenenza a Genova* (Bergamo, 1931), with an edition in English and German translation called *Christopher Columbus, Documents and Proofs of his Genoese Origin* (Genoa, 1932).

Of the three documents which I have selected here, the first two are important as narrowing the date of Columbus's birth to the ten weeks between 25 August and 31 October 1451, and the third definitely ties up Columbus with the Genoese family of Colombo.

Other evidence of Columbus's Genoese birth is the long-lost *Ystoria de Colón* by Hernán Pérez de Oliva, who died in 1531. This opens with the words *Cristóval Colón*,

Genovés, exactly as it was entered in Ferdinand Columbus's catalogue of his Library. This long-sought-after "first" biography of the Admiral has finally been located, in the shape of a late 16th century ms. copy, now in the Yale University Library. It has not yet been printed, but is analyzed by Leonardo Olschki in *Hispanic American Historical Review* XXIII (1943) 165-96.

A much contested document on Columbus's Genoese origin is the *Mayorazgo* (Majorat, a form of will entailing an estate), which he executed between voyages on 22 February 1498. Herein (to quote the translation in Filson Young *Christopher Columbus* 442, 445-6) the Admiral not only says, "I, being born in Genoa, came to serve them [Ferdinand and Isabella] here in Castile," but commands his immediate heir to create a fund in the Bank of St. George in Genoa, and begs him and his heirs to "always strive and labor for the honor and good of the city of Genoa." Navarrete printed this document, from a ms. which he found in the Duke of Veragua's muniments, and the royal confirmation thereof, dated September 1501, which he found in the royal archives of Simancas, in his *Colección de los Viages* II (1825) 221-35. These naturally proved stumbling blocks for the charlatans who were trying, with faked documents, to prove that Columbus was a Spaniard. They therefore resorted to the device, common among historical theorists, of impugning the documents and accusing Navarrete of having been paid by Genoa to invent them. And when it turned out that the Duke of Veragua had lost or mislaid the Majorat, and that nobody could locate the royal authorization in the Archives, the *Colon Español* boys celebrated with indecent joy.


Now, Navarrete had done his research at Simancas prior to the Napoleonic Wars, although he did not publish until 1825. During the French invasion of Spain some of Murat's troopers were quartered at Simancas, and used documents from the Archives as bedding for their chargers. After Wellington's victory such documents as could be salvaged from the horse stalls were tossed into a large room. Successive royal archivists were supposed to sort these out; but a century and more passed, and all but one archivist, who quickly became discouraged, flinched from so laborious and unpleasant a task. It remained for the indefatigable Alice Gould of Boston to fish around in this cavalry dump, among dried Napoleonic manure, and pull up some sheets of the original royal confirmation of the Majorat. Sensation! The Spanish government, pleased at this vindication of the honor of a royal naval officer, saw to it that Alfonso XIII conferred on Miss Gould a suitable decoration.¹

1. This story was told by the eminent Spanish historian Altolaguirre in *BRAH* LXXXVIII (1926) 330-55; repeated in *City of Genoa Documents* (1932) 228. Nevertheless, Salvador de Madariaga, in his *Columbus* (1940) asserted "Columbus never said that he came from Genoa." In the second edition of this interesting biography, of which the thesis is that Columbus was a Catalan Jew, Madariaga shifts his criticism to the Majorat text, declaring it to be a later forgery because therein Columbus left no money to his aged father, or to his Genoese cousins. Aged father disappears from the records in 1492 and probably died shortly after,

and as the main purpose of the *Mayorazgo* was to entail all the Admiral's property to his immediate descendants, legacies to cousins were hardly in order. The historian who has gone most thoroughly into this question, Enrique de Gandia *Historia de Cristóbal Colón, análisis crítico de las fuentes documentales y de los problemas colombinos* (Buenos Aires 1942), still considers (p. 51) that the Majorat text that has come down to us is untrustworthy, but observes that the Genoese documents leave no doubt of Columbus's Genoese birth.

a. DEPOSITION OF 31 OCTOBER 1470

[Facsimile of Ms. and Text, in Latin, from the archives of the Notary Nicolò Raggio, in *City of Genoa Documents* 170. Translation by Dr. Milton Anastos.]

 In the name of God, amen. *Christofforus de Columbo*, son of Domenico, over 19 years old, in the presence, and by the authority, advice, and consent of the said Domenico, his father present and approving, voluntarily and by his own certain knowledge and not by any error of right or fact, admitted and truly acknowledged in public to Pietro Bellesio of Porto Maurizio, the son of Francisco, and in his presence, that he was bound to give and pay him 48 lire, 13 soldi, and 6 denarii of Genoa. This was for the balance due on wines sold and de-

livered to the same Christopher and the said Domenico by the aforementioned Pietro.

[More details about the debt follow.]

The said Domenico and Christopher swore by the Holy Gospels of God, actually touching the Scriptures, not to violate the above specified terms, but rather to carry them out and observe and fulfil them all.

Done at Genoa, in Fassatello, at the office of the notary Lazzaro Raggio, Anno Domini 1470, in the third indiction according to the Genoese calendar, on Wednesday, the last day of October, at the hour of terce.


[Names of three witnesses follow.]



b. *THE ASSERETO DOCUMENT • DEPOSITION OF 23 AUGUST 1479*
before the "VENERABLE BOARD OF TRADE" of Genoa

So called because it was discovered in the Notarial Archives of Genoa and published by Ugo Assereto in 1904. Significant both because of information on Columbus's age, and because it proves that he had a responsible position as supercargo in the Portuguese merchant marine.

Ludovico Centurione, who made this deposition, and his partner Paolo di Negro, belonged to an important merchant-banking house of Genoa which had already employed Columbus. See Morison, *A.O.S.* I 30-1, 49. Facsimile of ms. and Latin text in *City of Genoa, Documents* 135-7. Translation by Dr. Milton Anastos.

 Firstly, he [Centurione] intends to demonstrate and prove that it was and is the truth that on a former occasion in the year just passed, at the time specified by the witnesses, Paolo di Negro, acting for the same Ludovico and the said Cazano, or one or the other of them, undertook to send to the island of Madeira to purchase a certain quantity of sugar and that on the said occasion the same Ludovico had sent 1290 ducats, or 1290 *grossati*, or the equivalent, to the said Paolo, who was to purchase 2400 or more *arrobas* of sugar. Christopher Columbus was sent to the island of Madeira under orders from Paolo and there reserved or secured on option the above-mentioned amount of sugar expecting to receive from the said Paolo the money to cover the said balance. But the said Christopher received only 103½ ducats, or 310,000 *regales*, in the money of Lisbon, which he had been sent in various amounts at various times, as is shown by the account given by the same Columbus. Wherefore, by virtue of the failure of the said Paolo to provide the money, the said Christopher was unable to acquire the whole amount of the sugar he had reserved and secured on option, and because

of the lack of money he was also unable to load the said cargo of sugar on the vessel commanded by Fernando of Palos, the Portuguese. This was and is the truth.

[Notarized Deposition of Columbus as a witness, on 25 August, followed by witnesses for Ludovico Centurione.]

In the name of God, amen. To all and each who may see the present public testimony: know that before me the Notary and the subscribed witnesses cited and summoned for this purpose came Christopher Columbus, a citizen of Genoa, required to appear here as a witness and as such to be received and examined for the sake of the permanent record, at the instance and demand of the honorable Ludovico Centurione, who desires him to offer proof and evidence concerning the following.

The above-mentioned Christopher, after swearing on the Scriptures to tell, and testify to, the truth, deposed that, concerning the matters set forth above he knows only that they are true and that when, in July of the year just passed, the witness and the said Paolo were in Lisbon, the witness was sent by the same Paolo to the island of Madeira to buy 2400 *arrobas*

of sugar. At that time, on the aforementioned occasion, the witness was given 115,000 *regales* by the said Paolo or by another acting for him and, thereafter, while the witness was on the said island of Madeira, the witness was sent additional amounts by the said Paolo or another acting for him so that at the time aforesaid the total came to 312,000 *regales* or thereabouts, including the 115,000 *regales* above-mentioned. This was the situation until the time that the vessel commanded by Ferdinand of Palos, the Portuguese, arrived at the said island. It was on and upon this vessel that the said quantity of sugar was to be loaded, but it could not be loaded at that time, although it had been reserved and secured on option beforehand by the witness, who, however, can not now testify accurately and precisely what part of the said sugar he had reserved and secured on option, as he does not have the book in which all the details are clearly set forth and recorded and to which he makes reference. But at the time of the arrival of the said vessel, this witness was unable to secure the sugar he had reserved and purchased on option as above stated, on account of the failure of the said Paolo to provide the witness with the money to pay for the sugar. Moreover, the quantity of sugar delivered to the witness by the sellers but not paid for by him by the time of the arrival of the said vessel was threatened by them with sale at the cost and to the detriment of this witness, because of his default in paying the amount due them. On this account it was

not possible to load the said quantity of sugar in and upon the said vessel.

In explanation whereof this witness states that he is the Christopher mentioned above, on which account he knows that the aforesaid statements made by him are true as he has declared and testified above.

When asked to explain his knowledge and how and in what manner he knew of the matters therein described, this witness replied that he was the person against whom the claim [for carrying charges] was made by the said Fernando, to whom this witness would have delivered the cargo if the money had been provided by the said Paolo to pay for the said quantity of sugar.

When asked whether the matters to which he testified involved profit or loss to him, he replied that they did not.

When asked if he were related to the said Ludovico, he said he was not.

When asked if he were going away in the near future, he replied that he was leaving tomorrow morning for Lisbon.


When asked how old he was, how much money he had, and which party he hoped would prevail, he replied that he was 27 years old, or thereabouts, had something over 100 florins, and hoped that the party with justice on its side would prevail.

Done in Genoa, in the quarter of San Siro, in the shop of the said Ludovico, in the year of the Incarnation of our Lord 1479, . . .

c. *THE CONTRACT OF COLUMBUS'S COUSINS, 1496*

Despite the abundant documentation on Columbus's birth and origin, a myth of 19th-century origin, that the Discoverer was a Spanish Colón and nothing to do with

the Genoese Colombo, persists. Consequently, this document is significant, as definitely tying in the Genoese Colombo family to the Admiral. Christopher's uncle Antonio had three sons, Giovanni, known as Giannetto ("Johnny"), Matteo, and Amighetto. On 11 October 1496, after the death of their father, these three met in notary Giovanni Batista Peloso's office and agreed to share expenses for Johnny to go to Spain and seek a job from uncle Christopher. He got it too—Columbus gave him command of a caravel in his Third Voyage, and Las Casas mentions him as a *deudo* (relative) of the Admiral. (See Morison, *A.O.S.* I 24, n. 26. Facsimile of ms. and Latin text in State Notarial Archives, Genoa, in *City of Genoa Documents* 116-17. Translation by S.E.M.)

 Giovanni Colombo of Quinto [a suburb of Genoa], Matteo Colombo, and Amighetto Colombo, brothers, sons of the late Antonio, being aware and cognizant that the said Giovanni should go to Spain to seek out Don Christopher Columbus, Admiral of the

King of Spain, and that all expenses incurred by the said Giovanni for the purpose of seeking out the said Don Christopher should be shared by the three brothers aforesaid, each contributing one third, . . . and thus they are agreed.

The Toscanelli Correspondence

NO MORE CONTROVERSIAL SUBJECT CONNECTED WITH COLUMBUS EXISTS THAN THE TOSCANELLI CORRESPONDENCE. Henry Vignaud devoted one fat volume (*Toscanelli and Columbus*, 1902) and parts of several others to proving that it was faked up by Columbus's friends after his first voyage to make it seem "respectable." Nobody any longer doubts that it was genuine. The Argentine historian Dr. Diego Luis Molinari, in *Historia de la Nación Argentina II* (Buenos Aires, 1937) 398-425, and in *La Empresa Colombina* (Buenos Aires, 1938) pointed out that not only is the one existing copy of the most important letter in Columbus's hand; it is surmounted by the characteristic cross which he placed at the head of his letters.

In brief, the story is this. A Florentine physician, Paolo da Pozzi Toscanelli, in an era when leading physicians took an interest in cosmography, astronomy, and astrology, took part in the Church Council of Florence, 1438-45. There he met Canon Martins, a delegate from Lisbon, and also a visitor from the Far East who was trying to interest the West in reestablishing the contact with China which had been broken after the return of Marco Polo to Venice. Toscanelli, unlike most of the erudite, supported Marco Polo's excessive estimate of the length of Eurasia, and his statement that Japan lay 1500 miles off the coast of China, which would have brought it (if one accepted the smallest estimate of the size of the earth) within 3000 nautical miles of the Canary Islands. When Columbus was gradually pulling together the threads of his great enterprise he was much excited to hear that he could obtain learned support from Toscanelli, who had written to Martins in 1474 urging him to press King Alfonso V of Portugal to take this western route to the Indies, instead of trying to push around Africa. Accordingly, Columbus wrote to the Florentine physician—at what date we know not, but probably in 1481, as Toscanelli died next year—for details. In reply he received document (a) below, incorporating Toscanelli's 1474 letter to Martins. Later he wrote again to Toscanelli and re-

ceived letter (b). Müntzer's Letter to João II (c) is added as a significant sequel to this correspondence.


Unfortunately, the chart mentioned by Toscanelli no longer exists. So-called reproductions of it are mere guesses. But a comparison of Toscanelli's distances with those on the Martin Behaim globe of 1492 (reproduced in Ernest G. Ravenstein *Martin Behaim*, 1908) indicates that Toscanelli's views on the distance across the Ocean were similar to those of the German geographer.

Anyone who follows Columbus's Journals will appreciate that he was continually looking for what Toscanelli predicted he would find.

a. *TOSCANELLI'S LETTER TO CANON MARTINS, 25 JUNE 1474*

Ms. copy in Columbus's hand in the back of his copy of Aeneas Sylvius *Historia Rerum*, now in the Biblioteca Colombina, Seville. Text, in Latin, with facsimile of Ms., in Molinari *La Empresa Colombina* 70-75. Translation by Dr. Milton Anastos and S.E.M.

Copy sent to Christopher Columbus by Paul the Physician, with a chart of navigation.

 Paul the physician to Fernan Martins, canon of Lisbon, greetings. I was pleased to learn of your good health and of the favor and friendly re-

lations [you enjoy] with your very noble and magnificent prince.

On another occasion I spoke with you about a shorter sea route to the lands



of spices than that which you take for Guinea. And now the Most Serene King requests of me some statement, or preferably a graphic sketch, whereby that route might become understandable and comprehensible, even to men of slight education.

Although I know that this can be shown in a spherical form like that of the earth, I have nevertheless decided, in order to gain clarity and save trouble, to represent [that route] in the manner that charts of navigation do.

Accordingly I am sending His Majesty a chart done with my own hands in which are designated your shores and islands from which you should begin to sail ever westwards, and the lands you should touch at and how much you should deviate from the pole or from the equator and after what distance, that is, after how many miles, you should reach the most fertile lands of all spices and gems, and you must not be surprised that I call the regions in which spices are found "western," although they are usually called "eastern," for those who sail in the other hemisphere always find these regions in the west. But if we should go overland and by the higher routes we should come upon these places in the east.

The straight lines, therefore, drawn vertically in the chart, indicate distance from east to west; but those drawn horizontally indicate the spaces from south to north.

Moreover, I have marked on the chart various places where you may touch, for the better information of navigators, should they by reason of the winds or of some accident reach a different place from what they expected. I did this also partly that they may show the natives that

they have some knowledge of that country, which ought to please the natives greatly. And they would not settle in the islands unless they were merchants. Indeed, it is said that there is a greater plenty of vessels with freight in one very splendid port called *Zaiton* than in all the rest of the world. They say that a hundred large ships of pepper are brought into that port every year, exclusive of other ships carrying other spices.

That country is densely populated and blessed with a multitude of provinces, kingdoms, and cities without number, under the rule of a single prince, who is called the Great Khan, a name which in Latin means King of Kings. His seat and residence is for the most part in the province *Katay*.

His forebears, who craved intercourse with Christians, already 200 years ago sent to the Pope and requested of him several men learned in the faith so that they might be enlightened. But those who were sent encountered difficulties on their journey and returned home.

Even in the time of [Pope] Eugenius [IV] a man came to Eugenius who affirmed his great good will for the Christians, and I had a long talk with him on many things,—on the vast size of the royal buildings, on the vastness of the rivers in breadth and wondrous length, on the multitude of cities on the banks of the rivers, and of how on a single river some 200 cities have been built with marble bridges of great width and length, adorned with columns on both sides.

This country is worthy to be sought by the Latins not only because immense wealth can be had in the form of gold, silver, gems of every kind, and spices which are never brought to us; but also

because of the learned men, wise philosophers and astrologers by whose genius and arts those mighty and magnificent provinces are governed and even wars are waged.

So much then in partial reply to your request, so far as shortness of time and my occupations permitted. I hold myself ready in the future to give His Royal Majesty as much additional information as he wishes. Given at Florence, 25 June 1474.

From the city of Lisbon westward in a straight line to the very noble and splendid city of Quinsay 26 spaces are indicated on the chart, each of which covers 250 miles. [The city] is 100 miles in circumference and has 10 bridges. Its name means City of Heaven; and many marvelous tales are told of it and of the multitude of its handicrafts and treasures. It

[China] has an area of approximately one third of the entire globe. This city is in the province of *Mangi*, evidently in the vicinity of the province of *Katay*, in which is the royal residence of the country.

But from the island of *Antilia*,¹ known to you, to the far-famed island of *Cippangu* [Japan], there are 10 spaces. That island is very rich in gold, pearls, and gems; they roof the temples and royal houses with solid gold. So there is not a great space to be traversed over unknown waters. More details should, perhaps, be set forth with greater clarity but the diligent reader will be able from this to infer the rest by himself. Farewell, dearest friend.

1. See note 1 to Columbus's Journal of the First Voyage for 25 September, below.

b. TOSCANELLI'S SECOND LETTER TO COLUMBUS, undated

This letter is known only in the Italian translation of Ferdinand Columbus's *Historie* of his father, published at Venice in 1571. That, in turn, was a Spanish translation of the original Latin. A facsimile of the appropriate pages of Ferdinand's printed biography is in Molinari *La Empresa Colombina* 75-6. This English translation of the Italian translation of the Spanish translation is by Dr. Milton Anastos and S.E.M.



To Christopher Columbus, Paul the physician, greetings:

I received your letters together with the things you sent me; I was greatly benefited by them, and I esteem your noble and grand desire to navigate from the East to the West, as is shown by the chart which I am sending you; which would have better been shown in the form of a round sphere. I am greatly pleased that it is well understood. For the said voyage is not only possible, but it is sure and cer-

tain and will bring honor, inestimable gain and the widest renown among all Christians.

But you will not be able to understand it perfectly except by experience or practice, as I have had most abundantly, and good and true information from illustrious men of great learning who have come from the said regions to this court of Rome, and from merchants, also, who have trafficked for a long time in those regions, persons of great authority.

So that when the said voyage takes place, it will be to powerful kingdoms and cities and provinces, very noble, very rich in all sorts of things, abundant, very necessary to us, as also in all kinds of spicery in great quantity and jewels in great abundance. Moreover it will be very agreeable to those kings and princes, who are very eager—more than we—to have intercourse and speech with Christians from our countries, for a great part of them are Christians, and also to have speech and intercourse with men of learning and tal-


ent from these places, both in religion and in all the other fields of knowledge, on account of the great fame of the empires and governments of these regions. Because of all these things and many others which could be mentioned I am not surprised that you, a man of great courage, and all the nation of the Portuguese, who have always been men of courage in all great enterprises, should be seen with heart aflame with great zeal to carry out the said voyage.

c. *HIERONYMUS MÜNTZER TO D. JOÃO II, KING OF PORTUGAL*
14 JULY 1493

The project of persuading Portugal to seek out a westward route to the Indies was not forgotten in Northern and Central Europe, as this letter testifies. Müntzer, like Toscanelli, was a learned physician with an abundant curiosity about the world; and it is strange that as late as 14 July 1493 he had not heard of Columbus's First Voyage, which had ended in March. The Martin Behaim whom he mentions was the young Nuremberger, probably known personally to Columbus, who, after serving on a commission of King João II, returned to his native city and constructed a famous globe, depicting the world according to the Marco Polo concept. It is reproduced in colors in Ernest G. Ravenstein's *Martin Behaim*, and in outline in Morison, *A.O.S.* I 88–9, and many other books.

Text: part in original Latin and part in contemporary Portuguese translation (ms. in the State Library of Munich), printed in H. Vignaud *Histoire Critique* II 620–22. Translation by Dr. Milton Anastos.

Nuremberg, 14 July 1493

 The letter sent by Hieronymus Müntzer, a German doctor of the city of Nuremberg in Germany to the most serene King D. João II of Portugal on the discovery of the Ocean Sea and the province of the Grand Khan of *Catay*, translated from the Latin into the vernacular by Master Alvaro da Torre, master of theology of the Order of St. Dominic and

preacher to the said Lord King.

To the Most Serene and Invincible João, King of Portugal, the Algarves, and Maritime Mauritania, first discoverer of the Islands of the Canaries, Madeira, and the Azores, Hieronymus Müntzer, a German doctor of medicine most humbly commends himself. Because heretofore you have inherited from the most serene prince D. Henrique your uncle the glory of sparing neither effort nor expense in

extending the bounds of the world and by your diligence you have subjected to your rule the Seas of Ethiopia and Guinea and the maritime nations as far as the Tropic of Capricorn together with their products such as gold, grains of Paradise, pepper, slaves, and other things, you have by this display of talents won renown and immortal fame and great profit for yourself besides. Nor is it to be doubted that in a short time the Ethiopians, who like animals in human form have had no part in divine worship, will as a result of your labors put off bestiality and come over to adherence to the Catholic faith.¹ Wherefore, Maximilian, the most invincible king of the Romans, who is Portuguese on his mother's side,² desired to have Your Highness invited to seek the very rich shore of Catay in the Orient by way of a letter, however crude, written by me. For Aristotle at the end of the second book of his *De Caelo* expresses the opinion, as do Seneca in the fifth book of his *Naturales*, Pierre d'Ailly, the most learned man of his time, and many other men of high repute—they express the opinion, I repeat, that the beginning of the habitable East is quite close to the boundary of the habitable West. Proofs of this are the elephants, which abound in both these regions, and the reeds from the Orient which the storm casts upon the shores of the Azores Islands. Moreover, there are arguments without number, so to say, and of great persuasiveness, for concluding almost without question that this sea can be crossed to the Catay of the Orient in a few days.

Be not disturbed by Alfragan and certain others who lack experience and who have said that only one quarter of the earth is not covered by the sea and

that three quarters thereof are beneath the waters. For in matters pertaining to the habitableness of the earth more confidence is to be placed in experience and trustworthy accounts than in fantastic imaginations. For you know that many official astronomers denied there was any habitable land below the tropics and the equatorial regions. By your own experience you have found reasoning like this to be vain and false. It cannot be doubted that land is not spread out beneath the sea but that, on the contrary, the sea is lower. The orbicular rotundity of the earth also [contributes to this view]. Furthermore, you have wealth and riches and highly skilled mariners who also are eager to win immortality and fame.

O what glory you will gain if you make the habitable Orient known to your Occident! Likewise what profits would its commerce give you, for you will make those Isles of the Orient tributaries, and their kings, amazed, will quietly submit to your sovereignty!

Already you are praised as a splendid Prince by the Germans, Italians, Russians, Polish, Scythians, and those who dwell beneath the arid star of the arctic pole, as well as by the Grand Duke of Muscovy—and not many years ago under the aridness of the said star the great island of Greenland was discovered, which has a circumference of 300 leagues and in which there is a large settlement under the said sovereignty of the said Grand Duke.³ But, if you carry out this mission you will be exalted with praise like a god or a second Hercules; and, if you wish, you will take along on this journey as a companion Martin Behaim, deputed by our King Maximilian especially for this purpose, and many other learned mariners who

will set out from the Azores and sail the breadth of the sea, by their skill, with the aid of the quadrant, the chilindre,⁴ the astrolabe, and other instruments. There neither cold nor calm will harm them, but they will sail to the Orient in very moderate weather of air and sea.

There are a great many other arguments of how Your Majesty will win glory. But what need is there to spur on him who is running? You yourself are one to examine all matters thoroughly and carefully, so that writing in detail about this matter is to hinder him who runs from reaching the goal. May the Al-

mighty keep you steadfast in your purpose, and after your men have completed the voyage, may you be crowned with immortality.

Farewell! From Nuremberg, a city in Upper Germany, 14 July A.D. 1493.

1. This is one of the many odd ideas that Europeans had about Ethiopia prior to the return of the first Portuguese Embassy in the early 16th century.

2. King of Rome was the title of the heir presumptive to the Holy Roman Empire. Maximilian became emperor in 1493; his mother was the Infanta D. Leonor, aunt of D. João II.

3. The writer's notions on the discovery and sovereignty of Greenland are completely wild.


4. A portable sun-dial of cylindrical shape; mentioned by Chaucer.

Preparations

a. COLUMBUS AND HIS SON AT LA RÁBIDA

IN MID-1485, AFTER THE DEATH OF HIS WIFE DOÑA FELIPA AND THE REJECTION OF HIS ENTERPRISE BY D. JOÃO II, Columbus and his five-year old son Diego took passage from Lisbon to the port of Palos, and thence walked to the monastery of La Rábida, which overlooks the Rio Tinto. No story about Columbus is better known than the following, related in a deposition by Dr. García Fernández of Huelva in 1515. Unfortunately, the Doctor combined this visit by Columbus of 1485, when he left little Diego as a boarder, with a later visit in 1491; but the picture of their appearance at the monastery door is doubtless correct.

Ms. Spanish text in the "Pleitos de Colón" (pleadings in the legal hassle between Columbus's heirs and the Spanish Crown, over a period of some 25 years) in Archives of the Indies, Seville. This and other Pleitos were printed very inaccurately by Fernández Duro in *Documentos Inéditos* 2nd series, VII and VIII. Our text is from microfilm of the ms. in Library of Congress. Translation by Dr. Milton Anastos.

 . . . This witness . . . knew that the said Admiral *Don Cristóbal Colón* journeyed on foot to La Rábida with his son Don Diego, who is now Admiral, arrived at La Rábida, which is a monastery of friars, and asked at the gate for bread and water to drink for the small child, a boy. This witness says that while he [the witness] was there,¹ a friar by the name of Juan Pérez, now deceased,

wished to speak with the said Christopher Columbus and, noting that he had the appearance of a man from another country or foreign kingdom, Pérez asked him who he was and whence he had come. The said Christopher Columbus replied that he had come from the court of his Highness [the King of Portugal] and Pérez requested him to give an account of his mission to the Court and of the reason for it. The

said Christopher Columbus answered that he had spoken with his Highness about making discoveries and had vowed that he would present him with a mainland, seeking aid from his Highness in the form of vessels and other supplies needful for the said voyage. He said that a great number of nobles and others who were present at the said discussion refused to listen to him and that he was not admitted to the royal presence before they had ridiculed his plan and had said that they had on numerous occasions made the attempt and had dispatched ships to find land and that the whole idea was vain and ridiculous. Wherefore, on seeing his scheme rejected with so little comprehension of what he offered to do and accomplish, the said Christopher Columbus left the Court and made straight from there for the town of Huelva to talk and visit with a brother-in-law of his, the husband of his wife's sister. The witness says that this brother-in-law was alive at that time and was known as *Mulyer*,² and that the said friar, on hearing of Columbus's scheme, sent for this witness, who was a good friend of his, to talk with the said Christopher Columbus, and hear the arguments on this matter of discoveries, because this witness had some knowledge of astronomy. This said witness came at once, and all three discussed the said matter and from here sent a man to deliver a letter to the Queen, Doña Isabela (may she win holy fame), from the said friar Juan Pérez, her confessor. The bearer of the said letter was Sebastian Rodríguez, a pilot from Lepe. They kept the said Christopher Columbus in the monastery to await a reply from her Highness to their said letter, so that they might see what they had accomplished thereby.

And so it was that two weeks later the Queen, our Lady, wrote to the said friar Juan Pérez, thanking him deeply for his kind intentions and bidding and commanding him to appear in court before her Highness immediately upon receiving her letter, and to give the said Christopher Columbus encouragement until her Highness could write to him. As soon as he saw the letter and its purport, the said friar left the monastery privily before midnight. Riding on muleback he carried out her Highness's orders and appeared in Court. There they decided to give the said Christopher Columbus three vessels so that he might set out to make discoveries and prove the truth of his boast. The Queen, our Lady, in addition to this grant, sent 20,000 maravedis in florins, which were conveyed by Diego Prieto, a resident of this town, together with a letter bidding this witness hand over the said sum to Christopher Columbus, so that he might dress fittingly, purchase a small horse or mule, and appear before her Highness. The said Christopher Columbus received the said 20,000 maravedis and appeared before her Highness, as has been said, to discuss the whole of the aforementioned project. Columbus departed thence with authorization to take the said vessels which he should select as suitable to make the said voyage. Thus arose the agreement and association with Martin Alonso Pinzón and Vicente Yáñez, for they were sturdy fellows and experienced in sea-craft.

1. The rest of this story happened in 1491-92. In 1485 it was Fr. Antonio de Marchena who listened to Columbus's story and recommended that he appeal to the Duke of Medina Sidonia (see next document).


2. Miguel Molyart of Huelva, whose wife was sister to Columbus's late wife.

b. LETTER OF THE DUKE OF MEDINA CELI TO THE GRAND
CARDINAL OF SPAIN, 19 MARCH 1493

Upon the advice of Fr. Antonio de Marchena (see previous document, note 1), Columbus turned for support to the Duke of Medina Sidonia, and then to the Count of Medina Celi, who owned a merchant fleet. After Columbus's return from his First Voyage, Medina Celi (who in the meantime had been created Duke), wrote the following letter to the Grand Cardinal of Spain, giving details respecting his attempt to outfit Columbus, and his hospitality, in the hope of being allowed to invest in his next voyage. His language is unusually blunt for a Spanish grandee, and I have translated it accordingly.

Spanish text from the Archives at Simancas, printed in Navarrete *Colección de Viages* II 20.

Very Reverend Sir:



I do not know whether your Lordship is aware that for some time I have been keeping *Cristóbal Colomo* in my house, who came from Portugal and was bent on going off to the King of France to get his assistance to go in quest of the Indies. I should like to have taken a whack at it, and have sent him off from the Port;¹ for I had three or four caravels, and he asked me for no more. But since I felt that this was a job for the Queen, our Lady, I wrote to her Highness about it from Rota, and she answered that I should send Columbus to her. So I sent him to her, and besought her Highness, since I did not care to try it and was getting things set up² for her behoof, that she let me be given a piece of it, and that the ships be loaded, and [on their return] be unloaded, at the Port. Her Highness received him and turned him over to Alonso de Quintanilla, who wrote to me on her behalf that she did not hold this business likely to come off; but that if it should be firmed up, she would graciously grant me a piece of it. But, after she had well quizzed him [Columbus], she decided to send him to find the Indies. He departed

about eight months ago and has now returned to Lisbon; he has found everything he looked for, the whole of it. As soon as I learned of this, to make known the good news to her Highness I wrote to her about it by Xuares,³ and I sent him in person to entreat her graciously to allow me to send out [to the Indies] some of my own caravels each year. I beg your Lordship to be pleased to give me a boost in all this, and to intercede with her for me; since it is owing to me, because I kept him in my house for two years and sent him away to her service, that he has made good, discovering such wonderful things. Since Xuares is charged to inform your Lordship in more detail, I beg you to believe what he says.

May our Lord watch over your Very Reverend Person, as your Lordship wishes.

From my village of Cogolludo,⁴ 19 March [1493]. We kiss your Lordship's hand.

THE DUKE.

1. Puerto Santa María, where the Duke had his marine establishment.

2. *aderazaba*, literally, "dressing things up."

3. Apparently one of the Duke's confidential servants.

4. A town northeast of Madrid; it is astonishing that news of Columbus's return had reached there so quickly.

c. *INVITATION OF D. JOÃO II TO COLUMBUS TO RETURN TO PORTUGAL, 20 MARCH 1488*

After Columbus had been turned down once or twice by the Spanish sovereigns he decided to try Portugal again. In reply he received this very cordial letter from that monarch, and our next document (d) proves that he accepted.

Ms. in the king's secretary's hand, signed by him, in the Veragua Mss., Archives of the Indies. Portuguese text and facsimile in Armando Cortesão *Cartografia e cartógrafas portuguesas* I 208-10.



To *Christovam Col-
lon*, our particular friend, in Seville

Christoval Colon: We, D. João by the Grace of God King of Portugal and the Algarves within and beyond the Sea of Africa, Lord of Guinea, send you good greetings. We have seen the letter which you wrote Us and We thank you heartily for the good will and affection you display in it for Our service. And as for your coming here as well as because you indicate that, for other reasons, your industry and good talent will be necessary to Us, We desire and will be much pleased to have you come. As for what concerns you, matters will be arranged as you wish.

And since you may perhaps have some fear of Our justice because of certain debts of yours, We by this our letter promise you that neither on your way hither nor during your stay with Us, nor on your return will you be arrested, detained, accused, cited, or prosecuted in any suit, civil or criminal, of any kind whatsoever. And by this same letter We command all Our judges to comply with this order. Wherefore We charge and urge you to come at once and to have no fear on this account. We shall be grateful and regard Ourselves as greatly served.

Written at Avis, 20 March 1488.

THE KING.

d. *SIGNIFICANT POSTILLE ON MARGINS OF COLUMBUS'S BOOKS*


During his long years of proposing and waiting in Spain, Columbus and his brother Bartholomew, who shared his views and ambitions, perused avidly all the works on cosmography they could lay hands on, seeking learned support; and some of the actual books that they owned are still preserved in the Biblioteca Colombina, Seville, founded by Columbus's son Ferdinand. In these books, the two brothers wrote copious marginal notes (*postille*) in Latin on passages of particular interest to them; their handwritings are so similar that one cannot tell, except from the context, whether a given note is Christopher's or Bartholomew's.

The favorite book of the brothers, judging from the number of notes (898), was the *Imago Mundi* of Pierre d'Ailly, Cardinal of Cambrai, composed around 1410 and printed at Louvain around 1480. Columbus's own copy with notes, edited by Edmond Buron, was reprinted, with French translation, in three volumes at Paris in 1930. Next in number of ms. notes is their copy of the *Historia Rerum Ubique Gestarum* by Aeneas

Sylvius Piccolomini (Pope Pius II), printed in 1477. All the notes, in these and other books, are reprinted in *Raccolta* I ii 289-525.

We have reproduced, in translation, several which seem to throw light on Columbus's movements and intentions.

[Parts of notes 23 and 24, which are written all over *Imago Mundi* chap. viii (Buron I 206-15)]



Note that in this year '88 in the month of December arrived in Lisbon *Bartholomeus Didacus*, captain of three caravels which the Most Serene King of Portugal had sent to try out the land in Guinea. He reported to the same Most Serene King that he had sailed beyond *Yan* 600 leagues, viz. 450 to the south and 250 to the north, up to a promontory which he called *Cabo de Boa Esperança*, which we believe to be in Abyssinia. He says that in this place he found by the astrolabe that he was 45° below the equator,¹ and that this place is 3100 leagues distant from Lisbon. He has described this voyage and plotted it league by league on a marine chart in order to place it under the eyes of the Most Serene King himself. I was present in all of this (*in quibus omnibus interfui*).

Aristotle [says] between the end of Spain and the beginning of India is a small sea navigable in a few days.

Pliny [says] one can sail from the Arabian Gulf to the Columns of Hercules in no great time.

Esdras [says] six parts of the globe are habitable and the seventh is covered with water. Observe that the blessed Ambrose and Augustine and many others considered Esdras a prophet, and approved his book.²

[Note No. 677 on margin of *Imago Mundi* (Buron III 660-1)]

The end of Spain and the beginning

of India are not far distant but close to one another. It is evident, that this sea can be crossed in a few days with a fair wind.

[Note No. 6 on margin of *Historia Rerum* (*Raccolta* I ii 291)]

Julius [Solinus] teaches that the entire sea from India to Spain is navigable, behind Africa.

[Note No. 166 on margin of *Imago Mundi* (Buron I 304-6)]

Note that the kingdom of Tarshis is at the end of the Orient, in the end of *Katay*. It was in this country, at the place called Ophir, that Solomon and Jehoshaphat sent ships which brought back gold, silver and ivory . . . Note that the king of Tarshis came to the Lord at Jerusalem, and spent a year and 13 days en route, as the blessed Jerome has it. . . .

[Note No. 10 on margin of *Historia Rerum* (*Raccolta* I ii 292)]

Men of China have made their way eastward. We have seen many notable signs of this, especially in Galway of Ireland, a man and a woman taken in two small boats, of wondrous aspect.³

[Note No. 234 on margin of *Imago Mundi* (Buron I 342-5)]

Africa is half the size of Europe, and although in the middle there is a sandy desert, nevertheless in some places it is populated. In the north and south parts live innumerable people despite the fierce heat. And under the equator, where the days are 12 hours long, is the castle of the Most Serene King of Portugal, in which I was, and I found the place to be temperate.⁴

[Note No. 663, quoting *Imago Mundi* chap. xiii (Burton III 622-3)]

"A part of our habitable earth ends at the rising sun with an unknown land," which touches the oriental people of Greater Asia, people of China and Serica. "To the South" there's "an unknown land," which surrounds the Indian Ocean and embraces southern Ethiopia, called Abyssinia. "At the setting sun" also "an unknown land" which surrounds the Ethiopian Gulf of Africa and is bordered by the Western Ocean.⁵

[Note No. 486 on margin of *Imago Mundi* (Burton II 526-7)]

From the end of the Occident to the end of India by land it is much more than one half the [circumference of the] earth, that is 180°. The eastern edge of which [India] is near Africa or Spain, and part of the earth opposite this half appears to be habitable just like this India one, which embraces a third of the habitable world.

[Note No. 490 on margin of *Imago Mundi* (Burton II 530-2)]

Note that often when sailing from Lisbon south to Guinea I often took pains to study the course as the captains and

mariners do, and later I took the altitude of the sun with the quadrant and other instruments several times, and I found them to agree with Alfragan, i.e., that the length of a degree is $56 \frac{2}{3}$ miles. He is therefore to be trusted for this calculation. Accordingly, we can say that the circumference of the earth at the equator is 20,400 miles.⁶

[Note No. 860 at the back of *Historia Rerum (Raccolta I ii 369)*]

In the year of Our Lord 1485 the king of Portugal sent Master Joseph, his physician and astrologer, to Guinea to compute the altitude of the sun in all Guinea. He carried out his mission and announced to the said Most Serene King in my presence (*me presente*) that at another place on 11 March he found he was exactly 5° from the equator on an island called *de los Ydolos*, which is close to Sierra Leone. And this he determined with the greatest care. Afterwards the said Most Serene King sent him to other parts of Guinea. Later . . . he found that the said master Joseph was correct in his figures, and hence I believe the Castle of Mina is below the equator.⁷

1. The Cape is in latitude 34° 21' S, and Dias could not possibly have been below 37° S; another instance of the unreliability of celestial observations made in this era.

2. The preceding three paragraphs are paraphrases of D'Ailly's text.

3. Columbus must have called at Galway on his northern voyage in 1477. Presumably two flat-faced Finns, survivors of a shipwreck, came ashore there, and the Irish, unable to understand their language, decided they had drifted across from China.

4. The Castle of São Jorge da Mina, a fortified trading post, was founded by the Portuguese in 1482; but it is 5° 06' N of the equator. Columbus made one or more voyages thither as a merchant captain. The site, in Ghana, is called Elmina today.

5. This passage is from D'Ailly himself; the words in quotation marks are written by Columbus on the margin.


6. See George E. Nunn *The Geographical Conceptions of Columbus* (1924) 30 for the significance of this and other Columbian notes for the Admiral's underestimate of the length of the degree and the size of the earth.

7. This observation by Mestre Joseph, a Jewish physician of Lisbon, was actually made. By hanging an astrolabe to the limb of a tree ashore he found the latitude of Los Idolos Islands (off Konakry, Guinea) to be 5° N—a mere 4° 30' off. Columbus was much impressed by this and on his Third Voyage endeavored to prove that Trinidad was on the same latitude as the Los Idolos Islands.

e. *RECRUITING A CREW AT PALOS*

In the Pleitos de Colón (see above, document 3a) is a deposition by Fernando Valiente telling about the help that Columbus obtained from one Pedro Vasques de la Frontera. Pedro had been on a voyage undertaken in 1452 by Diogo de Teive, a Madeiran, whom the Infante D. Henrique sent on a voyage of discovery westward from Fayal. He discovered the westernmost Azores, Flores and Corvo, but turned back after many days without finding any other land (S. E. Morison *Portuguese Voyages* 21-6; *A.O.S.* I 182-3). It is also probable that this is the factual basis for the story that an anonymous pilot helped Columbus by giving him sailing directions to the islands that he discovered.

The text is Alice Gould's in *BRAH XCII* (1928) 183-5. Translation by S.E.M.

 That which he [Valiente] knows is that *Don Cristobal Colon*, before he went to negotiate with The Catholic Sovereigns about the discovery, came to the town of Palos to seek favor and help to go on the said voyage, and stayed in the monastery of La Rábida, and thence came many times to the town of Palos and spoke with one *Pero Vázquez de la Frontera*, who was a man very

wise in the art of the sea, and had gone one time to effect the said discovery with the Infante of Portugal; and this Pedro Vasques de la Frontera gave advice to the said Columbus and to Martín Alonso Pinzón, and encouraged the people, and told them publicly that they all should go on that voyage, that they would have [a chance] to find a very rich land; and this witness knows it because he saw the same Colum-



bus and heard him say that he had the same from the said Pedro Vasques de la Frontera, and he said it publicly in the plazas at that time, and this witness saw the said Columbus and the said Martín Alonso talking and negotiating both together and that this witness saw that the said Columbus departed, and he said that he was going to the court to negotiate with the Catholic Sovereigns

who gave him money and equipment to organize a fleet; and after the said Don Christopher Columbus had come from the court this witness saw Martín Alonso Pinzón and Vicente Yáñez his brother taking charge of buying and seeing to the things necessary to go on the voyage, and that thus the fleet was created, and departed.

The Capitulations of 17 and 30 April 1492

THIS IS THE GENERAL TITLE COMMONLY USED FOR THE LEGAL ACTS OR OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS RELATING TO COLUMBUS'S FIRST VOYAGE which were issued by the Sovereigns on 17 and 30 April 1492: (a) the Contract, or Articles of Agreement, between Columbus and the Sovereigns, (b) the *Título*, or grant of titles and offices to him and his heirs, (c) the Letter of Credence from the Sovereigns to oriental potentates, (d) Columbus's passport, Royal Decrees (e) ordering the town of Palos to supply Columbus with two caravels, (f) suspending criminal actions against his sailors, (g) giving Columbus the right to purchase provisions and equipment, and (h) forbidding authorities to levy taxes on them.

For discussion of these documents see Morison *A.O.S.* I 138-45; Cecil Jane Introduction to *Voyages of Columbus I* (Hakluyt Society ser. II LXV) pp. c-cvi; Vignaud *Histoire critique I*; Altolaguirre "Estudio Jurídico de las Capitulaciones y Privilegios" *BRAH XXXVIII* (1901) 279-93.

a. THE ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT, 17 APRIL 1492

This document is the main support to writers like Vignaud who deny that Columbus was seeking a route to the Indies, since it refers only to the discovery of new lands and a mainland. It has even been argued, on the basis of the past tense (*ha descubierto*, has discovered) in the preamble to the oldest known copy, that Columbus had already either made a secret voyage to America, or had a chart from a pilot who had been there and back; and so knew exactly what he was going to find in 1492! A little reflection, however, will suggest that Columbus needed no charter or contract to find a *route*; only for control over it after found, through admiralty jurisdiction, and viceregal powers over any new lands he might discover incidentally. The Articles of Agreement follow

the form of the *Cartas de Donação* (charters of donation) granted by Kings of Portugal to sundry navigators for discovering new islands west of the Azores, and with the terms of which Columbus was doubtless familiar; this differs from them only in that Columbus demanded and obtained the promise of more titles and privileges than the Portuguese. See Morison *Portuguese Voyages* 29-33. The letters patent granted to John Cabot by Henry VII in 1496 (J. A. Williamson *Voyages of the Cabots* 26), which follow the same form, make no mention of a route to the Indies, although there is positive evidence elsewhere that this was his main object. All difficulties about interpretation are cleared up when we recall that Columbus's idea of a colony was the trading-post, such as he had seen when a young man at Chios, and later at S. Jorge da Mina in Africa; he assumed (as Müntzer assumed in the letter quoted above) that oriental potentates would be only too willing, like those of West Africa, to grant Spain sovereignty over outlying islands in order to reap advantages from a direct trade with Europe. And that is exactly what happened when the Spaniards acquired Manila.

The original document in Spanish, signed by the Sovereigns, has disappeared, but there are four well authenticated early copies:


(1) The copy in the Registers of the Crown of Aragon, recorded in 1493, and printed inaccurately in Navarrete II 7-17.

(2) The copy transcribed in Columbus's "Book of Privileges," one copy of which is reproduced in facsimile, with Spanish text and English translation, in B. F. Stevens *Christopher Columbus His Own Book of Privileges* (1893) 42-5.

(3) The Genoa ms. copy of this "Book of Privileges," printed in *Raccolta Colombiana* II ii 21-4.

(4) The copy we use, a certified one made at Hispaniola, now in the Archives of the Indies. Dr. Milton Anastos established the Spanish text from a photograph of the original in the Library of Congress, and made this translation.

This copy begins with a long explanation by the notary, Rodrigo Peres of Isabela, to the effect that the Sovereigns had commanded him to make it, lest Columbus's original be lost by hazards of the sea. The first paragraph, although part of the document copied, was obviously added as a heading to the original after the First Voyage was over, and before the Second started.

 The things supplicated and which Your Highnesses give and grant to *Don Christoual de Colon* in some satisfaction for what he hath discovered in the Ocean Seas and for the voyage which with the help of God he is now about to make therein in the Service of Your Highnesses are the following:

First, that Your Highnesses as actual Sovereigns of the said Ocean Seas from

henceforth appoint the said Christopher Columbus their Admiral in all those Islands and Mainlands¹ which by his labor and industry shall be discovered or acquired in the said Ocean Seas during his life and, after his death, his heirs and successors from one to the other perpetually with all the Rights and Privileges pertaining to that Office and just as Don Alonso Enríques, our High Admiral of

Castile and his predecessors in the said office, held it in their jurisdictions.²

It so pleases Their Highnesses. JOHAN DE COLOMA.³

Further, that Your Highnesses appoint the said Don Christopher their Viceroy and Governor-General in all the said Islands and Mainlands which, as has been said, he may discover or acquire in the said Seas, and that for the Government of each and every one of them he may name three persons for each Office and that Your Highnesses may take and choose the one most suitable to your service, and thus the lands which Our Lord allows him to discover and acquire in the service of Your Highnesses will be better governed.

Item, that of all Merchandise whatsoever, whether Pearls, Precious Stones, Gold, Silver, Spiceries, and other Things and Merchandise of whatever kind, name, or description that may be, which may be bought, bartered, found, acquired, or obtained within the limits of the said Admiralty, Your Highnesses grant from henceforth to the said Don Christopher and decree that he take and keep for himself the tenth part of the whole after all expenses have been deducted, so that of all that remains free and clear he may have and take the tenth part for himself, and dispose of it as he pleases; the other nine parts remaining for Your Highnesses.

Further, that, if on account of the goods that he brings from the said Islands and Lands which, as has been said, may be acquired or discovered; or if [on account] of goods obtained in exchange for these from other merchants here, any suit arise in the place in which the said trade and transaction shall occur and take place; and if by the superiority of his office of Ad-

miral it appertains to him to take jurisdiction over the said suit, it pleases Your Highnesses that he or his representative and no other magistrate take jurisdiction of the said suit and thus it is provided from henceforth.

It so pleases Their Highnesses, since it pertains to the said Office of Admiral which the said Admiral Don Alonso Enríques and his predecessors held in their jurisdictions, and if it be just.

Item, that in all the Vessels which shall be equipped for the said traffic and business, every time and whenever and as often as they may be equipped, the said Don Christopher Columbus may, if he wish, pay and contribute the eighth part of the total expense of the equipment and that also he may take and also keep for himself of the profit the eighth part of all that may result from such equipment.

These are executed and despatched with the responses of Your Highnesses at the end of each section in the town of Santa Fe de la Vega de Granada,⁴ on the 17th day of April A.D. 1492.

I THE KING. I THE QUEEN.⁵

By order of the King and Queen,
JOHAN DE COLOMA.

The above copy has been transcribed from the said original capitulation in the Noble City of *Ysabela* of the Island of *Española* on the 16th day of the month of December, A.D. 1495.

Present as witnesses

[four names follow].

1. *Islas é Tierras-firmes*. Several historians have read into this phrase hidden meanings, such as the existence of a continent already known to Columbus. But the phrase is taken from the Portuguese *cartas de donação*, mentioned above, and is merely a customary phrase for legal completeness, like the English "goods and chattels," "lands, tenements and hereditaments," etc.

2. Columbus's Admiralty had nothing to do with the

Navy, nor did it give him authority to command a fleet; it meant admiralty jurisdiction in the regions discovered, over all crimes committed or disputes engendered at sea. Alonso Enríques, the Admiral of Castile, had jurisdiction over the seas between Spain and the Canary Islands. Columbus later discovered that Don Alonso took a 30 per cent cut on all trade over that route, and tried to get the same for trade to the New

World, with conspicuous lack of success.


3. This formula, signed by the same official, concludes each paragraph.

4. A temporary town built by the Sovereigns for their headquarters during the Siege of Granada.

5. Spanish and Portuguese sovereigns always signed thus; you were supposed to know which king or queen it was.

b. *THE TITULO, OR CONDITIONAL GRANT OF TITLES AND HONORS, 30 APRIL 1492*

[Facsimile and Spanish text in B. F. Stevens *Christopher Columbus His Book of Privileges* 53-7. Translation by Dr. Milton Anastos.]

 *Don Ferdnando and Doña Ysabel*, by Grace of God King and Queen of Castile, Leon, Aragon, Sicily, Granada, Toledo, Valencia, Galicia, Majorca, Seville, Sardinia, Cordova, Corsica, Murcia, Jaen, Algarve, Algeciras, Gibraltar, and the Canary Islands; Lords of Biscay and Molina; Count and Countess of Barcelona; Dukes of Athens and Patras; Counts of Rousillon and Sardinia; Marchesses of Oristano and Goziano;

Whereas you, *Christoual Colón*,¹ are setting forth by Our Command to discover and acquire with certain Vessels and people of Ours certain Islands and Mainland² in the Ocean Sea; and it is hoped that with the help of God some of the said Islands and Mainland in the said Ocean Sea will be discovered and acquired by your efforts and industry, and so it is just and reasonable that, since you are exposing yourself to the said danger in Our Service, you be rewarded for it. And, desiring to honor and favor you on account of the aforesaid, it is Our will and pleasure that you, the said Christopher Columbus, after you have discovered and acquired the said Islands and Mainland in the said Ocean Sea, or any of them, shall be Our

Admiral of the said Islands and Mainland which you thus shall have discovered and acquired and shall be Our Admiral and Viceroy and Governor therein, and shall be empowered thenceforward to call and entitle yourself *Don Christoual Colón*. And likewise your Sons and Successors in the said office and charge shall be empowered to entitle and call themselves Don, and Admiral, and Viceroy and Governor thereof. And, that you shall have the right to exercise and enjoy the said office of Admiralty together with the said office of Viceroy and Governor of the said Islands and Mainland that you may so discover and acquire, by yourself or by your lieutenants, and to hear and decide all suits and cases, civil and criminal, appertaining to the said office of Admiralty and Viceroy and Governor according as you shall find by law and as the Admirals of Our Kingdoms are accustomed to use and exercise it; and shall have power to punish and chastise delinquents and may exercise the said offices of Admiralty, Viceroy, and Governor, you and your said lieutenants in all that appertains to or concerns the said offices and each one of them, and that you shall have and levy the fees and salaries appertaining to, deriving from, and concerning the said offices and each one of them according as

Our High Admiral in the Admiralty of Our Kingdoms is accustomed to levy them.

And, by this our patent or by a copy thereof, signed by a public notary, we command Prince Don Juan, Our very dear and beloved son, and all Princes, Dukes, Prelates, Marquesses, Counts, Masters of [Knightly] Orders, Priors, Commanders, and also members of Our Council, and the justices of Our Supreme Court, Mayors, and other Magistrates whomsoever of Our household, court, and chancery, and also the Subcommanders, Governors of castles, strongholds, and unfortified places, and all the Councillors and Assistants, Prefects, Justices, Bailiffs, Judges, City Councillors, Knights, Squires, executive officials and liege men of all the cities, towns, and districts in Our Kingdoms and Dominions and of those which you may conquer and acquire; and also captains, masters, quartermasters, mates, and marine officials, and seamen, Our natural subjects present or future, and each one and any one soever, that after your discovery and acquisition of the said islands and mainland in the said sea, and after the administering of the oath and the performing of the rites prescribed in such cases by you or your deputy, they shall have and hold

you henceforth, during the whole of your life and thereafter your son and successor and successor after successor for ever and ever, as Our Admiral of the said Ocean Sea and as Viceroy and Governor of the said Islands and Mainland which you, the said Don Christopher Columbus shall discover and acquire and they shall use toward you and your deputies, in said offices of Admiralty and Viceroy and Governor, all honors, graces, favors, preëminencies, exemptions, immunities, and other things appertaining thereto, and also pay you and cause to be paid all dues and emoluments and other things appertaining to and deriving from the said offices. . . . [The rest of the document is a repetition.]

Given in Our City of Granada, on the 30th day of April A.D. 1492.

I THE KING. I THE QUEEN.

I, Johan de Coloma, Secretary to the King and Queen, our Lords, had this written by their command.

[The Royal Confirmations of the above, dated 28 May 1493 and 12 June 1497, follow.]

1. Here, as in the previous document, Columbus's Christian name is spelled with the customary *Chrismon* abbreviation for the first syllable, thus: Χρῶual; the first two letters being meant for a Greek chi and rho.

2. See note 1 to previous document. *Tierra-firme* here and henceforth is in the singular.

c. LETTER OF CREDENCE, 30 APRIL 1492

[Ms. in the Registry of the Crown of Aragon. Text from Alicia B. Gould y Quincy, "Nueva lista documentada de los tripulantes de Colón en 1492," *BRAH XC* (1927) 544. Henry Vignaud's text in his *Histoire Critique* II 582 attempts to correct the Latin. Translation by S.E.M.]

To the Most Serene Prince [blank space] Our very dear friend,¹ Ferdinand and Isabella, King and Queen of Castile,

Aragon, Leon, Sicily, etc., greetings and increase of good fortune. From the statements of certain of Our subjects and of others who have come to Us from Your Kingdoms and Domains, We have learned with joy of Your esteem and high regard for Us and Our nation and of Your great eagerness to be informed about things

with Us. Wherefore, we have resolved to send you Our Noble Captain, *Christopherus Colon*, bearer of these, from whom You may learn of Our good health and Our prosperity, and other matters which We ordered him to tell you on Our part. We therefore pray You to give good

1. Las Casas observed that Columbus carried several copies of this document, with blank spaces where he could insert the proper names and titles of oriental potentates whom he might encounter. The Spanish court assumed, erroneously, that the proper title of the Emperor of China was *El Gran Can* or *Cam*, but they had

faith to his reports as You would to Ourselves, which will be most grateful to Us; and on Our part We declare ourselves ready and eager to please You. From Our City of Granada, 30 April A.D. 1492.

I THE KING.

I THE QUEEN.

Done in triplicate.

Coloma, secretary.

no idea how to address the Emperor of Japan, or the monarchs of unknown islands. Note also the assumption, alluded to in Toscanelli's and Müntzer's letters above, that rulers of the Far East were eager for contacts with the West.

d. *THE PASSPORT (IN LATIN WITH TRANSLATION)*

Ms. and text as for (c). Discussion in Morison *A.O.S.* I, 141-2, 145.

Mittimus in presentiarum nobilem virum *Xpōforūm*¹ *Colon*, cum tribus caravelis armatis per maria oceana ad partes Indie pro aliquibus causis et negotiis.

1. See Note 1 to Título, above.

By these presents we send the nobleman Christopher Columbus with three equipped caravels over the ocean seas toward the regions of India for certain reasons and purposes.

e. *ROYAL DECREE REQUIRING THE PEOPLE OF PALOS TO PROVIDE COLUMBUS WITH CARAVELS PINTA AND NIÑA, 30 APRIL 1492*

Ms. in Veragua mss., Archives of the Indies. Spanish text in Navarrete II 16-19. Translation by S.E.M.

Don Fernando and Doña Isabel, by the grace of God King and Queen of Castile, León, Aragón [etc., etc.]. To you, Diego Rodríguez Prieto, and to all the other persons, your associates and other citizens of the Town of Palos, and to each one of you, Greetings and Grace.

You well know that, because of certain acts performed and committed by you to Our detriment, you were condemned by Our Council and obliged to provide Us for twelve months with two

caravels equipped at your own cost and expense, whenever and wherever you should be required by Us, under fixed penalties, as is provided in detail in the aforementioned decree, which has been pronounced against you.

And now, whereas We have commanded *Cristóbal Colon* to set out with a fleet of three *carabelas armadas*¹ as Our Captain of the same, toward certain regions of the Ocean Sea to perform certain things for Our service; and, [where-

as] We desire that he take with him the said two caravels with which you are thus required to serve Us, therefore, We command that within ten days of receiving this Our Letter, without further notice from Us, without deliberation or delay, and without further communication from Us on this matter, you have all ready and prepare two equipped caravels, as you are required by virtue of the said sentence, to depart with the said Christopher Columbus whither We have commanded him to go. You shall set out with him at any time after the limit designated, whenever you are so ordered and commanded by him in Our behalf. We have commanded him to give you advance pay for four months, for the people who are to sail in the said caravels, at the rate to be paid to the other people who are to be in the said three [*sic*] caravels, and in the other car-



avel which we have commanded him to take;² whatever is commonly and customarily paid on this coast to the people who go to sea in a fleet. Setting out under these conditions you shall follow the course which he will set you in Our behalf and shall do his bidding and proceed at his command and direction. And we forbid the said Christopher Columbus, or anyone else who sail in the said caravels, to go to the Mine,³ or engage in the trade thereof, which the Most Serene King of Portugal, Our brother, holds. For it is Our pleasure to abide by and enforce the terms which we agreed upon and covenanted with the said King of Portugal on this matter. Upon receipt of a certificate signed by the said Captain attesting to his satisfaction with your service with the two equipped caravels aforementioned, We shall regard you as quit of the said penalty imposed upon you by the members of Our Council.

Now for that time, and looking ahead until then, we consider and declare Ourselves well served by you with the said caravels for the period and in the manner prescribed by the members of Our Council; but we warn you that if you do not render performance as specified or if you interpose delay and procrastination, We shall order the execution of the penalties provided in the said sentence which was pronounced against you, upon you, and upon each one of you, and upon your property. None of you shall contravene these provisions in any way, under pain of forfeiting Our favor and 10,000 maravedis to our exchequer for each [infraction]. Under the same penalty we command any notary public who may be summoned for this purpose to furnish you with attested documents as

proof, that we may know of the fulfillment of our order.

Given in Our City of Granada on 30 April A.D. 1492.

I THE KING.

I THE QUEEN.

I, Joan de Coloma, Secretary of the King and Queen, our Lord and Lady, had this written by their command.

[At the end of this document was entered the following record of its reception by the men of Palos.]

On Wednesday, 23 May A.D. 1492, in the Church of St. George of this Town of Palos, in the presence of Fr. Juan Pérez and Christopher Columbus, and likewise in the presence of Alvaro Alonso Cosío and Diego Rodríguez Prieto, the Senior Alcaldes, and Francisco Negrete and Alonso Rodríguez Prieto and Alonso Gutiérrez, City Councillors, the said Christo-

pher Columbus gave and presented to the aforesaid this letter of Their Highnesses, the which was read by me, Francisco Fernández, Notary Public of this said Town of Palos, to the said Alcaldes and Councillors, and he asked them to comply with the letter, as commanded by Their Highnesses, and he asked them for their attestation. Thereupon, the said Alcaldes and Councillors declared that they were hearing the said letter with due respect, as a letter of Their Highnesses, and that they are ready to comply with it in every thing whatsoever, as Their Highnesses direct.

[Names of witnesses follow.]

1. *carabelas de armada* in another text. This means either square-rigged caravels, or equipped caravels.

2. The *Santa Maria*, which Columbus chartered himself. For discussion of these ships, see Morison *A.O.S.* ch. ix.

3. São Jorge da Mina.

f. *ROYAL DECREE ORDERING THE SUSPENSION OF JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS AGAINST CRIMINALS, PROVIDED THEY SHIP WITH COLUMBUS, 30 APRIL 1492*

[Same provenance as preceding document.]

Don Fernando and Doña Isabel, by the grace of God King and Queen of Castile, León, Aragón [etc., etc.]

To the members of Our Council, [and to all manner of lesser officials] Greetings and Grace. Know ye that since We have commanded Christopher Columbus to sail into the Ocean Sea to perform certain tasks in Our service, and to enlist the people that he needs for the three caravels that he is taking, it is said that it is necessary to grant safe-conduct to the persons who might join him, since under no other conditions would they be willing to sail with him on the said voy-

age, and on his part he has entreated Us to grant them this, as Our Grace; and we are willing so to do. So, by these presents We grant safe-conduct to all and whatsoever persons who sail on the said caravels with the said Christopher Columbus on the said voyage which he is making at our command to the region of the aforementioned Ocean Sea, as has been said, so that they may suffer no harm, damage, or any injury to their persons or property or to any of their interests by reason of any crime they may have committed or perpetrated prior to the date of this our decree and during the time of their journey thither, their sojourn in

that place and return to their homes, and two months thereafter.

Wherefore We command you all and every one of you in your districts and jurisdictions to take cognizance of no criminal action involving the persons who are to accompany the said Christopher Columbus in the aforementioned three caravels during the time above designated. For it is Our Grace and Will that all such matters be thus suspended. None of you shall contravene this order in any manner under pain of forfeiting Our Favor and 10,000 maravedis to Our Exchequer for every infraction. Moreover We command every notary public who may be summoned for this purpose that he give

a certificate thereof to whoever exhibits this decree to you, so that We may know how Our order is obeyed. Given in Our City of Granada, 30 April A.D. 1492.

I THE KING.

I THE QUEEN.

I, Joan de Coloma, Secretary of the King and Queen, our Lords, have caused this to be written by their command.¹

1. It was this document which gave rise to the myth that Columbus's crews were composed entirely of jailbirds. The truth, established by Alice Gould in her intensive search for details on Columbus's shipmates (Morison *A.O.S.* I 184, 190-2) (one vol. ed. 142) is that only four men—Bartolomé de Torres, Alonso Clavijo, Juan de Moguer, and Pedro Yzquierdo—took advantage of this decree. They were criminals only in a technical sense (having helped a pal to break jail), and they made good on the voyage.

g. ROYAL DECREE ORDERING COLUMBUS TO BE GIVEN EVERY FACILITY TO REPAIR HIS VESSELS AND PROCURE SUPPLIES AT REASONABLE PRICES, 30 APRIL 1492

[Same provenance as for Document (e).]

Don Fernando and Doña Isabel, to you, Councillors [and all manner of officials and citizens], in the cities, towns and villages on the sea-coast of Andalusia and in all Our Kingdoms and dominions [etc., etc.], Greeting and Grace.

Know ye that We have ordered Christopher Columbus with three equipped caravels to make for certain regions of the Ocean Sea, as Our Captain, for the sake of certain duties to be performed for Our service. Wherefore We command you all, and every one of you, . . . to give and provide whatever the said Christopher Columbus may need by way of wood, carpenters, or other master workmen, or tackle and provisions of bread, wine, meat, and fish, or gunpowder and munitions, or other things for the equip-

ment, renovation, repair, and provisioning of the said caravels with which he is to sail, or any other articles, wherever they may be available, upon payment of reasonable prices by Our said Captain for everything that he may need or take in this way. And in this affair you shall neither interpose, nor tolerate the interposition of, any embargo or delay, for thus Our service will be fulfilled. None of you shall offer any opposition, under pain of forfeiting Our Grace and 10,000 maravedis to Our Exchequer for every offense. Given in Our City of Granada on the 30th day of April A.D. 1492.

I THE KING.

I THE QUEEN.

I, Joan Coloma, Secretary of the King and Queen, our Lord and Lady, had this written at their command.



b. *ROYAL DECREE PROHIBITING TAXATION OF PROVISIONS AND OTHER THINGS PURCHASED FOR THIS VOYAGE, 30 APRIL 1492*

[Same provenance as Document (e).]

The King and Queen to Landlords, Receivers, Tax-gatherers, Tithe-collectors, Toll-keepers, Customs Officers, and Guards, and all other persons who have charge of collecting and receiving taxes of whatever kind in the very noble City of Seville and in all other cities, towns, and villages of Our kingdoms and dominions, and to every single one of you: Forasmuch as We have commanded Christopher Columbus with certain *fustas de*

armada to sail to certain regions of the Ocean Seas for matters included in Our service, We direct all and each of you to allow and permit all provisions, ship chandlery, arms, tackle, and other things, which may be necessary, to be taken and transported from the said cities, towns, and villages and the said *Cristóbal Colón* to arrange for purchases and delivery to the said vessels, without demanding or collecting any taxes therefor, or for any part thereof, provided the people take

oath that the things they are to transport are intended for Our said fleet and not for sale or for any other purposes. You shall not disobey, at the pain of forfeiting Our Grace and 10,000 maravedis to Our Exchequer.

PRELIMINARIES 1451-1492

Done in the Town of Santa Fe, on the 30th day of April 1492.

I THE KING.

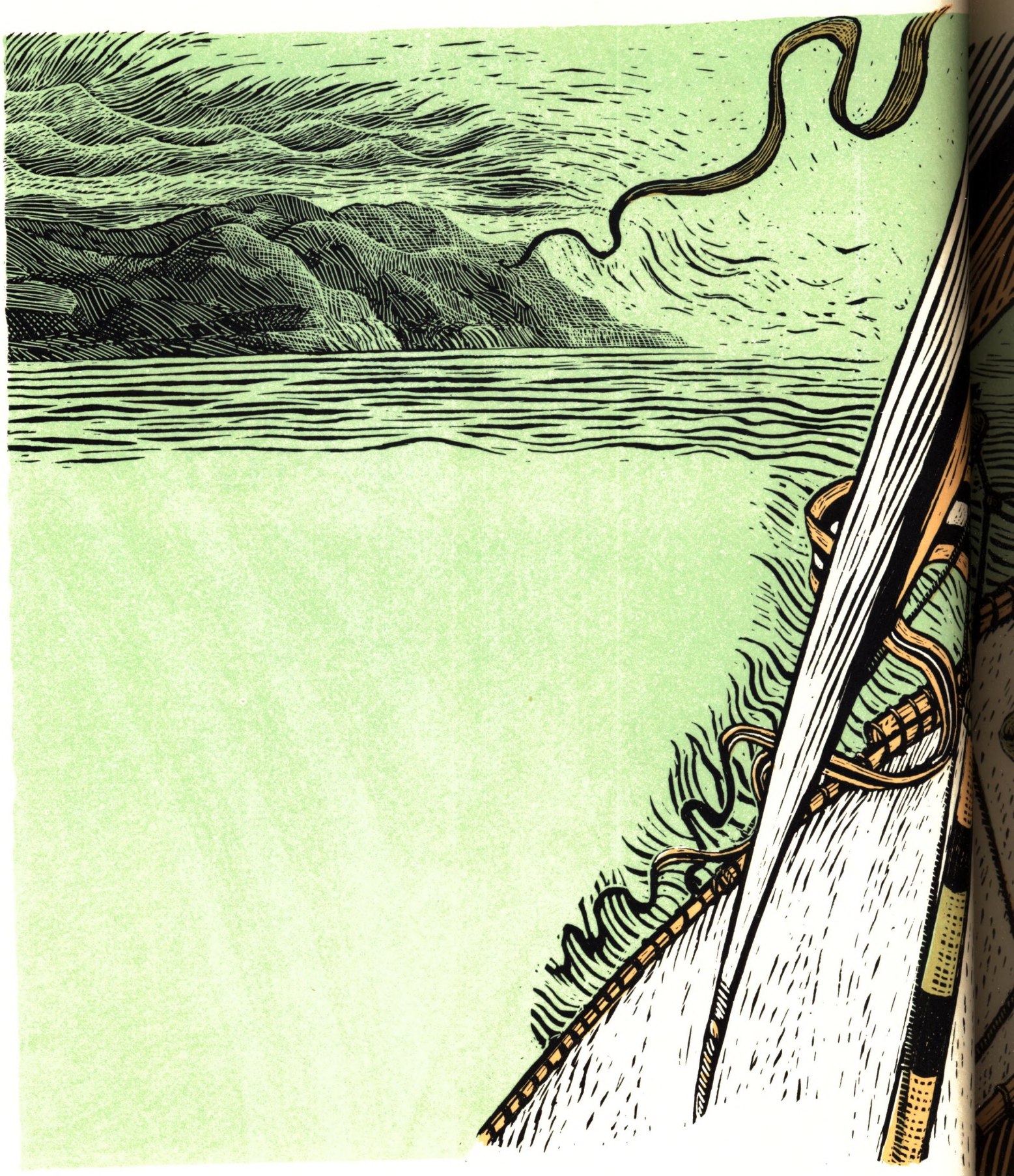
I THE QUEEN.

By command of the King and Queen,
Joan de Coloma.

PART III

The First Voyage of Discovery

1492-1493





The Journal of the First Voyage

COLUMBUS IS KNOWN BY SEVERAL CONTEMPORARY REFERENCES¹ TO HAVE KEPT A DAY-BY-DAY JOURNAL OF HIS FIRST VOYAGE, partly as a record of events, and partly to show to Ferdinand and Isabella as evidence of what he had discovered. It was used by his son Ferdinand in the life of his father that first appeared in an Italian translation at Venice in 1571; and by Bartolomé de Las Casas, in his *Historia de las Indias*, which remained in manuscript until 1875.² But no other of the early historians of the Indies seems to have had access to it.

Martín Fernández de Navarrete (1765–1844) retired from active service in the Spanish navy in 1789, and received a commission from D. Carlos IV to collect documents bearing upon the history of Spanish navigation and discovery. Shortly after 1790 he discovered in the library of the Duque del Infantado a manuscript of 76 folios, in the hand of Las Casas, which proved to be an Abstract of the Journal of Columbus's First Voyage. This is the nearest thing to an original Journal that we have. Its title in Spanish is *El Libro de la Primera Navegación*.³

Las Casas did not have the original holograph Journal of the Admiral in his hands when he made the Abstract, only a copy of it. This is proved by his complaints of the scribe, as well as from internal evidence of the document itself. The manuscript that Las Casas used was evidently copied from the original Journal by some not very literate or intelligent person. It contains many obvious copyist's errors of the type common in medieval manuscripts. Most frequent are the confusion of *leguas* (leagues) with *millas* (Roman miles) and of *oueste* (west) and its compounds with *leste* (east) and its compounds.

This Abstract made by Las Casas has been vigorously attacked by Henry Vignaud (whom various secondary writers of the "debunker" school have credulously followed), as a garbled document, systematically falsified.⁴ It was necessary for Vignaud to do this,

since the Las Casas Abstract, as it stands, is a sufficient refutation of Vignaud's theory that Columbus was seeking new lands, and not the "Indies," the Far East. Vignaud asserts that Las Casas, possibly with the collaboration of Ferdinand or of the Admiral himself, deliberately fixed up the Journal in order to support the thesis that Columbus had been looking for the Indies all along. Professor Carbia of the University of Buenos Aires reached conclusions similar to Vignaud's, and expressed them with more passion though less prolixity.⁵ His emphasis is on the *fraudes*, *superchería*, the *fantasía*, and the *adulteraciones* of Las Casas, whilst Vignaud's is on the incompetence of Columbus and his manifest intention to discover nothing more than Atlantic islands. Both works are highly charged with emotion, and both are excellent examples of ingenious dialectic. Neither author makes a thorough analysis of the Abstract Journal, but picks out isolated phrases and words to sustain his thesis.

On this subject I may express my firm conviction that the Las Casas Abstract was well and honestly made, and that the Vignaud and Carbia theses must find their support elsewhere, if anywhere. A number of passages that are given in the third person and indirect discourse in the Abstract are given in direct discourse as quotations in Las Casas's *Historia* and Ferdinand's *Historie*. These indicate that the Abstract was correctly made, and that in transposing from the first to the third person Las Casas omitted nothing essential. Far from editing the Journal in order to present Columbus as a peerless discoverer, Las Casas preserved countless passages that reflect on his hero's credulity, character, and skill as a navigator.⁶ The evidence of his seeking the Indies is found in many places, and is in the background of many days' entries. By sundry indirect references (as to the rhubarb on 30 December, and the Isle of Women on 13 and 15 January), it is clear that Columbus sailed with the *Book of Ser Marco Polo* in his head, if not in his hand; and that his daily and constant hope was to find some positive evidence that would prove his discoveries to be *Cipangu* or *Cataia*. Las Casas does interpolate his own remarks; but, as in the reference to Florida, which was not discovered until 1519, this is done honestly with no intent to deceive. I am satisfied that the Abstract is exactly what it purports to be, an honest précis in the third person, with long quotations in the first person, from a copy of the original Journal, and that nothing except some details on navigation has been left out.

Wherever Las Casas indicates that the Journal is a direct quotation from Columbus's original, as for 3 August, part of 2 October, and 13-24 October inclusive, I have placed quotation marks. Proper names in italics follow the Spanish text.

The original *Libro de la Primera Navegación* was something more than a simple seaman's log-book. Columbus's extensive remarks on the people seen and the places visited, and on fauna and flora and other natural features, together with pious reflections, suggestions of a future colonial policy, remarks on the shortcomings of some of his companions, and reminders of his own great services to the Crown, were obviously intended to impress the Sovereigns of Castile and Aragon and their high officials, and to stimulate them to provide a more worthy expedition than that of 1492. These remarks make the document one of primary importance for students of American discovery and geography, of the Indians, of American fauna and flora, of the first contact by Europeans with a land and peoples unknown to the ancients, of Columbus's own character and personal-

ity, and of the history of navigation. Strange it is that a document of such transcendent importance has never before been accurately translated, and that only one really scholarly and accurate text of the original has been printed.

The first printed text was Navarrete's, in his *Colección de los Viages y Descubrimientos* I (1825) 1-166. Better is the one in the official Italian *Raccolta di Documenti e Studi* (14 vols., Rome, 1892-94) Part I Vol. i, edited by Cesare de Lollis. This is the one that I used for my translation, checked by a photograph of the Las Casas ms. Several popular editions which have appeared since are analyzed, by Dr. Emiliano Jos in *El Libro del Primer Viaje, algunas ediciones recientes*, reprinted from *Revista de Indias* X (Oct.-Dec. 1950). Dr. Carlos Sanz of Madrid has produced, too late for me to use, a facsimile of the original, together with a line-by-line printing thereof with a critical introduction, as *Diario de Colón* (2 vols. of *Bibliotheca Americana Vetustissima*, Madrid, 1962). This is the best text.

The text was first translated into English by Samuel Kettell and published as *Personal Narration of the First Voyage of Columbus* at Boston in 1827. It was reprinted under other titles by Charles Boni (New York, 1924) and Jonathan Cape (New York, 1931). This very bad translation held the field until 1893, when the Hakluyt Society brought out an even worse one, by Sir Clements R. Markham. Inexplicably, this is the one used by Edward G. Bourne in his volume *The Northmen, Columbus and Cabot* (1906), in the *Original Narratives* series edited by J. Franklin Jameson, a useful compilation that is still in print. Next, came Cecil Jane's translation, in *The Voyages of Christopher Columbus* (London, Argonaut Press, 1930).⁷ This, though defective in many points, and careless on navigational matters, even omitting certain phrases, was so superior to the preceding that it was chosen for reprinting in 1961 as *The Journal of Christopher Columbus Translated by Cecil Jane* (New York, Clarkson N. Potter). In this lavishly illustrated edition the errata noted by me in 1939 have been corrected, but, so far as I can ascertain, no others.

Consequently, when preparing my *Admiral of the Ocean Sea* around 1939-41, I made a fresh translation of the *Raccolta* text, checked by a photograph of the Las Casas ms. In this I was generously assisted both by my dear friend and master the late Professor Jeremiah D. M. Ford, and by my then assistant, Dr. Milton Anastos. In this translation I have since made a few changes in the light of the excellent book by Admiral Julio F. Guillén Tato, director of the Marine Museum in Madrid, on nautical terms used by Columbus.⁸ The identification of places was done by myself, on the Harvard Columbus Expedition of 1939-40, and on my other sailing voyages to the Caribbean. For the identification of flora, fauna, and the like I have relied on the courtesy of several men of science. Professors Rollins and Clement of Harvard, the late Brother León of Colegio La Salle, Havana, and Brother Alain of St. Joseph's Boys' High School, West New York, N.J., helped me in botany; Dr. James G. Baker of the Lick Observatory and Lieutenant John W. McElroy U.S.N.R. in astronomy and navigation; the late Ludlow Griscom, curator of ornithology at the Harvard Museum of Zoology, identified the birds; Professor Talbot H. Waterman identified the fishes; and the late Professor Charles Brooks of the Harvard Blue Hill Meteorological Observatory made a valuable commen-

tary on the storms on the home passage. Their respective initials are attached to notes for which they provided the information ("H.U.B." means the Harvard botanists).

The first examination of the navigation of Columbus's First Voyage by a professional seaman and historian was by Lieutenant (now Rear Admiral) McElroy, navigator of the Harvard Columbus Expedition. His findings were printed, with chart, in *American Neptune* I (1941) 209-40; the chart is also in Morison *A.O.S.* I 292 (one-vol. ed. 222). Columbus's *milla* or mile was the Italian or Roman mile of 4,842 feet. There were four of these Italian miles to his *legua* or league, which therefore was equivalent to 3.18 of our modern nautical miles of 6,080 feet. But McElroy's plotting of the outward passage proved that Columbus overestimated his distances by 9 per cent. And in the homeward passage in *Niña*, without making allowance for leeway, which must have been considerable when he was sailing close-hauled in January, the over-estimate was 15 per cent. This would probably have been reduced to 9 or 10 per cent if we could have figured leeway, but there is no way that could be done save by building a caravel like *Niña* and sailing her in those waters at the same time of year.

Columbus also used a different league, not much greater than a nautical mile, for his runs along the coasts of Cuba and Hispaniola. This was the conclusion of Srs. Van der Gucht and Parajon, who traced his course along Cuba (see Journal for 28 October, note 1), and of Captain E. Roukema, in *American Neptune* XIX (1959) 81-4.

A seaman's "day's work," placed under a certain date in his journal, until very recently, always began at an hour other than midnight. Usually, in days of sail, it began at noon. But Columbus's "day" on the outward passage (excepting at departure and arrival), was calculated from sunrise on the day named to sunrise the following morning. Thus, the Journal for 16 September begins at sunrise that day, and continues until sunrise on the 17th. On the return passage, however, Columbus computed his "day" from sunset to sunset. Consequently, events from sunset on the day named to midnight are included in the next day's work. McElroy's calculations of the position at the end of each "day" will be found in *American Neptune* I 218-29.

My own efforts to make sense out of Columbus's very sketchy attempts at celestial navigation on this and later voyages are in *American Neptune* I 6-25 and 123-37, and in a separate pamphlet, *Columbus and Polaris*. These, revised and extended, appeared in Spanish translation by Captain Arturo Celery of the Argentine Navy, in *Anuario de la Sociedad de Historia Argentina* (Buenos Aires 1942) 11-52.

For keeping time at sea, Columbus had no clock or other mechanical timepiece, only the *ampolleta* or half-hour sand glass. He could correct this on every fair day, if he chose, by noting when the sun reached the zenith. Often, however, he expressed time by the canonical hours that he faithfully observed. The proper times for these were: Prime, 6 A.M.; Terce, 9 A.M.; Sext, 12 noon; Nones, 3 P.M.; Vespers, 6 P.M.; Compline, 9 P.M. Columbus never mentioned Sext and Nones; and, from the context, I would say that he observed Prime at dawn, Terce at 9 A.M., Vespers anywhere from 3 P.M. to 7 P.M., and Compline before retiring. But when he says "at the hour of Terce" he probably means 9 A.M., no matter what time he happened to read it that morning. At Vespers all hands were called, a brief service read, the *Salve Regina* sung, and the watch changed.



Readers will understand the Journal better if they will first read my chapters on "A Day at Sea" and "How Columbus Navigated" in *A.O.S.* I 220-63, or the one-volume edition, 167-96, or, briefly, in *Christopher Columbus, Mariner* 34-7.

The language of the Journal, with the exception of certain passages in which Columbus awkwardly tried to express his enthusiasm, is simple, rough, and very repetitive; for, as Las Casas remarked on the lyric passage about Baracoa in the Journal for 27 November, Castilian "was not the mother tongue of the Admiral." I have made no effort, as earlier translators have, to dress up the Admiral's language and make "literature" of it, or even to omit the constant repetition of *diz que*, "it is said," which Las Casas probably inserted to assure the reader that he was following the Journal closely. I have translated *andaría* as "must have gone," as I believe the conditional was used in that sense. The past, *anduvieron*, I translate "they proceeded" or "they went," or by the seamanlike "they made" when followed by a rate or distance.

Columbus's very simplicity and over-enthusiasm, reminding one of a boy whose language trips over itself when trying to express an urgent want, are part of the man. He had the feelings and instincts of a poet, but he was no poet; simply a very great sailor to whom the Spirit had spoken, and who had grasped ideas of inestimable benefit to mankind—at least to that part of mankind which did not belong to the nations whom Columbus supposed to be Indian.

As elsewhere in this book, proper names italicized reproduce the exact spelling of the original text. Passages in quotation marks are those signaled by Las Casas as being "the Admiral's own words."

Seafarers of Columbus's era did not think of a course or direction in terms of degrees measured from true north, as we do; or of compass points, as our forebears did for over 300 years; but in terms of winds, *los vientos*. Of these, eight principal ones were recognized. Each had a name in Italian: *Tramontana* for N,⁹ *Greco* for NE, *Levante* for E, *Sirocco* for SE, *Ostro* or *Auster* for S, *Libeccio* or *Africo* for SW, *Ponente* for W,

Maestro (*Mistral* in French) for NW. But, as most of these names had reference to Mediterranean geography, the Spaniards and Portuguese in ocean navigation adopted the modern system based on eight cardinal points, which we abbreviate N, NE, E, SE, S, SW, W and NW. The eight intermediate points, NNE, ENE, ESE, SSE, SSW, WSW, WNW, and NNW, they called *los medios vientos*, the half-winds; and what we call the "by" points of N by E, NE by N, etc., they called *las cuartas*, or *quartas*, the quarter-winds. Hence *cuarta* (or *quarta*) became their word for one full compass point, equivalent to $11\frac{1}{4}^\circ$. Thus, if Columbus wished to give the course that we call W by S, he said "*Oueste cuarta del Sudueste*," literally, "West, one point to the Southwest."¹⁰ "Quarters" in the sense of a point, like many other Spanish and Portuguese sailors' terms,

Columbus's Compass Points	English Compass Points	Abbreviations	Expressed in Degrees
Norte	North	N	0
Norte cuarta del Nordeste	North by East	N by E	11 $\frac{1}{4}$
Nornordeste	North Northeast	NNE	22 $\frac{1}{2}$
Nordeste cuarta del Norte	Northeast by North	NE by N	33 $\frac{3}{4}$
Nordeste	Northeast	NE	45
Nordeste cuarta del Leste	Northeast by East	NE by E	56 $\frac{1}{4}$
Lesnordeste	East Northeast	ENE	67 $\frac{1}{2}$
Leste cuarta del Nordeste	East by North	E by N	78 $\frac{3}{4}$
Leste or Levante	East	E	90
Leste cuarta del Sueste	East by South	E by S	101 $\frac{1}{4}$
Lestesueste or Lesueste	East Southeast	ESE	112 $\frac{1}{2}$
Sueste cuarta del Leste	Southeast by East	SE by E	123 $\frac{3}{4}$
Sueste	Southeast	SE	135
Sueste cuarta del Sur	Southeast by South	SE by S	146 $\frac{1}{4}$
Sursueste	South Southeast	SSE	157 $\frac{1}{2}$
Sur cuarta del Sueste	South by East	S by E	168 $\frac{3}{4}$
Sur	South	S	180
Sur cuarta del Sudueste	South by West	S by W	191 $\frac{1}{4}$
Sursudueste or Sursudoeste	South Southwest	SSW	202 $\frac{1}{2}$
Sudueste cuarta del Sur	Southwest by South	SW by S	213 $\frac{3}{4}$
Sudueste	Southwest	SW	225
Sudueste cuarta del Oeste	Southwest by West	SW by W	236 $\frac{1}{4}$
Ouesudueste or Oeste Sudueste	West Southwest	WSW	247 $\frac{1}{2}$
Oeste cuarta del Sudueste	West by South	W by S	258 $\frac{3}{4}$
Oeste	West	W	270
Oeste cuarta del Norueste	West by North	W by N	281 $\frac{1}{4}$
Ouestnorueste or Ouesnoroeste	West Northwest	WNW	292 $\frac{1}{2}$
Norueste cuarta del Oeste	Northwest by West	NW by W	303 $\frac{3}{4}$
Norueste	Northwest	NW	315
Norueste cuarta del Norte	Northwest by North	NW by N	326 $\frac{1}{4}$
Nornorueste	North Northwest	NNW	337 $\frac{1}{2}$
Norte cuarta del Norueste	North by West	N by W	348 $\frac{3}{4}$
Norte	North	N	360

went over into English. The First Witch in *Macbeth* threatens that the winds she controls will "blow all the quarters that they know i' the shipman's card"—the compass card. The *New English Dictionary* has a quotation dated 1604, "Their card has thirty-two quarters."

The table on the opposite page will, I hope, be of assistance.

1. Printed in De Lollis's introduction to *Raccolta I* i pp. v-vi.
2. *Historia de las Indias* (5 vols. Madrid 1875). The edition in three volumes by Don Gonzalo de Reparaz (Madrid 1927) is a mere reprint of the 1875 edition, with different pagination. Our references are to the A. M. Carlo & Lewis Hanke ed. (Mexico, D.F. & Buenos Aires 1951).
3. The manuscript is in the Biblioteca Nacional of Madrid. From it De Lollis made his text for the *Raccolta* (I i 1), and of it I obtained a photographic copy, which has been used in establishing the following text. There is no doubt that it is in Las Casas's handwriting. Alice Gould lists and describes several other copies of the Abstract in *BRAH LXXXVI* (1925), 492-94.
4. *Histoire critique de la grande entreprise de Christophe Colomb* (2 vols. Paris 1911).
5. Rómulo D. Carbia *La Nueva Historia del Descubrimiento de América* (Buenos Aires 1936). For a refutation of Carbia see Emiliano Jos "El Congreso Internacional de Americanistas de Sevilla y la historia del descubrimiento" *Tierra Firme* Año II (1936) Núm. 1 47-71.
6. The several false landfalls on the outward passage; the kidnapping of Indians, especially of women, upon which Las Casas reflects very severely; the bad calcu-

lations of latitude on 30 October, 2 and 21 November, and 13 December; and on 7 December either Las Casas or the Admiral himself corrects an extravagant estimate of 48 Roman miles between two points thus: *verdad es que las veynte fueron*, "truth is that 20 were made."

7. For further details, see Morison "Texts and Translations of the Journal of Columbus's First Voyage" *Hispanic American Historical Review* XIX (Aug. 1939) 235-61.
8. J. F. Guillén Tato *La parla marinera en el Diario del primer viaje de Cristóbal Colón* (Madrid, Instituto Histórico de Marina 1951). Illustrated with sketches by Capt. Guillén, who was the designer and constructor of the third *Santa Maria*, now permanently on shore at Barcelona.
9. The stylized fleur-de-lys at the north point on compass cards still in use is derived from the T for *Tramontana*.
10. A great deal of confusion has been created by historians supposing that *una cuarta* meant a quarter-point, less than 3°. The compass cards of Columbus's day were not big enough to have half-points and quarter-points marked, and the only instances when Columbus spoke of anything less than a full point were his observations of compass variation.

a. PROLOGUE



This is the First Voyage and the routes and course taken by the Admiral *Don Christóval Colón* when he discovered the Indies, set forth in

summary fashion, save for the Prologue,¹ which he made for the Sovereigns, which is reproduced in full and begins in this manner:

"In the Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ

"Because, most Christian and very Exalted, Excellent and mighty Princes, King and Queen of the Spains and of the Islands of the Sea, our Lord and Lady, in this present year 1492, after Your Highnesses had made an end to the war with the Moors who ruled in Europe, and had concluded the war in the very great City of

Granada, where in the present year, on the second day of the month of January, I saw the Royal Standards of Your Highnesses placed by force of arms on the towers of the Alhambra (which is the citadel of the said city),

"And I saw the Moorish King come forth to the gates of the city and kiss the

Royal Hands of Your Highnesses and of the Prince my Lord, and soon after in that same month, through the information that I had given to Your Highnesses concerning the lands of India, and of a Prince who is called *Gran Can*, which is to say in our vernacular 'King of Kings,' how many times he and his predecessors had sent to Rome to seek doctors in our Holy Faith to instruct him therein, and that never had the Holy Father provided them, and thus so many people were lost through lapsing into idolatries and receiving doctrines of perdition;

"And Your Highnesses, as Catholic Christians and Princes devoted to the Holy Christian Faith and the propagators thereof, and enemies of the sect of Mahomet and of all idolatries and heresies, resolved to send me, Christopher Columbus, to the said regions of India, to see the said princes and peoples and lands and the disposition of them and of all, and the manner in which may be undertaken their conversion to our Holy Faith, and ordained that I should not go by land (the usual way) to the Orient, but by the route of the Occident, by which no one

to this day knows for sure that anyone has gone;—

"And thus, after all the Jews had been exiled from your realms and dominions,² in the same month of January your Highnesses commanded me that with a sufficient fleet I should go to the said regions of India, and for this granted me many graces, and ennobled me so that henceforth I might call myself *Don* and be Grand Admiral of the Ocean Sea and Viceroy and Perpetual Governor of all the islands and mainland that I should discover and win, or that henceforth might be discovered and won in the Ocean Sea, and that my eldest son should succeed me, and thus from rank to rank for ever.

"And I departed from the city of Granada on the 12th day of the month of May of the same year 1492, on a Saturday, and came to the town of Palos, which is a seaport, where I fitted for sea three vessels³ well suited for such an enterprise, and I departed from the said harbor well furnished with very many provisions and many seamen, on the third day of the month of August of the said year, on a

1. Many writers, especially those of the Vignaud-Carbia school, maintain that Columbus either tacked on this Prologue at the end of his First Voyage, or that Las Casas wrote it himself. Alberto Magnaghi, for instance, in *Bollettino de la Reale Società Geografica Italiana*, 6th ser., V (1928), 570, claims that the reference to his being ennobled proves that it was an epilogue rather than a prologue, since the Capitulations promised Columbus nobility only when and if he discovered something. But both the Letter of Credence and the Passport, printed above, refer to Columbus as *nobilis* before his departure. Subsequent reference to "three ships well suited for such an undertaking" strongly suggests that he wrote this prologue shortly after his departure, for his Journal has many subsequent complaints of the *Santa Maria*. Moreover, in an epilogue Columbus would hardly have promised to "set down everything by latitude . . . and longitude," which he notoriously failed to do, and for which omis-

sion the Sovereigns shortly after his return called him to account.

2. The royal decree expelling Jews from Spain is dated 30 March 1492; see Morison *A.O.S.* I 193-4, and Jean Hippolyte Mariéjol *The Spain of Ferdinand & Isabella* (Keen trans. 1961) chap. II. It is strange that, despite this and other unfeeling references to Jews in Columbus's writings, it should still be seriously contended that he was a Jew himself.

3. I have consistently translated *navío* "vessel," as it is a generic term for all sailing craft; *nao*, "ship," as it means the standard full-rigged ship of that day, and *carabela*, "caravel," which means a special type of vessel. For discussion, see my *A.O.S.* I chap. ix, and J. F. Guillén Tato *op. cit.* The three *navíos* were the *nao Santa Maria*, the square-rigged caravel *Pinta*, and the lateen-rigged caravel *Niña*, riggered square at Las Palmas.

Friday, at half an hour before sunrise, and took the route for the Canary Islands of Your Highnesses, which are in the said Ocean, that I might thence take my course and sail until I should reach the Indies, and give the letters of Your Highnesses to those princes, and thus comply with what you had commanded.

“And for this I thought to write down upon this voyage in great detail from day to day all that I should do and see, and encounter, as hereinafter shall be seen. In addition, Lord Princes, to noting

down each night what that day had brought forth, and each day what was sailed by night, I intend to make a new chart of navigation, upon which I shall place the whole sea and lands of the Ocean Sea in their proper positions under their bearings, and, further, to compose a book, and set down everything as in a real picture, by latitude north of the equator and longitude west; and above all it is very important that I forget sleep and labor much at navigation, because it is necessary, and the which will be a great task.”

b. THE OUTWARD PASSAGE, 6 AUGUST–11 OCTOBER 1492

FRIDAY, 3 AUGUST

“We departed Friday the 3d day of August 1492 from the bar of *Saltés*¹ at 8 o'clock. We proceeded with strong variable winds until sunset toward the south 60 Roman miles, which are 15 leagues; afterwards to the SW and S by W, which was the course to the Canaries.”

1. The entrance to the Rios Tinto and Odiel, and to the ports of Palos and Huelva.

SATURDAY, 4 AUGUST

They proceeded to the SW by S.

SUNDAY, 5 AUGUST

They proceeded on their course, [and] between day and night made more than 40 leagues.



MONDAY, 6 AUGUST

The rudder of the caravel *Pinta*, in which *Martín Alonso Pinçón* sailed, jumped its gudgeons. According to what is believed or suspected, this was the trick of one *Gómez Rascón* and of *Christóval Quintero* who owned the caravel, because he disliked going on the voyage;¹ and the Admiral says that before departing they had found the same men holding back and "beefing,"² as they say, about the said things. The Admiral was much perturbed because he couldn't help the said caravel without endangering himself, and says that he got rid of some anxiety through knowing that *Martín Alonso Pinçón* was a man of real power, very ingenious.³ In the end they made, day and night, 29 leagues.

1. Quintero was sole owner of *Pinta*, notwithstanding the statement in the printed editions of *Las Casas Historia* lib. i chap. 35 (1951 ed. I 181), which Alice Gould (*BRAH* LXXXV 491) has shown to be a misprint.

2. *grisquetas*, a word unknown to the dictionaries. Evidently a slang expression of the day for grousing, kicking, grumbling.

3. This is the first and last compliment that *Martín Alonso* drew from the Admiral.

TUESDAY, 7 AUGUST

The rudder of the *Pinta* jumped out again, and they repaired it and went in search of the island *Lanzarote*, which is one of the Canary Islands. And made between day and night 25 leagues.

WEDNESDAY, 8 AUGUST

Among the pilots of the three caravels, opinions differed as to where they were; and the Admiral came nearer the truth, and determined to go to the Grand Canary to leave the caravel *Pinta* because she was badly handicapped by the rudder, and made water, and he determined to obtain another there if he could find one. They were unable to reach it that day.

THURSDAY, 9 AUGUST [TO WEDNESDAY, 5 SEPTEMBER]

Until Sunday night¹ the Admiral couldn't reach *Gomera*,² and *Martín Alonso* stayed on that coast of the Grand Canary by the Admiral's command, because he couldn't sail. Afterwards the Admiral went to Grand Canary (or to *Tenerife*)³ and repaired the *Pinta* very well with much work and care of the Admiral, *Martín Alonso* and the rest; and in the end they came to *Gomera*. They saw a great fire come out of the mountain on the island of *Tenerife*, which is extraordinarily high. Rigged the *Pinta*⁴ square, because she was lateen. Made *Gomera* Sunday 2 September with the *Pinta* repaired. The Admiral says that many respectable Spaniards who were in *Gomera* with *doña Ines Peraça*, mother of *Guillem Peraça*, who was afterwards the first Count of *Gomera*,⁵ who were inhabitants of the island of *Ferro*, swore that every year they saw land to the West of the Canaries, which is where the sun sets, and others of *Gomera*

affirmed the same on oath.⁶ The Admiral says that he recalls that being in Portugal in the year 1484, a man of the island of Madeira⁷ came to the King to ask him for a caravel to go to this land which he had seen; the which he swore that he saw every year, and always in the same way. And he also says that he recalls that people said the same thing in the Azores, and all these in the same direction and the same general aspect and of about the same size.

Having taken on water and wood and meat, and the other supplies that the men procured whom the Admiral had left in Gomera when he went to the Grand Canary to repair the caravel *Pinta*, he finally set sail from the said island of Gomera with his three caravels on Thursday 6 September.

1. 12 August. More details of the fleet's movements at the Canaries are given in Ferdinand's *Historie* chap. 18 (Benjamin Keen trans., 46-8).

2. Gomera, although a poorer and less fertile island than the Grand Canary, had been settled many years, and its seaport, San Sebastián, was better fitted to furnish provisions than Las Palmas, a frontier settlement on an island only half subdued.

3. This clause probably an interpolation by Las Casas. Tenerife was still in the natives' hands.

4. *Sic* in ms., but an evident slip for *Niña*, as Ferdinand shows. *Pinta* was already square-rigged; and from what is said of *Niña's* sails on the homeward passage, she is the one which was square-rigged in the Canaries.

5. As Peraza, a small boy in 1492, did not become Count of Gomera until much later, this remark is evidently an interpolation of Las Casas, who perhaps was responsible for misnaming his mother Ines. Her real name was Beatriz; and as Michele de Cuneo says in his Letter on the Second Voyage (see below), Columbus fell in love with her. See Morison *A.O.S.* I 214-18 (one-vol. ed. 163-5).

6. This was the fabled Island of St. Brendan, which the Canary Islanders did not give up searching for until the 18th century. See Morison *Portuguese Voyages* 29. On the subject of mythical islands, see *ibid.* 15-21.

7. Probably Fernão Dominguez do Arco, who in 1484 obtained from D. João II a grant of an island if he could find it. *Id.*, 43.

THURSDAY, 6 SEPTEMBER

He departed this day in the forenoon from the harbor of Gomera, and shaped a course to make his voyage; and the Admiral learned from a caravel which came from the island of Ferro that three caravels of Portugal were cruising about there to take him. This must have been from the envy that King felt over his having gone over to Castile. And he went all that day and night in a calm, and at morning found himself between Gomera and Tenerife.

FRIDAY, 7 SEPTEMBER

All Friday, and Saturday up to three hours of the night, he lay becalmed.¹

1. Supposing he left San Sebastián, Gomera, at 11 A.M. Thursday, and lay becalmed until 3 A.M. Saturday, the current between Gomera and Tenerife, which runs at a rate of 0.2 knots, would have set his ships 8 miles

southeasterly into the channel between the two islands. Our *Capitana* experienced a similar set in 1939. See McElroy's chart of this voyage in *American Neptune* I (1941) 215, and in Morison *A.O.S.* I 292.

SATURDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER

At three hours of the night,¹ Saturday, the NE wind began to blow and he shaped

his way and course to the W; took in so much sea forward that it stopped her way,² and made 9 leagues that day and night.

1. 3:00 A.M. See note to yesterday. His point of departure was approximately lat. 28° N, long. 17° W. He could steer due W from that point and clear Ferro, which he wished to avoid, by about 15 miles. This entry is one of the exceptions to the rule that the day's

journal begins at sunrise; this day's journal begins three hours before sunrise. During the 27 hours covered by it the fleet made only 26 miles.

2. Probably due to faulty storage of the latest provisions taken on board, and later remedied.

SUNDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER

He made that day 15 leagues, and decided to reckon less than he made, so that if the voyage were long the people would not be frightened and dismayed. In the night he made 120 Roman miles at 10 Roman miles per hour, which is 30 leagues. The seamen steered badly, letting her run up to W by N, and even to the middle division [WNW],¹ for which the Admiral scolded them many times.

1. As the course was already W (Journal for 8 September), *sobre la cuarta del norueste* means "to the W by N." Navarrete mistakenly printed *nordeste* for *norueste*. Obviously WNW is the *media partida* (mid-

dle division) meant here. A variation of a point or two scudding before a brisk tradewind with a heavy sea, ship taking water forward, would not be considered a serious offense today.

MONDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER

On that day and night he made 60 leagues at 10 Roman miles per hour, which are 2½ leagues [an hour]. But he reckoned only 48 leagues in order not to frighten the people if the voyage should be lengthy.

TUESDAY, 11 SEPTEMBER

That day they sailed on their course, which was W, and made 20 leagues or more; and saw a big piece of the mast of a ship of 120 tons, and they couldn't get it on board. That night they made about 20 leagues and reckoned no more than 16, for the said reason.

WEDNESDAY, 12 SEPTEMBER

That day following his course they made night and day 33 leagues, reckoning less for the said reason.

THURSDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER

That day and night, following his course which was W, they sailed 33 leagues and reckoned 3 or 4 less. The currents were contrary.¹ This day at the beginning of night the compass needles varied to the NW, and in the morning a little to the NE.²

1. It is not clear how Columbus thought he could gauge the direction of the currents, since he had no means of finding longitude; and the current is not

strong enough in that part of the ocean to cause a tide-rip or similar indication. In fact the currents were negligible on the whole of Columbus's outward pas-

sage, which fell between the Gulf Stream and the Equatorial Current.

2. This entry, the *locus classicus* of compass variation, has never been correctly paraphrased or translated except by Las Casas in his *Historia* lib. i, chap. 36 (1951 ed. I 183). The mistake was made by Navarrete, who repeated *noruestaban* instead of printing *nordesteaban*.

The phenomenon that Columbus observed was not compass variation, but the diurnal rotation of Polaris, which then had a polar radius of $3^{\circ} 27'$, instead of less than 1° as today. Cf. Journal for 17 September, note 3; Alberto Magnaghi, in *Boll. della reale soc. geog. italiana*, 6 ser. V 481-83; and Morison "Columbus and Polaris" *American Neptune* I (1941) 11.

FRIDAY, 14 SEPTEMBER

He sailed that day and night their course to the W, and made 20 leagues. He reckoned somewhat less. Here they of the caravel *Niña* said they had seen a tern¹ and a boatswain-bird,² and these birds never depart from land more than 25 leagues.³

1. *Garajao*, meaning any large Tern with a bright red bill. The occurrence of any one of them 600 miles west of the Canaries in the Sargasso Sea is incredible. Columbus probably saw either the small Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*), which does migrate over the open ocean, or a young red-billed Boatswain-bird (*Phaethon aethereus*), which does not possess the long tail feathers of the adult. This is about the size of one of the larger terns. L.G.

2. *Rabo de junco*, lit. "reed-tail," is the common Spanish name for Boatswain-bird, Tropic-bird, or Phaethon. There are two species, the red-billed (*P. aethereus*), which breeds north to the Cape Verdes and is the most likely species to be encountered in the eastern half of the Atlantic, and the white-tailed or yellow-billed (*P. lepturus catesbyi*), which breeds in the West Indies and Bermuda, and is the likely species in the western half of Columbus's route. (L.G.) A white-tailed Boatswain-bird with a yellow bill struck the mainsail of *Capitana* on the night of 10 September,

1939, when in lat. $38^{\circ} 45' N$, long. $45^{\circ} 02' W$, and was captured. It stayed on board all night, and took off from the weather bulwarks next morning. Another came on board in a similar manner in the early morning of 12 September, when we were in about long. $42^{\circ} W$.

3. Ludlow Griscom observed here, "Columbus's idea that these birds did not occur 'more than 25 leagues from land' is wrong. In the suggestions that follow, I consequently assume that the birds seen were in fact pelagic species, normally occurring in those latitudes at that season. Any other approach leads to the absurd assumption that the open Atlantic was covered with lost waifs to a degree unheard of in the next four and one-half centuries." The statement is significant in connection with that of 9 August, showing that Columbus expected to sight St. Brendan's or some other mythical island that had been reported by imaginative navigators.

SATURDAY, 15 SEPTEMBER

He sailed that day and night 27 leagues on his course to the W, and somewhat more. And early this night they saw fall from the sky a marvellous branch of fire¹ into the sea 4 or 5 leagues away from them.

1. A meteor with a branching tail; what the French call *gerbe de feu*.

SUNDAY, 16 SEPTEMBER

He sailed that day and night on his course to the W. They must have gone 39 leagues, but he reckoned only 36. There were some clouds that day; it drizzled. The Admiral says here that today and ever thereafter they had very mild breezes, that the savor of the mornings was a great delight, that the only thing wanting was to hear night-ingles. Says he, "the weather was like April in Andalusia." Here they began to see many bunches of very green weed,¹ which had recently (as it seemed) been torn from land;

whereby all judged that they were near some island, but not the mainland, according to the Admiral who says: "Because I make the mainland to be further on."²

1. *yerba muy verde*. The common gulfweed or *Sargassum*. The fleet was just entering the Sargasso Sea, an oval-shaped area of the Atlantic extending roughly from long. 32° W to the Bahamas, and from the Gulf Stream to lat. 18° N. In most parts of it the weed is seen in patches extending from a few yards to several miles long. The weed floats on the surface, and, despite popular superstition, offers no impediment to navigation. The best historical and scientific article on the subject is Ö. Winge "The Sargasso Sea, its boundaries and vegetation," *Report on the Danish Oceanographical Expeditions 1908-1910* (Copenhagen, 1923) no. 7 III 1-34; and there is a good popular article by F. S. Collins "The Sargasso Sea" in *Rhodora* XIX (1917) 77-84. A century ago Columbus's belief that gulfweed grew on rocks was still common (e.g. Alexander von Humboldt *Examen Critique* III 64-107). The *Challenger* expedition of 1873 disproved it. As early as

1834 F. J. F. Meyen brought forward the theory that gulfweed is a pelagic perennial, the descendant of algae torn loose in prehistoric times, but for many thousands of years propagating by partition, the plants constantly breaking up and growing at one end and dying at the other. Professor A. E. Parr of Yale University has collected conclusive evidence of this, the theory now generally held by scientists. The dying weed is darker in color than the new growth; hence Columbus's distinction between "fresh" and "old" weed. The character, amount, and distribution of the weed varies seasonally and from year to year. For Columbus's many references to gulfweed, consult the Index.

2. This passage appears to have been overlooked by writers like Vignaud who insist that Columbus was looking for nothing more than Atlantic islands. Obviously the mainland he seeks is that of "the Indies."

MONDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER

He sailed on his course, W, and they must have made day and night 50 leagues and more; he only put down 47. They had a favoring current. They saw much weed and very delicate, and it was weed from rocks; and the weed came from the westward. They concluded that they were near land. The pilots took the North¹ in order to mark it, and found that the compass needles varied to the NW a full point; and the mariners took fright and were troubled and did not say why. The Admiral knew it, and ordered that the North be marked again at dawn, and they found that the needles were true. The reason was that the star appeared to move and not the needles.² After dawn that Monday they saw much more weed³ that appeared like river weed, in which they found a live crab which the Admiral kept, and he says that these were sure signs of land; because they are not found 80 leagues from land. The sea water was less salty than since they left the Canaries,⁴ the breezes were growing more gentle. All were very cheerful, and the vessels that sail fastest went ahead to sight the land. They saw many tuna, and they of the *Niña* killed one. The Admiral here says that those signs of land were to the westward, "whence I hope in that high God in whose hands is every victory, that he will very soon give us land." In that morning he says he saw a white bird called the Boatswain-bird which is not accustomed to sleep on the sea.

1. *tomaron los pilotos el Norte*—took a bearing on the North Star. This was done by the pilot standing over the binnacle, facing the North Star, raising his hand (held at right angles to his body) to a point where it cut Polaris, and bringing it directly down on the compass card—a gesture known as "the pilot's blessing."

2. Cf. Journal for 13 September, note 2. The apparent westerly variation at evening was little more than half a point, but Columbus's statement "that the star

moved and not the needle" is correct.

3. William Beebe mentions in his *Arcturus Adventure* (1926) 17-18, having found great masses of gulfweed near the position of Columbus on 17 September, and small crabs in it. These are still the most abundant form of life in the weed, the largest being from one to four inches in breadth, *Partunus sayi* (*Rhodora* XIX 82).

4. This was imaginary.

TUESDAY, 18 SEPTEMBER

He sailed that day and night and they must have made more than 55 leagues, but put down only 48. All these days the sea stayed very smooth as in the river of Seville. This day Martín Alonso with the *Pinta*, which was a fast sailer, did not wait; for he told the Admiral that from his caravel he had seen a multitude of birds flying westward,¹ and that he hoped to sight land that night, and on this account he was going so [fast]. A great cloudbank appeared to the northward, which is a sign of being over the land.

1. Most likely small Petrels or *Phalaroepa*. They were not in the path of migratory birds. L.G.

WEDNESDAY, 19 SEPTEMBER

He sailed his course, and between day and night made [only] 25 leagues, because they were becalmed. He put down 22. This day at 10 o'clock there came to the ship a booby,¹ and at evening another, which are not used to go 20 leagues from land. A drizzle came without wind, which is a sure sign of land. The Admiral did not wish to delay matters by beating to windward to ascertain if there was land, moreover, he held for certain that in the northerly and southerly directions there were some islands, as in truth there were, and he was going through between them,² because his desire was to follow right along to the Indies. "And the weather is favorable; wherefore (please God) on the return passage all will be seen." These are his words. Here the pilots ascertained their position. He of the *Niña* found himself 440 leagues from the Canaries, he of the *Pinta* 420; he of the flagship just 400.³

1. *alcatraz*. Although most Spanish dictionaries give the meaning as "pelican," this was then the Portuguese and Spanish term for boobies and gannets. The familiar European Gannet (*Sula bassana*), well known to Columbus as to all seamen, would be casual in mid-ocean in tropical latitudes. There are three tropical species, however, which are pelagic in the latitudes of Columbus's voyage: *Sula leucogaster*, on the western side of the Atlantic only, *S. dactylatra*, the Blue-faced Booby, and *S. piscator*, the Red-footed Booby. The last two, when adult, are great white birds with black wing tips, and only an ornithologist could tell them from a gan-

net. The immature of all three species would be completely undistinguishable to anyone but an expert. The chances are that most if not all *alcatrazes* sighted on this voyage were boobies. L.G.

2. This group of islands through which the Admiral thought he was passing was probably Santanaxia, Antilia, and San Borondon, all mythical, which are shown on 15th-century maps.

3. The true distance from point of departure on 8 September was 398 leagues, so the flagship's pilot was right; 400 leagues was the sum of "phony" reckonings that Columbus gave to his pilot. J.W.McE.

THURSDAY, 20 SEPTEMBER

He sailed this day to the W by N and WNW because the winds were very variable with the calm that there was. They must have made about 7 or 8 leagues. Two boobies came to the ship and later another, which was a sign of being near land, and they saw much weed, although on the previous day they had seen none. They caught by hand a bird which was like a tern; it was a river and not a sea bird, the feet being like a gull's.¹ At dawn two or three small birds came to the ship singing, and disappeared before sunrise.² Later came a booby from the WNW, which went to the SE; this was a sign

that land lay to the WNW; because these birds sleep ashore and go to sea mornings in search of food, and don't fly 20 leagues.³

1. *gaviota*, which means any small gull or tern. The only possibility here would be the Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) which is pelagic. L.G.

2. The nearest land, the Azores, was about 900 miles to the northeastward, and it is impossible that Co-

lumbus could now have encountered singing land birds. L.G.

3. Columbus's ideas about boobies sleeping ashore are incorrect. L.G.

FRIDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER

That day was for the most part calm, with some wind later on. That day and night they must have made about 13 leagues, counting what was on the course and what was not. At dawn they saw so much weed that the sea seemed to be a solid mass of it; it came from the W. Saw a booby, the sea very smooth like a river, and the air the best in the world. Saw a whale, which is a sign that they were near land, for they always stay near.¹

1. The Admiral had much to learn about the habits of whales.

SATURDAY, 22 SEPTEMBER

He sailed to the WNW more or less, steering to one hand or the other. They must have made 30 leagues; they saw hardly any weed, but they did see some petrels and another bird. The Admiral says here, "This contrary wind was of much use to me, because my people were all worked up thinking that no winds blew in these waters for returning to Spain." For part of the day there was no weed, later very thick.

SUNDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER

He sailed to the NW and sometimes NW by N and sometimes on his course which was W, and must have made about 22 leagues. They saw a dove,¹ a booby, another small river bird,² and other white birds,³ there was much weed and they found crabs in it. And as the sea fell flat and calm the people grumbled, saying that since there was no heavy sea, it never would blow hard enough to return to Spain. But afterwards the sea made up considerably, and without wind, which astonished them, commenting on which the Admiral here says, "Thus very useful to me was the high sea [a sign] such as had not appeared save in the time of the Jews when they came up out of Egypt [and grumbled] against Moses who delivered them out of captivity."⁴

1. *tortola*, any small ground dove. On 7 September 1939, a mourning dove flew about our *Capitana* when in about lat. 38° 15' N, long. 55° W, and lit on the weather fore brace, and stayed aboard several hours. She was probably migrating from Newfoundland to the West Indies. Although Columbus was considerably to the E and S of that position, he may have sighted a mourning dove blown off its course, or he may have

mistaken one of the phalaropes or petrels for a dove.

2. Probably a tern or a petrel.

3. Probably *Phalaropea*, of which there are two white species, both encountered in numbers in mid-ocean at that season. L.G.

4. The words in brackets are supplied from Las Casas *Historia* (1951 ed. I 189), who gives this passage in its unabridged form.

MONDAY, 24 SEPTEMBER

He sailed on his course to the W day and night, and they must have made 14½ leagues, but he recorded 12. A booby came to the ship, and they saw many petrels.

TUESDAY, 25 SEPTEMBER

On this day there was considerable calm and later wind, and they proceeded on their W course until nightfall. The Admiral was speaking with Martín Alonso Pinzón, captain of the other caravel *Pinta*, about a chart which he had sent three days before to the caravel, on which it seems the Admiral had depicted certain islands on that sea, and Martín Alonso said that they were in that region. The Admiral replied that so it appeared to him; but since they had not fallen in with them, this must have been caused by the currents which set the ships all the while to the NE, and they had not gone so far as the pilots said. This being so, the Admiral asked him to send back the said chart. When it had been sent over on a line the Admiral began to plot their position on it with his pilot and mariners.¹ At sunset Martín Alonso came up on the poop of his ship, and with much joy shouted to the Admiral, claiming largesse² for sighting land. The Admiral says that when he heard this said positively, he went down on his knees to give thanks to Our Lord, and Martín Alonso said the *Gloria in excelsis Deo* with his people. The Admiral's people did the same, and those of the *Niña* all climbed the mast and into the rigging, and all declared it was land. The Admiral thought so too, and he reckoned that it was 25 leagues away. All kept declaring it to be land until nightfall. The Admiral gave orders to alter his course which had been W, and that all should steer to the SW to where the land had appeared. That day they must have made 4½ leagues to the W and in the night 17 leagues to the SW,³ which are 21, although the people were told 13 leagues, because he always pretended to the people that he had made small distance, that it might not appear long to them. Thus he wrote up two logs on this voyage: the shorter was the fictitious and the longer the true one. The sea was very smooth so that many seamen went in swimming. Saw many dolphins⁴ and other fish.

1. Las Casas thought that this chart was the one that Toscanelli sent to Columbus, as related in his letter, above. But since Columbus and his brother Bartholomew were both professional map-makers, it seems unlikely that he would have brought along a conjectural chart of the Atlantic sent him years before. Toscanelli's letter said that Antilia, or the Island of the Seven Cities, was on the way to Japan, and Ferdinand's *Historie* declares that Columbus intended to find "some island or land of great utility, whence he could the better pursue his principal design." Probably Antilia was the island that Pinzón and Columbus thought they saw. This was a mythical island in the Atlantic which, according to a Portuguese myth, was peopled in seven cities, by Christian refugees from a battle with the Moors in the 8th century. The name means simply "Island over against" Portugal. For discussion see

Morison *Portuguese Voyages* (consult Index) with pre-Columbian map showing it at p. 16; and Francis M. Rogers *Valentim Fernandes, Rodrigo de Santaella, and the Recognition of the Antilles as Opposite-India* reprinted from *Boletim* of the Sociedade de Geografia de Lisbon, July-Sept. 1957.

2. *albricias*, a word of Arabic origin, meaning a tip given to the bearer of good tidings.

3. *Sudeste*, an obvious misprint for *Sudoeste*, SW.

4. *dorados*, the common name of several species of *Coryphaena*, esp. *C. hippuris*, known as the gilt-head, dorado, or dolphin in the West Indies and Florida. Oviedo *Historia* (1535) I 429 (xiii chap. 6) refers to the sailors' harpooning it. The classical dolphin (*Delphinus delphis*) is the same as the common porpoise, and is called *tonina* by Columbus. T.H.W.

WEDNESDAY, 26 SEPTEMBER

He sailed on his course to the W until afternoon; thence they went to the SW, until he made out that what they had been saying was land was not, but sky. They went day and night 31 leagues and reckoned to the people 24. The sea was like a river, the air sweet and very soft.

THURSDAY, 27 SEPTEMBER

He sailed on his course to the W. He made day and night 24 leagues; reckoned to the people 20 leagues. Many dolphins came; they killed one and saw a boatswain-bird.

FRIDAY, 28 SEPTEMBER

He sailed on his course to the W. They made day and night with calms 14 leagues; he reckoned 13. They met little weed, caught two dolphins, and the other ships more.

SATURDAY, 29 SEPTEMBER

He sailed on his course to the W. They went 24 leagues; he reckoned 21 to the people. Because of calms which they had they made little progress between day and night. They saw a bird called the man o' war bird, which makes the boobies vomit what they have eaten, in order to eat it, and live on nothing else; it's a sea-bird, but does not alight on the sea or depart 20 leagues from land; there are many of them in the Cape Verde Islands.¹ Afterwards they saw two boobies; the air was very sweet and savory, so that he says that the only thing wanting was to hear the nightingale, and the sea smooth as a river. Later three boobies and a man o' war bird appeared thrice. They saw much weed.

1. *rabiforcado*, "forked-tail," is the Frigate-bird, or Man-o'-War-Bird, *Fregata magnificens*. Columbus's descriptions of its habits at the expense of the boobies is correct, and much to his credit; since naturalists for long after his day (and common seamen to this day) have declared that the frigate-bird ate the boobies'

excrement. Columbus's observation must have been made on his Guinea voyages, as this bird cannot rise from water, and has never been observed more than 200 miles from land. R. C. Murphy in *Natural History* XLIV (1939) 135, 143.

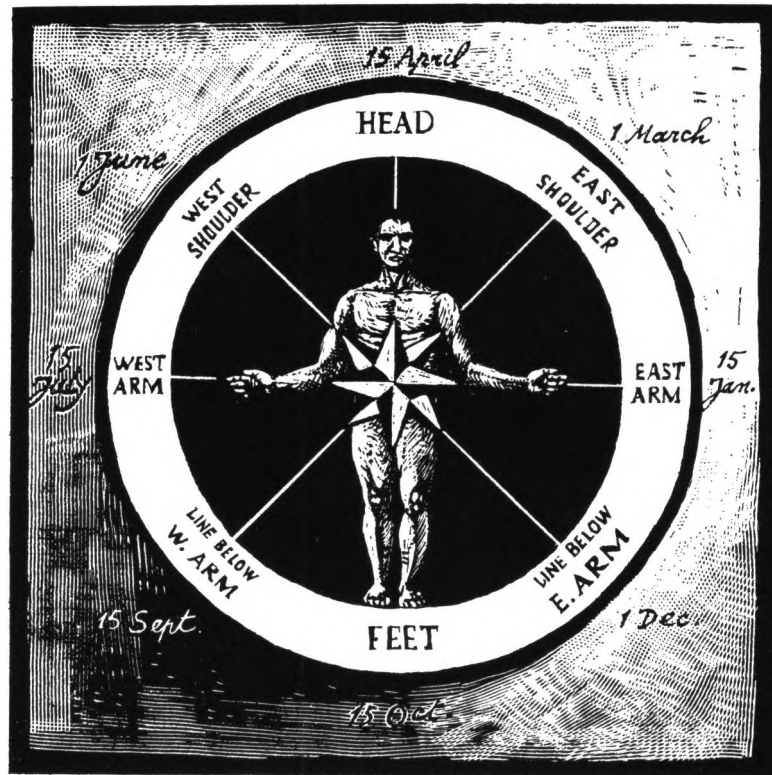
SUNDAY, 30 SEPTEMBER

He sailed his course to the W. Day and night he made 14 leagues, but because of calms reckoned 11. Four boatswain-birds came to the ship, which is a great sign of land; because so many birds of one kind together is a sign that they are not strays or lost. They saw four boobies twice, much weed. Note that the stars called the Guards, when night comes on are near the Arm on the W, and when dawn breaks are on the line below the Arm to the NE;¹ hence it appears that the whole night they proceed only three lines, which are 9 hours, and this every night.² So says the Admiral here. Also at nightfall the compass needles varied to the NW one point and at dawn they were right on the Star,

DIAGRAM FOR TELLING
TIME FROM POLARIS, 1492

Kochab, the Major "Guard," moves counter-clockwise one line every three hours; its midnight position relative to Polaris is shown for each date

Example, from Columbus's Journal for 30 September, 1492: Kochab, when first observed at 8:00 P.M., was "next to the Arm on the West," about half an hour below it. At midnight it was halfway between "Line Below W. Arm" and "Feet." At 5:00 A.M., when dawn began to break, it had passed "Line Below East Arm," and, with the other Guard, was pointing northeasterly, from the observer's viewpoint. Thus it had moved three "Lines" or nine hours between dusk and dawn.



whence it appears that the Star moves like the other stars, and the needles always point true.³

1. An evident mistake of the scribe for SE.
2. This passage, which baffled all previous translators, is explained by the Mediterranean seamen's method of telling time by the Little Bear or Little Dipper, which swings around Polaris at a regular rate. For a simple explanation, they used the figure of a man with outstretched arms to denote the four principal positions, with four other lines, between them. The Guards (β and γ *Ursae Minoris*) move 15° counter-clockwise every hour. Thus on 30 September 1492, the principal Guard (β *Ursae Minoris*, Kochab), was at West Arm at 7 P.M., at Feet at 1 A.M., at Line below E arm at 4, *nordeste* in the text being an obvious scribe's error for *sudeste*, SE. Thus it made only three "lines"—(below West arm, Feet, and Line below East arm)—during the night. Columbus, like all experienced seamen, was familiar with this system of telling time, and his remarks were intended to show that the night here was only 9 hours long. Shakespeare in *Othello* II i 17 says "quench the Guards of th'ever-fixed Pole," and H. H. Furness has a long and learned note on the

Guards in his *Variorum* ed. of *Othello*, 934. Capt. W. B. Whall in his *Shakespeare's Sea Terms Explained* (Bristol 1910) 83, says that these were still called "guards of the pole" by old-fashioned seamen, and that before the days of cheap clocks every ship carried a simple instrument called a Nocturnal for telling time at night by comparison of Kochab's position with that of Polaris. Similarly, it is possible by this means to compute latitude, as we shall see in due course. For further elucidation see Morison *Columbus and Polaris* 2-5 or *American Neptune* I 7-13, and A. Fontoura da Costa *A Marinbaria dos Descubrimentos* (1933) 42-43.

3. Cf. Journal for 13 September, note 2, and 17 September, note 2. If Columbus observed correctly, the fleet had reached the line of 5° westerly variation. At nightfall, when Polaris was over $3\frac{1}{2}^\circ$ E of the celestial pole, the needle pointed $8\frac{1}{2}^\circ$ W of the star; a small error, since a compass point is $11\frac{1}{4}^\circ$. At dawn, when Polaris was $3\frac{1}{2}^\circ$ W of the pole, the compass needle almost agreed with it.

MONDAY, 1 OCTOBER

He sailed his course to the W. They proceeded 25 leagues, he reckoned 20 for the people. Great rainfall. At dawn today the flagship's pilot figured out that they so far had

gone 578 leagues to the W from Ferro. The lesser reckoning that the Admiral showed to the people, was 584; but the true one that the Admiral found and kept back, was 707.¹

1. There is faulty arithmetic here, unless Las Casas has dropped some figures out of his Abstract Journal. Columbus's own figures add up to 633 leagues from Ferro, and 652 from 8 September. By Lieutenant McElroy's

computation they had sailed 575 leagues from Ferro, and the pilot was right. If Columbus means westing rather than distance sailed, they had made 33°40' or 1794 nautical miles.

TUESDAY, 2 OCTOBER

He sailed on his course to the W night and day 39 leagues, reckoned to the people about 30 leagues. Sea always smooth and fine. "To God many thanks be given," the Admiral said here. Weed came from E to W, contrary to what was usual. Many fishes appeared, they killed one; saw a white bird that appeared to be a gull.¹

1. *gabiota*. Almost certainly a tern, as no gull could be expected here. L.G.

WEDNESDAY, 3 OCTOBER

He sailed his usual course. They made 47 leagues; he reckoned to the people 40 leagues. Sighted much weed, some very old and other very fresh and bore something like fruit.¹ They saw no birds,² and the Admiral believed that they had left astern the islands which were depicted on his chart. The Admiral here says he did not care to delay beating to windward last week and on those days that he saw so many signs of land, although he had information of certain islands in this region, so as not to delay; because his object was to reach the Indies,³ and if he had delayed, he says, it would not have made sense.

1. The "fruit" is the translucent globules that serve as floats to the gulfweed. Strange that he did not observe them earlier.

2. I.e., none of the kinds that Columbus thought were land birds.

3. Another important proof of Columbus's objective.

THURSDAY, 4 OCTOBER

He sailed on his course to the W, they made between day and night 63 leagues; he told the people 46 leagues. More than 40 petrels¹ came to the ship at once and with them two boobies; a boy of the caravel hit one with a stone; a frigate-bird came to the ship and a white one like a gull.

1. *pardales*. At least two species of small petrels would be possible: Wilson's (*Oceanites oceanicus*) or Leach's (*Oceanodroma leucorhoa*). L.G.

FRIDAY, 5 OCTOBER

He sailed on his course; they must have made 11 Roman miles an hour; night and day they proceeded about 57 leagues, because the wind moderated during the night. He told his people 45; sea fair and calm. "To God," says he, "many thanks be given." The air very soft and temperate, no weed; birds, many petrels; many flying-fish¹ flew aboard the ship.

1. *peces golondrinos*. These were the flying gurnard, or flying fish, *Cephalacanthus volitans*.

SATURDAY, 6 OCTOBER

He sailed his course to the *vueste* or *guesta*, which is the same thing [W]; they made 40 leagues between day and night; he told the people 33 leagues. This night Martín Alonso said 'twould be wise to steer to the SW by W. The Admiral thought that Martín Alonso didn't mean this for the island of *Cipango*; and the Admiral saw that if they were going wrong, they would be unable to reach land so soon, and that it was better to go at once to the mainland, and later to the islands.¹

1. One of the most significant entries in the Journal, revealing Columbus's objectives. Cf. Las Casas *Historia* chap. 38 (1951 ed. I 194): "Esta noche dijo Martín Alonso que sería bien navegar a la cuarta del *guesta*, a la parte del Sudueste, por la isla de *Cipango*, que llevaba la carta que le mostró Cristóbal Colón; al cual no pareció que debían de mudar la derrota, porque, si la erraban, no pudieran tan presto tomar tierra, y

que por esto era más seguro descubrir la tierra firme"— "This night Martín Alonso said that it would be well to steer SW by W for the island of Japan, as said the chart that Cristóbal Colón showed him; from which it did not appear [to Columbus] that they ought to change course, because, if they deviated, they would be unable to make land promptly, and because it would be safer to discover the mainland."

SUNDAY, 7 OCTOBER

He sailed on his course to the W; they made 12 Roman miles an hour for two hours, then 8 Roman miles an hour; and he proceeded about 23 leagues up to an hour before sunset; he told the people 18. This day at sunrise¹ the caravel *Niña*, which went ahead on account of her speed (and they were all doing their best to sight land first, so as to get the reward promised by the Sovereigns to whosoever saw it first), raised a flag to her masthead and fired a lombard² as signal that they had sighted land; for so had the Admiral ordered. He had also ordered that at sunrise and sunset all the ships should join him, because those two times are most favorable for seeing farthest, since the haze is least.³ In the evening they saw no land where the caravel *Niña's* people thought they had seen it. Moreover a great multitude of birds passed over going from the N to the SW. It was thought, therefore, they were either going to sleep ashore, or fleeing the winter which in the lands whence they came might be supposed to be coming on⁴ (because the Admiral knew that most of the islands that the Portuguese held they had discovered by birds). For these reasons the Admiral decided to abandon his W course, and to turn the prow WSW, intending to proceed two days on that course. This course began an hour before sunset. In the whole night they went about 5 leagues and 23 in the daytime, altogether 28, night and day.

1. Sunrise came a little before 6 A.M.

2. *una lombarda*. A lombard in Columbus's day meant a small cannon mounted on a carriage. Those mounted on the bulwarks were called falconets. Columbus often uses "a lombard's shot" as a unit of distance, somewhere between 800 and 1000 yards.

3. True enough, although for another reason, because a low sun helps to show up distant land. The Admiral

evidently did not wish to take chances of someone else sighting land at the best times of day! When the three ships were together, her high mast gave the *Santa Maria* the edge.

4. Another good estimate, for the fleet was now in the direct line of flight for migratory birds from Bermuda to the West Indies, and the season was right for seeing them. L.G.

MONDAY, 8 OCTOBER

He sailed to the WSW, and they must have made, day and night, 11½ or 12 leagues. At times it appeared that they were making 15 Roman miles per hour during the night (if the log is to be trusted).¹ They found the sea like the river of Seville. "Thanks be to God," says the Admiral; "the air is soft as in April in Seville, and it is a pleasure to be in it, so fragrant it is." Very fresh weed appeared, many land birds (and they caught one) that were flying to the SW; terns,² ducks,³ and a booby.

1. A remark by Las Casas, who noted the inconsistency and doubted the speed, as do we. For a day's run of 12 leagues, his average speed was under 2 knots, which was consistent with the speed on the previous night.
2. *grajaos*, crows, which could not possibly be so far

out to sea. Evidently a mistake of the scribe for *grajaos*, terns.

3. *ánades*; but no duck could have been seen in that part of the ocean. L.G.

TUESDAY, 9 OCTOBER

He sailed to the SW; made 5 leagues. The wind changed, and he ran W by N and made 4 leagues; afterwards all told, 11 leagues by day and 20½ at night. He told the people 17 leagues. All night they heard birds passing.

WEDNESDAY, 10 OCTOBER

He sailed to the WSW; they proceeded at 10 Roman miles per hour, occasionally 12 and sometimes 7, and between day and night [made] 59 leagues.¹ He told the people 44 leagues, no more. Here the people could stand it no longer and complained of the long voyage; but the Admiral cheered them as best he could, holding out good hope of the advantages they would have. He added that it was useless to complain, he had come [to go] to the Indies, and so had to continue it until he found them, with the help of Our Lord.²

1. A very good day's run, best of the outward passage; 170.7 nautical miles, after applying the factor of 9 per cent reduction (see introduction).

2. Another significant remark, both for Columbus's objectives and for the strength of his character.

THURSDAY, 11 OCTOBER

He sailed to the WSW; they found much sea, more than there had been the whole voyage. They saw petrels and a green reed near the ship. They of caravel *Pinta* saw a cane and a stick, and took on board also a little stick fashioned, as it appeared, with iron, and a small piece of cane and another plant that grew ashore and a small board. The men of caravel *Niña* also saw other signs of land, and a little branch full of dog-roses.¹ With these signs everyone breathed more freely and grew cheerful. Up to sunset this day they proceeded 27 leagues.

After sunset he sailed on his original course to the W. They must have made about 12 Roman miles every hour, and up to two hours after midnight they must have gone 90 Roman miles, which are 22½ leagues. Caravel *Pinta*, being a better sailer and having the lead of the Admiral, found land, and gave the signals that the Admiral had ordered.²



A mariner called Rodrigo de Triana first sighted this land,³ although the Admiral at 10 P.M., standing on the sterncastle, saw a light. Nevertheless it was so uncertain a thing that he did not wish to declare that it was land, but called *Pero Guitiérrez*, the King's steward of the dais,⁴ and said that there seemed to be a light, and that he should look for it. He did so, and saw it. The Admiral told also Rodrigo Sánchez of Segovia, whom the King and Queen had sent in the fleet as comptroller, but he saw nothing because he was not in a position from which he could see it. After the Admiral had spoken, he saw [the light] once or twice, and it was like a little wax candle lifting and rising, which to few seemed to be a sign of land, but the Admiral was certain that he was near land. Hence, when they had said the *Salve* which all seamen are accustomed to say and sing in their own fashion, and being all assembled, the Admiral asked and urged them to keep a sharp watch on the forecastle, and to look well for the land, and that to him who first sang out that he saw land he would give at once a silk doublet, besides the other rewards that the Sovereigns had promised, which were a 10,000 maravedis annuity to whoever should first sight it.⁵

1. *escaramojos*. He meant *Rosa canina*, a kind of wild rose that grows abundantly in hedges in Europe; but what *Niña* picked up must have been a Bahamian flower.

2. It has been suggested that Las Casas in summarizing the Journal for this day, garbled the order of events; but it seems more likely that the atmosphere was so

tense and the important events so many that Columbus put them down on the 12th or 13th just as they came into his head.

3. Oviedo *Historia* lib. ii chap. v (1851 ed. I 24) says that "Rodrigo" was the first to see the land, and at daybreak; but from Columbus's statement at the beginning of 12 October he must have sighted it by

moonlight at 2 A.M. Three of the *pleitos* in the later lawsuits agree that Rodrigo was the first to sing out, and that he was in *Pinta*; one says that it was in the second watch (11 P.M. to 3 A.M.), and another that *Pinta* fired a gun. The correct name of this vigilant seaman was Juan Rodríguez Bermejo. Alice Gould in *BRAH LXXXVIII* 756-65 prints all the extant documents on the landfall.

4. The servant whose duty it was to prepare the dais where the royal high table was set. He is later (Journal for 2 January) referred to as an underling of the chief butler. In spite of his title, Pero was evidently not very important, for Miss Gould searched long but in vain for any record of his connection with the royal household.

5. The able seaman's wage on Columbus's fleet was 1,000 maravedis a month, and a maravedi was worth about 7/10 of a cent in gold. So this reward meant an annuity of about \$700 in gold. The Crown raised the money in a fashion typical of the day, by levying a special tax on the butcher shops of Seville. Oviedo (I 24),

who says that a native of Lepe was the first to sing out *lumbre! tierra!* only to be told that the Admiral had already seen it, declares that this man was so indignant at being done out of the reward that he went over to Africa and became a Muslim. As to what or where the light was, most sailors will agree with Lt. J. R. Murdock: "Any one who has had much experience in trying to see faint lights on a sea horizon with a moderate sea running, knows how easy it is to be deceived, especially when from any cause the senses are on the alert for a light one *wishes* to see." *Proceedings* U.S. Naval Institute X (1884) 485. Recently, the artist Mrs. Ruth Wolper, a resident of San Salvador, has argued convincingly that the light was a fire on the highest part of the island, such as the Indians then, and the Negroes now, built before their huts on October nights to discourage the sand fleas. She tried the experiment of having a bonfire kept lighted on the top of High Cay, off the southeastern point of San Salvador, on an October night, and was able to see it from a point 28 miles off shore; even to photograph it.

c. *THE DISCOVERY OF THE WEST INDIES, 12 OCTOBER 1492-
15 JANUARY 1493*

[FRIDAY, 12 OCTOBER]¹

At two hours after midnight appeared the land, at a distance of 2 leagues.² They handed³ all sails and set the *treo*, which is the mainsail without bonnets, and lay-to waiting for daylight Friday,⁴ when they arrived at an island of the Bahamas that was called in the Indians' tongue *Guanahani*.⁵ Presently they saw naked people, and the Admiral went ashore in his barge, and Martín Alonso Pinzón and Vicente Yáñez, his brother, who was captain of the *Niña*, followed. The Admiral broke out the royal standard, and the captains [displayed] two banners of the Green Cross, which the Admiral flew on all the vessels as a signal, with an F and a Y, one at one arm of the cross and the other on the other, and over each letter his or her crown.⁶

Once ashore they saw very green trees, many streams, and fruits of different kinds. The Admiral called to the two captains and to the others who jumped ashore and to Rodrigo de Escobedo, secretary of the whole fleet, and to Rodrigo Sánchez of Segovia, and said that they should bear faith and witness how he before them all was taking, as in fact he took, possession of the said island for the King and Queen, their Lord and Lady, making the declarations that are required, as is set forth at length in the testimonies which were there taken down in writing. Presently there gathered many people of the island. What follows are the formal words of the Admiral, in his Book of the First Navigation and Discovery of these Indies:⁷

"I," says he, "in order that they might develop a very friendly disposition towards us, because I knew that they were a people who could better be freed and converted to our Holy Faith by love than by force, gave to some of them red caps and to others glass

beads, which they hung on their necks, and many other things of slight value, in which they took much pleasure. They remained so much our [friends] that it was a marvel, later they came swimming to the ships' boats in which we were, and brought us parrots and cotton thread in skeins and darts and many other things, and we swopped them for other things that we gave them, such as little glass beads and hawks' bells.⁸ Finally they traded and gave everything they had, with good will; but it appeared to me that these people were very poor in everything. They all go quite naked as their mothers bore them; and also the women, although I didn't see more than one really young girl. All that I saw were young men, none of them more than 30 years old, very well built, of very handsome bodies and very fine faces; the hair coarse, almost like the hair of a horse's tail, and short, the hair they wear over their eyebrows, except for a hank behind that they wear long and never cut. Some of them paint themselves black (and they are of the color of the Canary Islanders, neither black nor white), and others paint themselves white, and some red, and others with what they find. And some paint their faces, others the body, some the eyes only, others only the nose. They bear no arms, nor know thereof; for I showed them swords and they grasped them by the blade and cut themselves through ignorance. They have no iron. Their darts are a kind of rod without iron, and some have at the end a fish's tooth and others, other things. They are generally fairly tall and good looking, well built. I saw some who had marks of wounds on their bodies, and made signs to them to ask what it was, and they showed me that people of other islands which are near came there and wished to capture them, and they defended themselves. And I believed and now believe that people do come here from the mainland to take them as slaves. They ought to be good servants and of good skill, for I see that they repeat very quickly whatever was said to them.⁹ I believe that they would easily be made Christians, because it seemed to me that they belonged to no religion. I, please Our Lord, will carry off six of them at my departure to Your Highnesses, that they may learn to speak. I saw no animal of any kind in this island, except parrots."¹⁰ All these are the words of the Admiral.

1. Heading inserted by S.E.M. The Journal for 11-12 October runs along without a break. Columbus probably did not find time to write it up until the 13th or 14th.

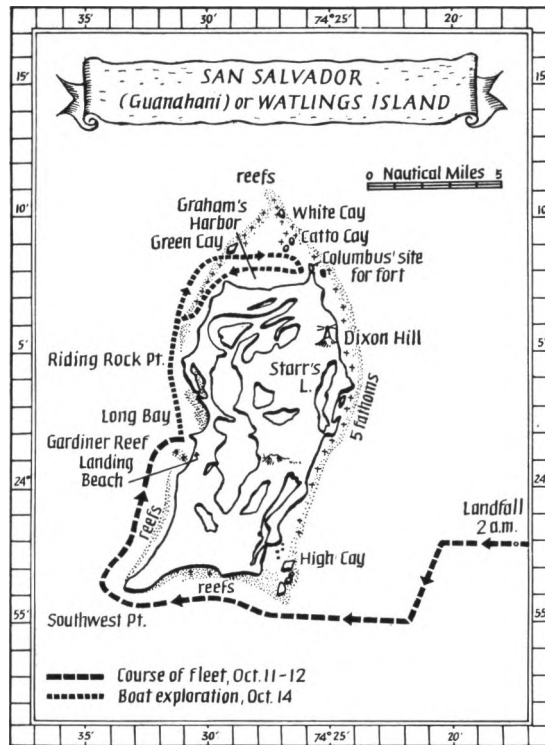
2. San Salvador has rock cliffs which show up conspicuously from the sea. On the night of 11-12 October 1492, the moon, in its third quarter, rose at 11 P.M. and at 2 A.M., when Rodrigo de Triana sighted land from *Pinta*, the moon would have been 39° above the horizon and bearing easterly so that the rock cliffs reflected it.

3. *amaynaron*, lowered; a Spanish word that went over into nautical English. "Amain!" was the common command for "Lower!" in the Elizabethan era, as Captain John Smith informs us in his *Seaman's Grammar* (1627).

4. Lat. 23° 47' N, long. 74° 29' W is the position of the landfall reached by Columbus's own dead reckoning, as plotted by Admiral McElroy. We agree, however, that the actual position at 2 A.M. 12 October was about 15 miles northeast of that, about lat. 24° N, long.

74° 19' W. So small an error in dead reckoning for so long a voyage is remarkable indeed. Cf. *American Neptune* I 216-17.

5. Since the Spaniards never used the Bahamas for anything but slave raids, and made no good charts of it, the identity of San Salvador-Guanahani remained an enigma, and was much discussed in the 19th century. Succinct histories of the controversy over the landfall will be found in Thacher I 587-603, and Lt.-Commander R. T. Gould, R.N. "The Landfall of Columbus: An Old Problem Re-stated" *Geographical Journal* LXIX (May, 1927), 403-29. Gustavus V. Fox *Methods and Results* (reprinted from *Report* of U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey for 1880, Appendix no. 18, Washington, 1882) which includes a chart showing the Bahamian routes assigned by various writers to the Columbus fleet. In my opinion the best account is by Lt. (later Rear Adm.) J. B. Murdock, U.S.N. "The Cruise of Columbus in the Bahamas, 1492" *Proceedings U.S. Naval Institute* X (1884) 449-86. Some weird explanations of the name *Guanahani*—one that it is Hebrew—



are noted by Alice Gould in *BRAH XC* (1927), 550-51. Almost everyone by 1900 accepted the identification of Guanahani with the island that the English called Watlings, which, accordingly, was officially renamed San Salvador by the British government. In 1947, however, Capt. P. Verhoog, a master mariner of the Holland America Line, challenged this concept in a pamphlet *Guanahani Again* (Amsterdam, C. de Boer Jr., 1947), arguing for Caicos, and published an article on the subject in *Proceedings U.S. Naval Institute*

LXXX (1954) 1100-11. Following him, E. A. and Marion C. Link, who cruised about in a motor boat, argued for Caicos in *A New Theory on Columbus's Voyage Through the Bahamas* (Smithsonian Inst., 1958). However, another Dutch master mariner, Capt. E. Roukema, has demolished both Verhoog's and the Links' arguments in "Columbus Landed on Watlings Island" *American Neptune* XIX (1959) 79-113, and the question may be considered settled.

6. The Admiral naturally did not anchor off the eastern and windward coast that he approached, because the strong trade wind on the 11th must have kicked up a heavy sea, his vessels might have been driven ashore, and landing in a small boat would have been impossible. From the fact that Columbus later explored the north end of the island by boat, it is clear that he sailed around the south end first. The island is entirely surrounded by reefs, except for a space of about two miles on the western side between Riding Rock and Gardiner's Reef, called Long Bay. Somewhere in this space took place the famous "Landing of Columbus" so often and inaccurately depicted. In the belief that the Admiral would have made in toward shore as soon as he got around Gardiner's Reef, a memorial cross has been erected on the sand beach just south of the shelving rocks known as Hall's Landing.

7. The formal title of the original Journal. Cf. 13 January, note 1.

8. *cascabeles*, hawk's bells—the tiny round bells used in falconry. Columbus shipped quantities of these, as well as glass beads, brass rings, red caps, and such trifles because they were in great demand among the Guinea Negroes. Cf. Camoens *Lusiads* v 29.

9. The thought of enslaving the Indians evidently crossed the Admiral's mind at his first encounter; it comes out more explicitly in his Journal for 21 December.

10. The only parrot in the Bahamas is *Amazona leucocephala*, the White-crowned Parrot, which no longer occurs on San Salvador. L.G.

SATURDAY, 13 OCTOBER

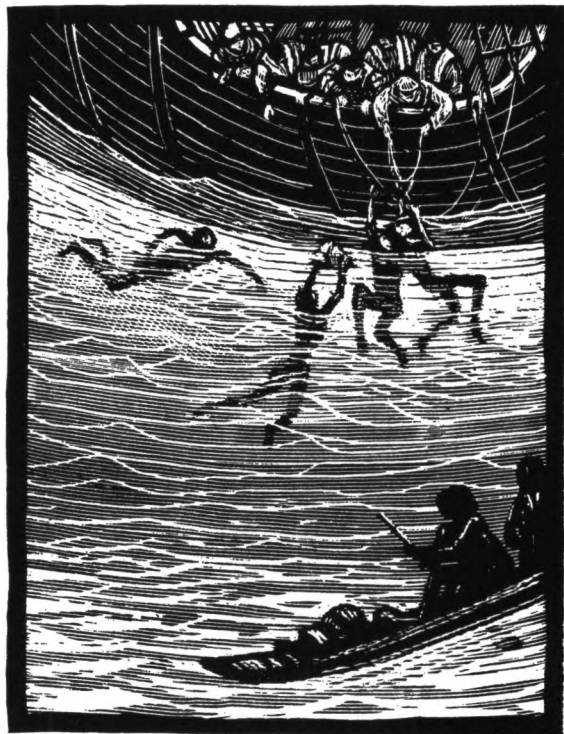
At the time of daybreak there came to the beach many of these men, all young men, as I have said, and all of good stature, very handsome people. Their hair is not kinky but straight and coarse like horsehair; the whole forehead and head is very broad, more so than [in] any other race that I have yet seen, and the eyes very handsome and not small. They themselves are not at all black, but of the color of the Canary Islanders; nor should anything else be expected, because this is on the same latitude as the island of Ferro in the Canaries.¹ The legs of all, without exception, are very straight and [they have] no paunch, but are very well proportioned. They came to the ship in dug-outs² which are fashioned like a long boat from the trunk of a tree, and all in one piece, and wonderfully made (considering the country), and so big that in some came 40 or 50 men, and others smaller, down to some in which but a single man came. They row with

a thing like a baker's peel³ and go wonderfully, and if they capsize all begin to swim and right it and bail it out with calabashes that they carry. They brought skeins of spun cotton, and parrots, and darts, and other trifles that would be tedious to describe, and give all for whatever is given to them. And I was attentive and worked hard to know if there was any gold, and saw that some of them wore a little piece hanging from a thing like a needle case which they have in the nose; and by signs I could understand that, going to the S, or doubling the island to the S, there was a king there who had great vessels of it and possessed a lot. I urged them to go there, and later saw that they were not inclined to the journey. I decided to wait until tomorrow afternoon and then depart to the SW, since, as many of them informed me, there should be land to the S, SW, and NW,⁴ and that they of the NW used to come to fight them many times; and so also to go to the SW to search for gold and precious stones. This island is very big⁵ and very level; and the trees very green, and many bodies of water, and a very big lake in the middle, but no mountain, and the whole of it so green that it is a pleasure to gaze upon, and this people are very docile, and from their longing to have some of our things, and thinking that they will get nothing unless they give something, and not having it, they take what they can, and soon swim off. But all that they have, they give for whatever is given to them, even bartering for pieces of broken crockery and glass. I even saw 16 skeins of cotton given for three *ceitis* of Portugal, which is [equivalent to] a *blanca* of Castile,⁶ and in them there was more than an *arroba*⁷ of spun cotton. This I should have forbidden and would not have allowed anyone to take anything, except that I had ordered it all taken for Your Highnesses if there was any there in abundance. It is grown in this island; but from the short time I couldn't say for sure; and also here is found the gold that they wear hanging from the nose. But, to lose no time, I intend to go and see if I can find the Island of *Çipango*.⁸ Now, as it was night, all went ashore in their dugouts.

1. There is only 3° 41' difference in their latitudes. Humboldt pointed out that Columbus, through the *Imago Mundi* of Pierre d'Ailly, was familiar with the theory of Aristotle, in *de Caelo*, that people and products on the same latitude were similar. (Cf. also the Toscanelli and Müntzer letters in Part I, above.) He expected to find kinky-haired Negroes such as he had become familiar with on his Guinea voyages, but reflected that, after all, he was in the same parallel with the Canary Islands, where the Guanches, of Berber origin, were "of the color of ripe olives, like . . . sunburnt countryfolk." (Ferdinand *Historie* chap. 23.)

2. *almadías*. Again, a souvenir of Africa; the Portuguese navigators used *almadía* for the native dugout of the West African coast; cf. Camoens *Lusiads* i 92, ii 88. Columbus did not catch the word *canoas* until he reached Cuba, and thenceforth used it instead of *almadía*.

3. The first European contact with a canoe paddle.



4. Correct, and to the SE also; Columbus had happened to hit the Bahamian island furthest out on the NW-SE rhumb.

5. It is about 16 nautical miles long and 7 wide. See chart in Morison *A.O.S.* I 299 (one-vol. ed. 227 and

Christopher Columbus, Mariner, 75).

6. Each worth a fraction of a cent.

7. About twenty-five pounds' weight.

8. Japan, which Marco Polo reported to be 1500 miles from the continent of Asia.

SUNDAY, 14 OCTOBER

"When day was breaking I ordered the ship's gig and the caravels' barges¹ to be readied, and I went along the coast of the island to the NNE, to see the other side, which was the eastern side, what there was there, and also to see the villages; and soon I saw two or three, and the people who all came to the beach, shouting and giving thanks to God. Some brought us water, others, other things to eat. Others, when they saw that I didn't care to go ashore, plunged into the sea swimming, and came out, and we understood that they asked us if we had come from the sky. And one old man got into the boat, and others shouted in loud voices to all, men and women, 'Come and see the men who come from the sky, bring them food and drink.' Many came and many women, each with something, giving thanks to God, throwing themselves on the ground, they raised their hands to the sky, and then shouted to us to come ashore; but I was afraid to, from seeing a great reef of rocks which surrounded the whole of this island, and inside it was deep water and a harbor to hold all the ships in Christendom, and the entrance of it very narrow.² It's true that inside this reef there are some shoal spots, but the sea moves no more than within a well.³ In order to see all this I kept going this morning, that I might give an account of all to Your Highnesses, and also [to see] where there might be a fortress; and I saw a piece of land which is formed like an island,⁴ although it isn't one (and on it there are six houses), the which could in two days be made an island, although I don't see that it would be necessary, because these people are very unskilled in arms, as Your Highnesses will see from the seven that I caused to be taken to carry them off to learn our language and return; unless Your Highnesses should order them all to be taken to Castile or held captive in the same island, for with 50 men they could all be subjected and made to do all that one wished. And, moreover, next to said islet are groves of trees the most beautiful that I have seen, and as green and leafy as those of Castile in the months of April and May; and much water.⁵ I inspected all that harbor, and then returned to the ship and made sail, and saw so many islands that I could not decide where to go first; and those men whom I had captured made signs to me that they were so many that they could not be counted, and called by their names more than a hundred.⁶ Finally I looked for the biggest, and decided to go there, and so I did, and it is probably distant from this island of San Salvador 5 leagues,⁷ and some of them more, some less. All are very level, without mountains, and very fertile, and all inhabited, and they make war on one another, although these are very simple people and very fine figures of men."

1. *batel* and *barcas*. The former means the second boat on a vessel, corresponding to our gig, and the latter the No. 1 boat, corresponding to our barge, or launch; but as "launch" has a power connotation, I have used

"barge" consistently, as that is still the word in the Navy for an admiral's boat. There are occasions, however (e.g. 17 October) when Columbus uses *barcas* for all the vessels' boats.

2. Graham's Harbor, about 3 miles long and 3 wide, tapers to a point as the barrier reefs come together in an inverted V. There are several entrances with 6 to 7 feet of water, and a greatest depth of 3 fathoms inside.

3. This is true; the sea is surprisingly calm within these reef harbors of the Caribbean.

4. Rocky Point, which makes off from the north coast of San Salvador into Graham's Harbor. The sea has since broken through the narrow neck which Columbus reported could be cut to make it an island; the channel can be waded at high tide. Rocky Point was later fortified, probably by the English; Dr. Cronau found an iron cannon there in 1891 (*Discovery of America and the Landfall of Columbus* 1921, 24-26, with sketch). Capt. E. Roukema has an excellent discussion of the Bahama route in *American Neptune* XIX (1959) 94-113.

5. San Salvador, and the Bahamas in general, were much more heavily wooded in 1492 than they are today, because after clearings were made in the 18th cen-

ture to grow cotton, hurricanes felled the remaining trees. In a valley not far from Graham's Harbor there is today a heavy growth of primeval forest, but most of the island is covered with low scrub.

6. This statement misled earlier historians into the belief that Columbus's landfall was in an archipelago like the Turks Islands. It is true that you can sail for miles W of San Salvador without seeing more than one island, but Cronau pointed out (*op. cit.* 29-31) that the numerous low hills of these long Bahamian cays look like strings of separate islands when the shore line is below the horizon. Ten miles SW of San Salvador, according to my own observation, Rum Cay looks like six separate islands.

7. Rum Cay, distant about 25 nautical miles from San Salvador. Glenn Stewart "San Salvador Island to Cuba" *Geographical Review* XXI (1931) 126 and Henry Howard "Southward Ho! in the *Alice*" *National Geographic Magazine* LXXIII (1938) 265-304, throw light on Columbus's route through the Bahamas.

MONDAY, 15 OCTOBER

"I had lain-to this night for fear of approaching the shore and anchoring before morning, not knowing whether the coast was clear of reefs, and at dawn made sail. And as the island was more than 5 leagues distant and nearer 7, and the current detained me, it was about midday when I arrived at the said island, and I found that the coast which lies over against the island of San Salvador ran N and S and for 5 leagues; and that the other which I followed ran E and W for more than 10 leagues.¹ And when from this island I saw another bigger one to the W, I made sail² to navigate all that day until nightfall, because otherwise I would not have been able to reach the western cape, to which I gave the name, The Island of *Sancta María de la Concepción*,³ and just about sunset I anchored near the said cape to find out if there was any gold there, because those whom I had captured on the Island of San Salvador told me that there they wore very big bracelets of gold on their legs and arms. I well believed that all they said was humbug in order to escape. However, it was my wish to bypass no island without taking possession, although having taken one you can claim all; and I anchored and remained until today Tuesday,⁴ when at break of day I went ashore in the armed boats, and landed, and the people who were numerous and also naked and of the same condition as they of the other island of San Salvador, let us go over the island and gave us what we asked. And because the wind veered to the SE quarter I did not care to stay and departed for the ship, and a big dugout came aboard⁵ the caravel *Niña*, and one of the men of the island of San Salvador, who was aboard, leaped into the sea and went away in it, and the night previously, about midnight, the other [had fled] and went after the dugout, which then escaped because there never was a boat that could catch up with her, even though we had great advantage over her.⁶ However they reached the land and abandoned the dugout and some of my company went ashore after them, and they all fled like chickens, and the dugout that they had abandoned we brought aboard the caravel *Niña*, to which already came from another

cape a little dugout with a man who came to trade a skein of cotton; and some sailors jumped into the sea because he wouldn't come aboard the caravel, and seized him. And I who was on the poop of the ship seeing everything, sent for him and gave him a red cap and some little beads of green glass which I placed on his arm, and two hawk's bells which I placed on his ears, and I ordered him to be given back his dugout, which they also had on the ship's boat, and sent him ashore. And I made sail to go to the other big island which I saw to the westward,⁷ and I ordered the other dugout which the caravel *Niña* was towing astern to be cast off, and later saw it ashore at the time of the arrival of the other man to whom I had given the aforesaid things; and I had not wished to take the skein of cotton, although he wished to give it to me, and all the others surrounded him and held it a great marvel, and well it appeared to him that we were good people, and that the other man who had fled had done us some harm, "[and that]" for that account we were carrying him along. For this reason I used him thus, and gave him the aforesaid articles, in order that they might hold us in such esteem that on another occasion when your Highnesses send men back here again, they may not make bad company, and all that I gave him was not worth four maravedis.

"And so I departed, it would be at 10 o'clock⁸ with the wind SE veering to the S, to go to the other island, which is very big,⁹ and where all those men that I am taking from San Salvador make signs that there is a lot of gold and that they wear it in the form of bracelets on the arms, legs, ears, nose and neck. And there was from this island of Santa Maria to that other [Long Island] 9 leagues on a parallel, and all this part of the island runs NW-SE, and it appears that there is certainly on this coast more than 28 leagues on this side,¹⁰ very level without any mountains like those of San Salvador and Santa Maria,¹¹ and all beach without boulders, except that all have some rocks under water near the shore, for which you must keep your eyes peeled when you wish to anchor, and not anchor very near the shore, although the water is always very clear and you see the bottom. And among all these islands at a distance of two lombard shots off-shore there is so much depth that you can't find bottom.¹²

"These islands are very green and fertile and the air very balmy, and there may be many things that I don't know, for I do not wish to delay but to discover and go to many islands to find gold. And since these people make signs that it is worn on arms and legs, and it is gold all right because they point to some pieces that I have, I cannot fail (with Our Lord's help) to find out where it comes from.

"Standing in mid-channel between the two islands, i.e., this Santa Maria and that big one, to which I give the name Fernandina,¹³ I came upon a man alone in a dugout on his way from Santa Maria to Fernandina, and he carried a bit of his bread that would be about the size of your fist, and a calabash of water, and a lump of bright red earth powdered and then kneaded, and some dry leaves which must be something much valued among them, since they offered me some at San Salvador as a gift.¹⁴ And he carried a basket of his own kind, in which he had a string of glass beads and two *blancas*, by which I knew that he had come from the island of San Salvador, had passed over to Santa Maria and was going on to Fernandina. And he came alongside the ship. I had him aboard (which he asked for) and had his dugout hoisted on deck, and had all he brought

guarded, and ordered him to be given bread and honey and drink; and I shall give him passage to Fernandina and give him back all his stuff, that he may give a good account of us when (please Our Lord) Your Highnesses send hither and that those who come may be welcome and be given all they need."

1. This orientation of Rum Cay is correct, but it is only 10 miles long by 5 wide. This is the first instance of Columbus using a different league, equivalent to between 1 and 1.5 nautical miles, for distances along-shore.

2. I suppose that Columbus had lowered sail when he reached the nearest point of Rum Cay, and had to make sail again to reach the western end. But he could not have sighted Long Island until he reached the western end of Rum Cay.

3. Rum Cay. His anchorage was E of Sandy Point at the SW end, as is proved by the later remark that the SE wind made it untenable.

4. 16 October.

5. *abordo*, a word that went directly into nautical English as "aboard," meaning, coming alongside, or "board to board."

6. Lacuna and corrupt text here; Las Casas supplies the missing words *se habia buido*.

7. Long Island, which Columbus later named Fernandina. It is said to be visible from the W end of Rum Cay, but I could not see it from a point about 3 miles S of the western point.

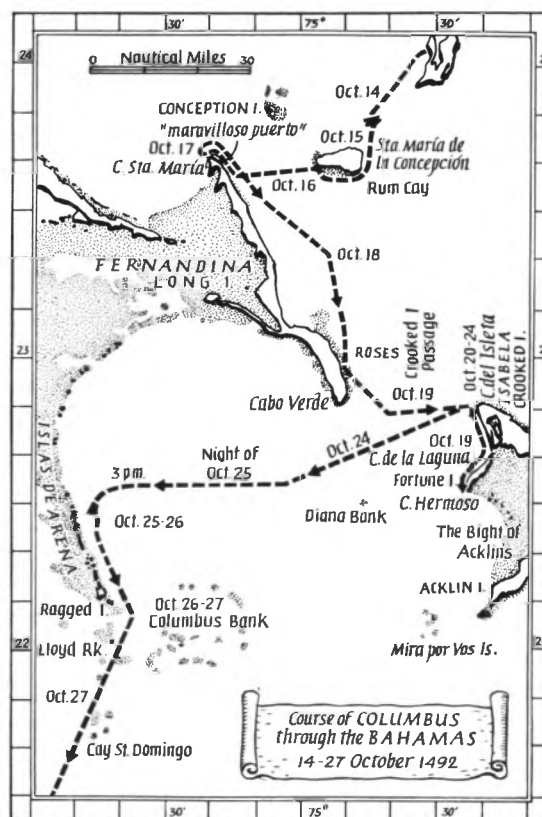
8. Tuesday, 16 October. Here, by exception, Columbus carries his day's work beyond sunrise of the following day.

9. Long Island. Columbus knew he could not anchor on the windward side, so worked to the S in order to find a harbor or a lee under the South Point, Cape Verde.

10. Long Island is actually about 63 miles (20 leagues) long, but the "east-west" distance from Rum Cay is 20 miles. *Leste-oueste* was the usual Spanish and Portuguese way of saying "on the same parallel," or "due E (or W)."

11. Long Island is no more level than San Salvador or Rum Cay, and as one approaches from the eastward presents the same appearance of a disconnected chain of small hilly islands.

12. From later references it is clear that the greatest depth that Columbus could sound was 40 fathoms, and the 100-fathom line runs only about a mile off the eastern shore of Long Island.



13. Long Island. Las Casas points out the logic and symmetry of the Admiral's nomenclature. His first island was named after the Saviour; his second after His Mother and the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception; and since he owed most to the Sovereigns, the third island was named after Don Ferdinand, the fourth after Doña Isabel, and the fifth after Don Juan, heir to the throne of Castile. *Historia* lib. i chap. 44 (1951 ed. I 220-21).

14. These dry leaves were probably tobacco. Later, in Cuba, his men saw it being smoked.

TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY [*sic*], 16 OCTOBER

"I took my departure from the islands of *Sancta Maria de Concepción*, it would be about midday, for the island *Fernandina*,¹ which appeared very great to the westward, and sailed all that day in a very smooth sea. Couldn't get there in time to see the bottom in order to anchor in a clear place, for here it is necessary to take great care in order not to lose the anchors.² And so I lay-to all this night until daybreak,³ when I came to a vil-

lage where I anchored and to which had come that man whom I found yesterday in that dugout in mid-channel. He had given such good account of us that all this night aboard the ship there was no want of dugouts, which brought us water and what they had. I ordered each to be given something, if only a few beads; 10 or 12 glass ones on a thread, and some brass jingles, such are worth in Castile a maravedi each, and some lace-points,⁴ all of which they considered of the greatest excellence; and also ordered them to be given molasses to eat, when they came aboard. And later, at the hour of terce, I sent the ship's gig ashore for water, and they with very good will showed my people where the water was, and they themselves carried the full casks to the boat, and took great delight in pleasing us.

"This island is very large, and I have determined to sail around it, because, as I understand, in or near it there is a mine of gold. This island is separated from Santa Maria by about 8 leagues on a parallel, and this cape, whither I came, and all this coast trends NNW and SSW [*sic*] and I saw at least 20 leagues of it, but it did not end there. Now, as I am writing this, I made sail with the wind S, to try and sail around the whole island, and work up to that which is called *Samaot*, which is the island or city where there is gold; as all those say who are on board, and as they of the Island of San Salvador and of Santa Maria told us. These people resemble those of the said islands, and the same language and customs, except that these appear to me to be a somewhat more domestic people, and tractable, and more subtle, because I observe that in bringing cotton to the ship and other things, they know better how to drive a bargain than the others. And also in this island I saw clothes of cotton made like short cloaks, and the people are better disposed, and the women wear in front of their bodies a small piece of cotton which barely covers their genitals. It is a very green island, and level and very fertile, and I have no doubt that the year round they sow and reap panic grass,⁵ and all other things too. And I saw many trees very unlike ours, and many of them have their branches of different kinds, and all on one trunk, and one twig is of one kind and another of another, and so unlike that it is the greatest wonder of the world. How great is the diversity of one kind from the other! For instance, one branch has leaves like a cane, others like mastic; and thus on one tree five or six kinds, and all so different. Nor are these grafted, for one can say that the grafting is spontaneous; for, first they are right there in the woods, nor do these people take care of them.⁶ I don't recognize in them any religion, and I believe that very promptly they would turn Christians, for they are of very good understanding. Here the fishes are so unlike ours that it is marvellous; they have some like dories, of the brightest colors in the world, blue, yellow, red, and of all colors, and others painted in a thousand ways; and the colors are so bright, that there is no man who would not marvel and would not take great delight in seeing them; also there are whales. Land animals I saw none of any sort, except parrots and lizards. A boy told me that he saw a big snake. I saw neither sheep nor goats nor any other beast, but I have been here but a short time, half a day; yet if there were any I couldn't have failed to have seen some. The circuit of this island I shall write about after I have been around it."

1. Long Island. He is still talking about Tuesday the 16th. He had previously said that he left his anchorage

near the southwest end of Rum Cay at 10 A.M., but it probably took him two hours in a light breeze to clear

the island. The episode just related of the man in the dugout evidently took place after he cleared Rum Cay and was in mid-channel.

2. Columbus is already wise to the technique of anchoring on a coral bottom; you have to avoid the coral heads, which are apt to catch the flukes of the anchor so that it cannot be recovered.

3. Wednesday the 16th.

4. *sonagas de latón*, the small brass discs attached to the edge of tambourines, and *agujetas*, metal tips for

laces which were then used to fasten clothing as well as shoes.

5. *panizo*, but it is unlikely that any of the native species of *panicum* were cultivated, and probable that what Columbus noticed was maize (Indian corn). James B. McNair in Botany Leaflets no. 14 of the Field Museum of Natural History (1930), believes this to be the earliest European reference to maize. R.C.R.

6. No plant even approaches this extraordinary type of polymorphy. It seems probable that a tree with epiphytes, saprophytes, etc., is described. R.C.R.

WEDNESDAY, 17 OCTOBER

"At midday I left the village where I was anchored, and where I took in water,¹ to sail around this island Fernandina; and the wind was SW and S, and since my desire was to follow this coast of this island where I was, to the SE, because it all runs NNW and SSE, and I wished to follow the said course to the S and SE, because in that region, [according to] all these Indians that I have aboard, and another, from whom I had instructions in this southern region, [it leads] to the island which they call *Samoet*,² where the gold is. And Martín Alonso Pinzón, captain of the caravel *Pinta*, on board of which I sent three of these Indians, came to me and told me that one of them very definitely had given him to understand that the island would very much sooner be circumnavigated in the NNW direction, and I saw that the wind was not helping me to take the course that I wished, and was good for the other, and set sail to the NNW.³ And when I was distant from the island cape 2 leagues, I discovered a very wonderful harbor with one mouth, or rather one may say two mouths, for it has an island in the middle, and both are very narrow, and within it is wide enough for 100 ships, if it were deep and clean [bottom], and deep at the entrance.⁴ It seemed reasonable to me to look it over well and take soundings, so I anchored outside it, and went in with all the vessels' boats, and saw that there was no depth. And because I thought when I saw it that it was the mouth of some river, I ordered casks to be broken out to get water, and ashore found 8 or 10 men, who came to us and showed us nearby the village, where I sent the people for water, some with arms and some with casks, and so took it. And because it was distant, I waited for them a space of two hours.

"During this time I walked among some trees, which were the most beautiful thing to see that ever I had seen, viewing as much verdure in so great a development as in the month of May in Andalusia, and all the trees were as different from ours as day from night, and so the fruits, the herbage, the rocks, and all things. It is true that some of the trees were of the nature of others that they have in Castile; but most of them were very different; and the other trees of all kinds were so numerous that nobody could say what they were, nor compare them to others of Castile. All the people were the same as the others already mentioned, of the same condition, and as naked, of the same stature, and gave what they had for whatever was given them. And here I saw that some of the ships' boys traded darts with them for bits of broken crockery and glass. The others who went for water told me how they had been in the houses, and that they were very simple and



clean inside, and their beds and furnishings like nets of cotton.⁵ They, viz. the houses, are all in the manner of Moorish tents, and very high and with good chimneys,⁶ but I did not see among the many villages that I sighted, any that had more than 12 or 15 houses. Here they found that the married women wore clouts of cotton; the wenches nothing, except a few who were already 18 years old; and there were dogs, mastiffs and terriers,⁷ and there they found a man who had in his nose a gold stud which would be like the half of a *castellano*, and on which they saw letters. I scolded them because they wouldn't exchange or give what I wanted, for I wished to see what and whose money this was, and they answered me that never had anyone dared to barter for it.⁸

"After taking on water I returned to the ship and made sail, and sailed to the NW until I had explored all that part of the island along the coast which runs East-West and then all these Indians began to say that this island was smaller than the island *Samoet*, and that it would be well to turn back, to be there sooner. The wind here left us flat, and began to blow from the WNW, which was contrary to the way we had come; and so I came about and sailed all this night to the ESE, sometimes to due E and sometimes to the SE; and this to keep clear of the land, for there were very heavy clouds and the weather very oppressive.⁹ There was little [wind], and it didn't permit me to reach the land to anchor. On this night it rained very hard from midnight to daylight, and it is still clouding up for rain. And we find ourselves at the SE cape of the island¹⁰ where I expect to anchor until it clears off, to see the other islands where I have to go. And on all these days since I was in these Indies¹¹ it has rained more or less. Your Highnesses may believe that this land is the best and most fertile and temperate and level and goodly that there is in the world."

1. Near Burnt Ground, or possibly Simms, Long Island.

2. Crooked Island. Not visible from that part of Long Island.

3. To Cape Santa Maria. This was a complete misunderstanding; only a canoe could have passed around the leeward side of Long Island.

4. This must have been Cape Santa Maria harbor, or

the present Hossie harbor, or the adjacent Calabash Bay. East Harbor is too small to fit the description, and at low water cannot be used by small boats. (Letter of 25 December 1961 from the manager of Cape Santa Maria Club.) This part of Long Island is far from level, as Columbus described it, but rugged, with high hills and bold headlands. Joe's Sound, emptying into the inner harbor, looks like a river as you approach.

5. Hammocks. See *A.O.S.* I 322 for Las Casas's description. The word *hamaca* is Arawak.

6. "These chimneys are not for smoke, but are little crowns that the Indians put above their houses. He said this, thinking that they were open for letting some of the smoke out."—Las Casas's marginal note.

7. Las Casas remarks that the Admiral must have been repeating sailors' hearsay—"for if he had seen them he would not have called them *mastines*, for they look like *podencos* (hounds); these and the small ones never bark, but only have a sort of grunt in the throat and are like the dogs of Spain, only differing in that they don't bark." *Historia* chap. 42 (1951 ed. I 215).

Oviedo devotes *Historia General y Natural* (1851 ed. I 390-91) lib. xii chap. 5 to the dogs; he says that they were good eating, and for that reason had become extinct. Dr. Glover Allen informs me that these were not a peculiar species of dog, and that Eskimo dogs today do not bark until they have made contact with outsiders' dogs that do. Cf. Journal for 28 October, note 4.

8. A *castellano* was a Spanish coin valued at about \$3.00 in gold. Las Casas remarks that the Spaniards were wrong in thinking that the nose-stud was a coin, since nowhere in the Indies was there any trace of coinage. Columbus of course hoped to prove that the marks were Chinese or Japanese characters.

9. He evidently turned back from Cape Santa Maria harbor, rounded the Cape, and sailed southeasterly off the windward shore of Long Island.

10. South Point, or Cape Verde. He is now writing about events of early Thursday, 18 October.

11. *estas Yndias*. This is the first time that Columbus refers to his discoveries as "The Indies."

THURSDAY, 18 OCTOBER

"After it cleared up I followed the wind and went around the island as far as I could, and anchored¹ when the weather was no longer suitable for sailing; but I didn't go ashore, and at break of day made sail."

1. Near the village of Roses, Long Island.

FRIDAY, 19 OCTOBER

"At break of day I weighed anchors, and sent the caravel *Pinta* to the ESE and the caravel *Niña* to the SSE, and I with the ship went to the SE, having given orders that they should follow those courses until midday, and that both should then change courses and join me; and before we had proceeded three hours, we saw an island to the eastward, for which we steered, and all three vessels reached it before midday at the north point, where there's an islet and a rocky reef making out from it to the north, and another between it and the big island,¹ which those men of San Salvador aboard called Saomete, and to which I gave the name *Isabela*.² The wind was north, and the said islet bore from the island Fernandina, whence I had departed, due east. Then we ran along the coast from the islet to the west, and made 12 leagues to a cape, which I called *cabo Hermoso*, which is on the western side;³ and handsome it is indeed, round and low-lying, with no shoals offshore, and at the approach there are rocks and a shoal, but inside there is sand beach as almost all the said coast is, and here I anchored this night Friday until morning. All this coast, and that part of the island which I saw, is all more or less beach, and the island is the most beautiful thing that I have seen; for if the others are very beautiful, this is more so. It has many and very green and very big trees; and this land is higher than the other islands formed; and in it a little hill, not that it can be called a mountain, but a thing that beautifies the rest;⁴ and there seem to be many bodies of water in the midst of the island.

From this part to the NE there is a great bight,⁵ and there are many and thick groves of trees. I wished to go and anchor within, to go ashore and see so much beauty; but the water was shoal, and I couldn't anchor except offshore, and the wind was very favorable to reach this cape, where I am now anchored. To it I gave the name *cabo Feroso*, for so it is. So I didn't anchor in that bight, yet furthermore, because I saw this cape beyond to be so green and so handsome, like all other things and lands of this island, so I don't know where to go first, nor can I tire my eyes from looking at such handsome verdure and so very different from ours. And I believe that there are in it many plants and many trees, which are worth a lot in Spain for dyes and for medicines of spicery; but I don't recognize them, which gives me great grief. And, approaching this cape, there came so fair and sweet a smell of flowers or trees from the land, that it was the sweetest thing in the world.⁶ Tomorrow, before leaving here, I shall go ashore, to see what is here on the cape. There's no village, except further inland, where, say those men aboard, there's a king who has much gold. Tomorrow I wish to proceed far enough to find the village, and to see or have speech with this king, who, according to the signs they make is lord of all these neighboring islands, and goes clothed and wears ever so much gold, only I don't hold much faith in their speeches, as much for not understanding them well, as for being aware that they are so poor in gold that whatever little this king wears would appear a lot to them. This is what I call *cabo Feroso*. I believe it to be on an island separated from Saometo, and also there is a little one between them,⁷ and I don't care to see so much detail, because I couldn't do it in 50 years, for I wish to see and discover the most that I can, before returning to Your Highnesses (Our Lord willing), in April. It is true that in the event of finding gold or spices there in abundance, I should stay until I have collected as much as possible. Accordingly I do nothing else but go on to try and run across it."

1. The fleet had just crossed Crooked Island Passage, one of the most frequented channels during the last two centuries for vessels going from North American ports to Cuba and the Caribbean. Bird Rock, Columbus's "islet," which two days later he named *Cabo del Isleo*, now has a high lighthouse.

2. Crooked Island.

3. The only way to make sense out of this passage, as Glenn Stewart shows in *Geographical Review* XXI 127-28, is to read *sueste* for *guesta*, and to reduce the distance. A westerly direction from Bird Rock would have taken the fleet right back to Long Island. A course about SSE from off Bird Rock, gradually changing to SSW as one follows the coast, takes one in about 20 nautical miles to the SW point of Fortune Island, Columbus's *Cabo Hermoso*, which fits his subsequent statements about the "great angle," the inlet between it and Crooked Island, and the course thence.

This SW point of Fortune Island is not what we would call *hermoso* today; dark cliffs about 25 feet high, topped by a flat expanse of scrub. But in 1492 it may well have been covered with fine timber. Cf. Rudolf Cronau *Landfall of Columbus* 39-41.

4. Mount Pisgah and the Blue Hills on Crooked Island are about 200 feet high; Fortune Hill near Cabo Hermoso is 110 feet high.

5. *angla*, which means "cape," according to Sr. Guillén; but Columbus obviously means an "angle" in the shore; the so-called Bight of Acklin, between Crooked, Fortune, and Acklin Islands. The main entrance is between Cabo Hermoso and North Cay.

6. As we in ketch *Mary Otis* lay-to off Crooked Island on the night of 10 June 1940, waiting for daylight, the tradewind brought us delicious odors of growing things.

7. Rat or Goat Cay.

SATURDAY, 20 OCTOBER

"Today at sunrise I weighed anchors from where I was with the ship and anchored at this island of Saometo at the SW cape, to which I gave the name *Cabo de la Laguna*,¹

and to the island *Isabela*, to sail to the NE and E from the SE and S, where I understood from those men on board that the village and the king of it was to be found; and I found the depth so slight that I could neither enter nor sail therein,² and I saw that to follow the southwesterly route would be a very great *détour*, and therefore I decided to turn back by the route whence I had come from the NNE, to the west, and go around this island along there. And the wind was so much ahead³ that I could never keep to the land along the coast except at night; and because it is dangerous to anchor in these islands except in daytime, when one can see where to let go the anchor, for it is all patches, one clear and the other not, I lay-to all this Sunday night. The caravels anchored because they found themselves prematurely near the shore, and thought that, according to the signals they were accustomed to, I would come to an anchor; but I didn't wish to."

1. Cape of the Lagoon, the SW point of Crooked Island (*Isabela*). At a spot marked French Wells on the modern chart there is good anchorage, and an entrance to the Bight of Acklin.

2. The modern chart states that the lagoon is "nearly

dry" inside the entrance at French Wells.

3. *tan escasso*, "so much ahead" (Guillén). The trades prevented him from sailing eastward along the N coast of Crooked Island. In nautical English a "scant" wind means a head wind, not a light wind.

SUNDAY, 21 OCTOBER

"At ten o'clock I arrived here at the Cape of the Islet and anchored,¹ and so did the caravels; and after having eaten I went ashore, where there was no other village but a single house, in which I found nobody, so that I believe that they had fled through fear, because they had left all their household gear. I allowed nothing to be touched, but set out with the captains and people to see the island. If the others already seen are very beautiful and green and fertile, this is much more so, and the large groves are very green. Here are some great lagoons, and around them, on the banks, the verdure is marvellous; and round about there is a marvellous amount of woodland, the grass like in April in Andalusia, and the singing of the little birds such that it would seem that man would never wish to leave here; and the flocks of parrots obscured the sun, and big and little birds of all sorts, and so different from ours that it is marvellous. Furthermore—it has trees of a thousand kinds, and all have their kinds of fruit, and all so fragrant that it is marvellous; and I had the greatest chagrin in the world not to recognize them, for I am well assured that they are all things of value; and I bring specimens of them and also of the plants. And thus walking around one of the lagoons I saw a reptile which we killed, and I bring the skin to Your Highnesses. It, as soon as we saw it, slid into the lagoon, and we followed it within, because it wasn't very deep, until we killed it with lances.² It is 7 palms long, I believe there are many like it in these islands. Here I came upon aloes,³ and tomorrow I have decided to take aboard 10 quintals of it, for they tell me it is worth much. Also while going in search of very good water, we came upon a village near here, half a league from my anchorage, and the people thereof, when they heard us, all fled and left their houses, and hid their clothing and whatever they had in the woods. I allowed not a thing to be touched, not even the value of a pin. Presently there came to us some of their men, and one came right up to us. I gave him some hawk's bells and glass beads, and he rested very content and very happy; and in order to strengthen the friend-

ship and ask them for something I asked him to get water; and they, after I had gone on board the ship, came down to the beach with their calabashes filled and rejoiced in giving it to me, and I ordered them to be given another string of little glass beads, and they said that tomorrow they would come here. I sought here to fill up all the containers⁴ on the ships with water; and finally, if time permits, I shall leave to circumnavigate this island until I may have speech with this king and see if I can obtain from him the gold that I heard he has, and afterwards to depart for another much larger island which I believe must be Japan, according to the description of these Indians whom I carry, and which they call *Colba*,⁵ in which they say that there are ships and sailors both many and great, and beyond this is another island which they call *Bofio*,⁶ which also they say is very big; and the others which are between we shall see as we pass, and according as I shall find a collection of gold or spicery, I shall decide what I have to do. But in any case I am determined to go to the mainland and to the city of *Quisay*⁷ and to present Your Highnesses' letters to the Grand Khan, and to beg a reply and come home with it."

1. Bird Rock and Portland Harbor, a small, well-sheltered basin with $3\frac{1}{2}$ fathoms of water, just east of the rock.

2. Las Casas (1951 ed. I 217) declares that this was an iguana.

3. *lignaloë*. "If we presume that Columbus was acquainted with the aloes of the Mediterranean region, it is probable that *Agave spp.* is the plant he is speaking of here. In my opinion *Agave bahamana Trelease* (Bahama Century Plant) is most likely the plant in question." H.U.B. In Cuba he may have seen *Agave legrilliana*. Brother Alain, quoting Br. León *Flora de Cuba* I (1947) 316. The reason why Columbus was so interested in aloes is that he had read in Marco Polo (lib. ii. ch. 77) that lignaloë (*lignum aloë*, a kind of wood), was one of the leading staples of Zaitun, and confused it with the medicinal aloes, the plant with no stem and spiky leaves from which a powerful purgative was and is extracted. Cf. Numbers xxiv. 6, and Psalms xlv. 8.

4. Casks and barrels. It was not until after Vasco da Gama's voyage to India that Europeans learned from the Arabs to construct built-in tanks for fresh water.

5. The first mention in the Journal of Cuba.

6. Another spelling of *Bobio*, which Columbus at first supposed to be the native name for Haiti. But Las Casas says here: "Calling it *Bobio* was to misunderstand the interpreters, because through all these islands, insomuch as all or almost all have the same language, they give the name *Bobio* to the houses in which they live, and this great island of Hispaniola they call Haiti; and they were trying to say that in Haiti there were big *bobios*, . . . i.e., big houses." *Op. cit.*, lib. i, ch. 43; (1951 ed. I 218).

7. Quinsai, "the City of Heaven," the modern Hangchow, was and still is an important seaport and metropolis of central China. Vividly described by Marco Polo, Quinsai became for Europe a symbol of the wealth of the Far East. It was doubtless found on such maps as Columbus had, and, being only $2^{\circ} 30'$ off the latitude of Ferro in the Canaries, was probably the place that Columbus hoped to hit by his westerly course, if he missed Japan. But its longitude is 242° W of Ferro, and Columbus had wested only 56° ! Cf. Journal for 24 October, note 2.

MONDAY, 22 OCTOBER

"All this night and today I was here,¹ waiting to see if the king here or other people would bring gold or anything substantial, and many of this people came, like the others of the other islands, as naked and as painted, some of them white, others red, others black, and [painted] in many ways. They brought darts and some skeins of cotton to barter, and which they swopped with some seamen for pieces of glass, broken drinking vessels, and pieces of earthenware. Some of them wore pieces of gold hanging from the nose, and which with good will they gave for a hawk's bell (of the sort [made] for the foot of a sparrow-hawk), and for little beads of glass; but there's so little that it is nothing at all. True it is that any little thing I gave them, and also our coming, they considered a great wonder, and believed that we had come from the sky. We took in water for the vessels



in a lagoon which is nearby to the Cape of the Islet, so it is called. In the same lagoon Martín Alonso Pinzón, captain of the *Pinta*, killed another reptile like the one yesterday 7 palms long; and I made them gather here as much of the aloes as could be found.”

1. Portland Harbor, Crooked Island

TUESDAY, 23 OCTOBER

“I wished to depart today for the Island of Cuba, which I believe should be *Çipango*, according to the description that this people give me of its size and wealth, and I did not turn aside here nor [did I attempt]¹ to circumnavigate this island to go to the village, as I had decided, in order to have speech with this king or lord; so as not to delay me much, since I see that there’s no mine of gold here, and the circumnavigation of these islands would require many different winds, and it does not blow here as the people would like. And since I should proceed to where there’s a lot going on,² I say that it is not reasonable to wait, but to proceed on the course, and discover much land, until reaching some very profitable country; although it is given me to understand that this one will be very profitable in spicery. But that [spicery] I don’t know, which is what causes me the greatest grief in the world, when I see a thousand sorts of trees that each have their own kind of fruit, and green now as in Spain in the months of May and June, and a thousand sorts of plants, the same with flowers; and of the whole lot I only recognize this aloes,³ much of which I have also ordered brought aboard to bring to Your

Highnesses. I have not yet set sail nor do I now set sail for Cuba, because there's no wind, only a dead calm and much rain, and it rained hard yesterday without being at all cold;⁴ on the contrary the day is hot and the nights mild as in May in Spain and in Andalusia.

1. Lacuna of one or two words.

2. *aya trato grande*, lit., "big business." He expected to find mighty cities such as he had read about in Marco Polo.

3. And he was wrong about that! See Journal for 21

October, note 3.

4. One of the most striking phenomena to a seaman coming from higher latitudes to the tropics; one can be completely drenched with rain or spray, yet not feel cold.

WEDNESDAY, 24 OCTOBER

"This night at midnight I weighed anchors from the island Isabela, Cape of the Islet, which is on the northern side where I was lying,¹ to go to the island of *Cuba*, which I heard from that people is very great, and with a lot going on, and therein gold, spices, big ships and merchants; and they showed me that a WSW course would fetch it.² And to my course I held, for I believe that, if it's as all the Indians of these islands told me by signs, as well as those aboard (for I don't understand their language), it's the island of Cipango, of which are related marvellous things; and on the globes that I saw, and in the delineations on the world-map, it is in this region.³ And so I sailed until day to the WSW and at daybreak the wind dropped and it rained, and thus continued all night [*sic*] and I remained thus with little wind, until past midday; and then it began to blow very gently, and I set all the sails of the ship, the maincourse and two bonnets, and fore-course, and spritsail, and mizzen, and topsail, and the boat towing astern.⁴ Thus I proceeded until nightfall, when *cabo Verde* of the island Fernandina, which is at the western point of the southern end, bore NW, and distant from me 7 leagues.⁵ And as it already blew up brisk and I didn't know how far it was to the said island of Cuba, and in order to avoid going in search of it at night, because all these islands are very steep-to, with no bottom around them except at two lombard's shots, and that all patchy, a bit of rock and



another of sand; for this reason it isn't possible to anchor safely except by eyesight. Therefore I decided to lower all sails except the forecourse and proceed with it [only]. And shortly after the wind increased greatly, and I was very doubtful of the way, and it was very overcast and rained; I ordered the forecourse to be furled and we didn't make 2 leagues that night, etc."⁶

1. Portland Harbor.

2. See Morison *A.O.S.* I 328-30, for the reasons why the Indians advised this course for Cuba.

3. The best-known sphere of the epoch, Martin Behaim's, although never mentioned by Columbus, was doubtless similar to others that he studied. Martin Behaim makes *Cipangu* (Japan) an immense island running N and S about the same distance as from Londonderry to Gibraltar, and crossing the Tropic of Cancer, which also runs through the Canaries. Quinsai is on the same Tropic. South of *Cipangu* is an archipelago which Columbus identified with the Bahamas.

4. This passage gives us the sail plan of *Santa Maria*

(see illustration). The last clause, *el batel per popa*, has been taken to mean that the boat's sail was set up on the poop, to make a sort of mizzen staysail. Sr. Guillén, to whom I defer, says that it merely means that the gig was being towed, as often was done in the era of discovery, even on transatlantic voyages, because there was no room on deck for more than one boat.

5. South Point (now also called Capé Verde) of Long Island, here first named, although he must have seen and so named it on 19 October.

6. This is the end of the direct quotation from the Admiral's Journal, which began 12 October.

THURSDAY, 25 OCTOBER

He sailed from sunrise until 9 A.M. to the WSW; must have made about 5 leagues. Afterwards changed course to the W. Proceeded at 8 Roman miles an hour up to 1 P.M., and thence up to 3 P.M., and must have made 44 Roman miles. Then they sighted land, and there were 7 or 8 islands strung out, all N to S. They were distant from them 5 leagues, etc.¹

1. These were the Ragged Cays, the long line of islands and reefs that tail off from the Great Bahama Bank. From the courses and distances given, Columbus

must have first sighted North, South, or Nurse Cays. See Morison *A.O.S.* I 329-30, 333-4 (one-vol. ed. 252-3).

FRIDAY, 26 OCTOBER

He was to the South of the said islands. It was all shoal water for 5 or 6 leagues. He anchored there.¹ The Indians on board said that to Cuba it was a journey of a day and a half in their dugouts, which are little boats of a single tree, without sail. Such are the *canoas*.² Departed thence for Cuba, because from the signs that the Indians made of its greatness and of its gold and pearls, he thought it was that land, viz., Japan.

1. There is good anchorage in fair weather on the Columbus Bank south of the Ragged Islands, from which a SSW course takes 6 leagues to cross the Bank, as Co-

lumbus says he did next day.

2. The first time that Columbus uses the Indian instead of the Portuguese word for a dugout canoe.

SATURDAY, 27 OCTOBER

They weighed anchors at sunrise from those islands which he called *las islas de Arena*,¹ owing to the slight depth which they had in the southerly direction, for a distance of 6 leagues. He made 8 Roman miles an hour until 1 P.M. to the SSW, and they would have gone about 40 Roman miles;² and [thence to] nightfall must have gone about 28

Roman miles on the same course, and before nightfall they sighted land.³ Jogged off-and-on at night with much rain, and how it rained! They made up to sunset Saturday 17 leagues to the SSW.

1. I.e., Sandy Isles. These were the modern Ragged Islands, and the bank that he crossed has been named Columbus Bank.

2. Las Casas did a bad job of editing here. Columbus evidently meant that he steered SSW, instead of S, in order to get earlier into deep water.

3. The course and distance that Columbus gives would have carried the fleet to a point approximately lat. 21° 20' N, long. 75° 58' W, whence the Cuban moun-

tains behind Gibara are visible. He hove to for the night as a seamanlike precaution, not knowing but what the Cuban coast might be fringed with reefs and banks. Although a one-knot westerly current is expected off this coast, we in the *Mary Otis* found none in June 1940, and our SSW course from Columbus Bank brought us half way between Bahía Bariay and Puerto Gibara. See Morison *A.O.S.* I 333-4 for discussion.

SUNDAY, 28 OCTOBER

He went thence in search of the island of Cuba to the SSW, to the shore nearest, and entered into a river¹ very beautiful and without danger of shoals, or of other impediments, and the whole coast that he came upon in that direction was very steep-to and clear up to the shore. The mouth of the river has 12 fathoms' depth² and is wide enough to beat in; he anchored inside, it is said at a lombard's shot. The Admiral says that he never beheld so fair a thing: trees all along the river, beautiful and green, and different from ours, with flowers and fruits each according to their kind, many birds and little birds which sing very sweetly. There were great numbers of palms, of a different kind from those of Guinea and from ours, of a middling height, and the trunk without any bark, and the leaves very big, with which they cover the houses;³ the land very flat. He jumped into the barge and went ashore, and came to two houses, which he thought were those of fishermen who had fled from fear; in one of them he found a dog that didn't bark,⁴ and in both houses he found nets of palm fibre and ropes and fish-hooks of horn, and bone harpoons, and other fishing tackle, and many fire-places within, and he believed that many people lived in one house. He ordered that nothing at all should be touched, and thus it was done. The grass was high as in Andalusia in April and May; found much purslane and wild amaranth.⁵ He returned to the barge, and went up the river a good distance, and it was, as is said, a great pleasure to see those green things and groves of trees and to hear the birds sing, that he couldn't leave to go back. He says that that island is the most beautiful that eyes have ever seen: full of very good harbors and deep rivers, and it appeared as if the sea never rose, because the herbage on the beach went almost to the water; which couldn't be where the sea is rough.⁶ Hitherto he had not experienced in all these islands a heavy sea. The island he says is full of very beautiful mountains, but they are not very great in length, only high, and all the other land is high in the manner of Sicily. It is full of many waters, as could be understood from the Indians whom he had on board, whom he took in the island of Guanahaní, and they said by signs that there are 10 great rivers and that one cannot circumnavigate it with their canoes in 20 days. When he came to land with the ships, two dugouts or canoes made out, and when they saw the seamen get into the barge and row to go and try the depth of the river, in order to find out where they had better anchor, the canoes made off. The Indians said that in that is-

land there were mines of gold and pearls, and the Admiral saw a likely place for them, and mussel shells which are a sign of them, and the Admiral understood that hither came ships of the Grand Khan, great ones; and that from here to terra firma was a journey of 10 days. The Admiral called this the River and Harbor of San Salvador.⁷

1. Columbus commonly calls any harbor that forms a river mouth *un rio*. This harbor, his first in Cuba, and which he named San Salvador, was undoubtedly Bahía Bariay. Every Cuban harbor from Baracoa to Nuevitas claims to be the first landing of Columbus. Srs. J. Van der Gucht and S. M. Parajón *Estudio sobre la Ruta de Cristóbal Colón por la Costa Norte de Cuba* (mimeographed, 1936) argued for Bahía Bariay, and our voyage in *Mary Otis* proved it. Puerto Gibara does, at least superficially, fulfil Columbus's description of San Salvador, and might have been reached on his SSW course if the fleet had drifted west during the night or fallen off a point; but Puerto Gibara much more nearly resembles Columbus's second port, Rio de Mares, and Bariay is finally identified by the curious mountain mentioned at the end of the Journal for 29 October.

2. Twelve Castilian *brazas* equal about 11 of our 6-foot fathoms.

3. *Cocothrinax spp.* and *Thrinax spp.* are both quite common along that coast, and commonly used by the natives today for thatching and walling their *bohíos*. Cf. Brother León's *Contribución al Estudio de las Palmas de Cuba* (reprint from *Memorias* of the Soc. Cubana de Hist. Natural XIII), 1939.

4. Cf. Journal for 17 October, note 7, for the dumb

dogs. Dog bones so eluded searchers in the middens of Cuban Indians as to give rise to the theory that these *perros que no ladran* were raccoons, not dogs. But veritable dog bones have since been found (M. R. Harrington *Cuba before Columbus* 48, 164, 297), and the numerous references to them by Columbus, Las Casas, and other early Spaniards who knew a dog when they saw one, and who called them *gozcós* because they resembled a breed of that name in the Peninsula, leave no doubt that the Tainos had domesticated dogs, which were used largely for food. Juan Ignacio de Armas *Zoología de Colón* (Havana 1888) 32-40, discusses the question thoroughly.

5. *verdolagas muchas y bledos*. The former was *Portulaca oleracea*, the common purslane; by *bledos* he seems to have meant the Spanish *Amaranthus spp.*, which, however, does not occur in Cuba. *A. spinosus* is the most common of several Cuban species, and is widely eaten, as its common name, *bledo de cocina*, shows. Brother León.

6. Mangrove trees sent their roots right out into the sea water wherever there is a level, sloping beach, little tide, and protection from waves. The rise and fall of tide in this part of Cuba is only two feet. Cf. Journal for 14 February 1493.

7. Bahía Bariay.

MONDAY, 29 OCTOBER

He weighed anchors from that port and sailed to the westward to go, it is said, to the city where it seemed to him (according to what the Indians said), that king dwelt. A point of the island made out to the NW 6 leagues; from there another point made out to the E 10 leagues; proceeded another league, saw a river not so wide at the entrance, which he named *Rio de la Luna*.¹ Continued until the hour of vespers; saw another river much greater than the others, so the Indians told him by signs, near it he saw good villages of houses. Called the river *Rio de Mares*.² Sent the boats to a village to have speech, and to one of them an Indian of those whom he carried, because already they understood them somewhat, and they showed themselves to be content with the Christians. All the men and women and creatures fled from those [villages], deserting their houses with all that they had, and the Admiral ordered that nothing should be touched. The houses he says were still finer than those that he had seen, and he believed that the more they approached the mainland, the better they would be. They were made in the manner of Moorish tents, very large, and looking like tents in an encampment, without regularity of streets, but one here and another there; and inside well swept and clean, and their furnishings well made; all are [constructed] of very fair palm branches. They found many images in the shape of women, and many heads in the shape of masks, very well

worked. He knows not whether these are for beauty or to be worshipped. There were dogs that never barked, wild birds tamed in their houses, and a marvellous collection of nets³ and fish-hooks and fishing tackle. They didn't touch a thing. He believed that all those of the coast ought to be fishermen who carried the fish inland, for that island is very great, and so beautiful that he never tired of speaking well of it. He says that he found trees and fruits of very wonderful taste, and says that they must have cows in it and other cattle, for he saw skulls which appeared to be those of cows.⁴ Large birds and small birds and the chirping of crickets, in which they took pleasure all night long, the air savory and sweet, neither cold nor hot. And, moreover, on the course from the other islands to that one he says that there was great heat, and here not, but mild as in May. He attributed the heat of the islands to the fact that they were very flat, and because the wind that bore them here was from the east, and therefore hot. The water of those rivers was salt at the mouth; they knew not where the Indians drank, although they had fresh water in their houses. In this river the ships could tack to enter and depart, and there are many good signs or landmarks; it has 7 or 8 fathoms of depth at the mouth, and within five.⁵ He says that all that sea appears as if it would always be smooth as the river of Seville, and the water suitable to breed pearls. He found large snails, tasteless; not like those of Spain. Describing the disposition of the river and the harbor, which he mentioned above and named San Salvador,⁶ [he says] that it has beautiful and lofty mountains like the *Pena de los Enamorados*,⁷ and one of them has on its summit another little peak like a pretty little mosque.⁸ This other river and harbor, in which he now was, has to the SE two somewhat rounded mountains, and to the WNW a fine low cape which sticks out.⁹

1. Punta Velásquez, 9 miles NW of the mouth of Bahía Bariay; Punta Cañetes, 12 miles to the E, both conspicuous as you come out of the harbor; the narrow-mouthed Bahía Jururu, 1 mile from Bariay, was the "River of the Moon." Columbus is using his "land league."

2. Puerto Gibara, the entrance to which is only 6 miles from Bariay; the wind must have been light, or else the fleet started late in the day. I am satisfied by personal inspection that no other identification of *Rio de Mares* is possible. Cf. Morison *A.O.S.* I 349.

3. The Cuban Indians made their nets of thread spun from *Roystonea regia*. Br. León.

4. Las Casas comments that these must have been skulls of the manatee "which have heads like cows," for no

cattle and few quadrupeds are native to Cuba. *Historia* ch. 44 (1951 ed. I 223).

5. Correct for Puerto Gibara today.

6. Bahía Bariay.

7. A Lovers' Leap near Granada, the legend of which is told in Southey's "The Lovers' Rock, the story of Laila and Manuel."

8. *una hermosa mezquita*. This mountain, now called La Teta de Bariay, is unmistakable, and it can be seen from only two other harbors (R. Jururu and B. Vita), which do not fit Columbus's description of B. Bariay.

9. The Silla de Gibara, behind Puerto Gibara, is a prominent landmark, and other rounded mountains are visible from the harbor. The low cape, bearing WNW as one rounds Punta Peregrina to enter the harbor, is Punta Baril.

TUESDAY, 30 OCTOBER

Departed from the *Rio de Mares* to the NW, and saw a cape covered with palms, and called it *Cabo de Palmas*.¹ After having gone 15 leagues, the Indians on board the caravel *Pinta* said that behind that cape was a river,² and from the river to Cuba it was four days' journey; and the captain of the *Pinta* said he understood that this Cuba was a city, and that that land was a very great continent that trended far to the N, and that the king of that land made war with the Grand Khan, whom they called *Camí*, and his land

or city *Faba*,³ and many other names. The Admiral decided to proceed to that river, and to send a gift to the king of the country, and to send the letter of his Sovereigns, and for that he had a seaman who had gone in Guinea on the same,⁴ and certain Indians of Guanahaní wished to go with him, who afterwards should return to their country. As it appeared to the Admiral, he was distant 42° N of the equator, if the text is not corrupt whence I copied this;⁵ and he says that he has to try and go to the Grand Khan, who he thought was here or at the city of Cathay, which is the Grand Khan's, and is very great, according to what he was told before leaving Spain.⁶ All that land he says is low and beautiful, and the sea deep.⁷

1. Punta Uvero, about 24 miles W of Puerto Gibara, is the only cape along this coast today with conspicuous palms on it.

2. Puerto Padre, approached by a long and narrow channel, is just around Punta Uvero.

3. Las Casas spells this name thus, but *Saba* is probably correct. Cf. the passage at the end of Michele de Cuneo's Letter on the Second Voyage, below. *Cubanacan*, says Las Casas, was a district in the interior of Cuba where a certain amount of gold was mined, apparently the only place on the Island where it was found. He opines that the Indians caught at Columbus's frequent mention of *El Gran Can* and thought he

was looking for *Cubanacan*. See Morison *A.O.S.* I 338 (one-vol. ed. 257).

4. Rodrigo de Xeres, as appears in the Journal for 2 November. Evidently he was an old African trader.

5. I do not think that this records an observation on 30 October, but that it is an interpolated remark of Las Casas based upon the observation on 1 November, which see.

6. In Toscanelli's famous letter, Cathay is both a province of China, and the capital thereof.

7. After passing a few miles west of Puerto Gibara no mountains are visible from the sea.

WEDNESDAY, 31 OCTOBER

All night Tuesday he beat to windward, and saw a river which he couldn't enter, because the entrance was shoal;¹ the Indians thought the ships could enter as their canoes did! And, sailing along, he came to a cape which ran very far out, and surrounded by shoals, and saw a basin² or bay, where small vessels could lie, and could not double it [the cape] because the wind had veered wholly to the N, and all the coast trends NNW and SE, and another cape that he saw beyond ran further out.³ For this [reason], and because the sky showed the wind blowing up, he had to go back to the Rio de Mares.⁴

1. One of the several shallow harbors near the entrance to Puerto Padre.

2. *concha* (in some editions misprinted *roncha*)—a semicircular bay.

3. These two capes were probably Punta Cobarrubia

and Punta Brava (Morison *A.O.S.* I 349, note 8).

4. Puerto Gibara. A norther was making up, and it was useless to attempt further westing. A point not far off Puerto Padre mouth was Columbus's farthest west on this voyage. He never reached Nuevitas Bay.

THURSDAY, 1 NOVEMBER

At sunrise the Admiral sent the barges ashore to the houses which were there, and they found that all the people had fled; then, a good time after, a man appeared, and the Admiral ordered that they leave him assured, and the barges returned, and after breakfast he again sent ashore one of the Indians whom he was carrying and who hallooed to him from afar saying that they had nothing to fear, because [we] were good people and did no harm to anyone, nor were we [subjects] of the Grand Khan, but had already given away our stuff in the many islands that we had been to. The Indian plunged in and

swam ashore, and two of the natives took him by the arms and brought him to a house, where they informed themselves about him; and when they were assured that there was to be no harm done to them, they were assured, and there came out to the ships more than 16 dugouts or canoes with spun cotton and other little things of theirs, of which the Admiral ordered that nothing should be taken, in order that they might surmise that the Admiral wanted nothing but gold, which they call *nucay*;¹ and thus all day they came and went from shore to ships, and some of the Christians went ashore in all security. The Admiral saw no gold on any one of them. But the Admiral says that he saw on one of them a piece of worked silver hanging to his nose, which he considered a sign that there was silver in the land. They said by signs that before three days many merchants would arrive from the back country, to purchase the things which the Christians brought there, and would give news of the king of that land (who, so far as he could understand by the signs they gave, lived four days' journey thence), because they had sent many people throughout the whole land, to let them know about the Admiral. "This people," says the Admiral, "is of the same type and custom as the others [already] found, without any religion that I can see, for hitherto I have neither heard nor seen those whom I carry make any prayer, although they say the *Salve* and the *Ave Maria* with their hands raised, as they are shown, and make the sign of the cross. The language also is all the same, and all are friends, and I believe that all these islands are at war with the Grand Khan, whom they call *Cavila* and the province, *Basan*;² and they all go naked like the rest." Thus says the Admiral. The river he says is very deep, and in the mouth ships can lay their topsides aboard the land.³ The fresh water doesn't come within a league of the mouth, and it is very fresh, and "It is certain," says the Admiral, "that this is the mainland, and that I am," says he "before *Zayto* and *Quisay*,⁴ 100 leagues more or less distant the one from the other, and this is demonstrated by the sea, which comes in another way than hitherto it has come, and yesterday, when I went to the NW, I found that it was cold."⁵

1. Las Casas says, "I think that the Christians failed to understand, because all these islands have one language, and since in this island of Española they call gold *caona*, the [Cuban] Indians should not have called it *nucay*." *Historia* chap. 45 (1951 ed. I 226).

2. *Bafan*, according to Las Casas *Historia* chap. 45 (1951 ed. I 227), where this passage is quoted. The alleged Chinese potentate was probably a Carib raider.

3. The east bank of Puerto Gibara is steep-to, but vessels would be well advised not to lay alongside, as the rocks are coral.

4. The "noble city of Zaytun" is described in Marco

Polo lib. ii chap. 77. It was either Tsuen-chau or Chang-chau, on the coast opposite Formosa. It is shown on Martin Behaim's globe as situated on a cape at the SE extremity of Asia. For Quinsay see note 7 to 21 October, above. Las Casas says that both were depicted on the map that Columbus had on board, *Historia* chap. 45 (1951 ed. I 227).

5. Columbus, with his keen observation of maritime phenomena, noticed that the current had changed direction with the wind; and it is characteristic of the other aspect of his mind that he should make this fit in with Marco Polian geography of Asia.

FRIDAY, 2 NOVEMBER

The Admiral decided to send two Spanish men: the one was called *Rodrigo de Xerez*, who lived in Ayamonte, and the other was one *Luís de Torres*, who had lived with the adelantado of Murcia, and had been a Jew, and knew, it is said, Hebrew and Aramaic and also some Arabic; and with these he sent two Indians, one of those he had brought from Guanahaní, and the other from those houses on the river that were in-

habited. He gave them strings of beads to buy food with, if it failed them, and allowed six days' limit before they returned; gave samples of spicery to see if any of them were found, gave instructions to ask for the king of that land, and [told] what they had to say on the part of the Sovereigns of Castile: how they had sent the Admiral to present their letters and a gift and to learn of his condition, and conclude friendship with him, and favor him in what he might desire from them, etc., and that they should find out about certain provinces and harbors and rivers, of which the Admiral had some knowledge, and how far distant from there, etc.

Here, this night, the Admiral took the altitude with a quadrant, and found that the distance from the equator was 42° , and says that by his reckoning he has made 1142 leagues since the island of Ferro, and he still insists that this is mainland.¹

1. See Journal for 30 October, where Las Casas expresses his incredulity, and where he makes the marginal note that the observation is false; and Journal for 21 November, where Columbus obtains the same result. The actual latitude is $21^{\circ} 07'$; Columbus simply

mistook another star for Polaris. See Morison "Columbus and Polaris" *American Neptune* I (1941) 13-19. For explanation of the 1142 leagues see Morison *A.O.S.* I 349, note 10.

SATURDAY, 3 NOVEMBER

In the morning the Admiral got into the barge; and as the river at its mouth makes a great lake, in which is a very remarkable harbor, very deep and clear of rocks, very good beach to careen ships, and much wood, he went up the river until he found fresh water, which would be about two leagues up,¹ and climbed a small mountain to discover something of the land; and couldn't see a thing, on account of the groves which were very fresh with foliage and fragrant; for which he said he had no doubt that they were aromatic plants. He said that all he had seen was so beautiful that his eyes would never tire



beholding so much beauty, and the songs of the birds large and small. Came that day many dugouts or canoes to the ships, to swop articles of spun cotton, and the nets in which they sleep, which are hammocks.²

1. Rio Gibara, which empties into the head of Puerto Gibara through a lagoon, is navigable by small boats for 4 or 5 miles, and at that distance the water is fresh and clear. The mouth of the river is now blocked by a bar. The scenery along it is very fine. About a mile

east of the river mouth is a cove locally known as El Carenero, where the owners of small sailing vessels careen them today.

2. *hamacas*, first appearance of this Arawak word.

SUNDAY, 4 NOVEMBER

Presently at sunrise the Admiral got into the barge and went ashore to hunt the birds that he had seen the day before. After he returned, Martín Alonso Pinzón came to him with two pieces of cinnamon¹ and said that a Portuguese whom he had in his ship, had seen an Indian who carried two big bundles of it, but that he did not dare to trade for it, because of the penalty that the Admiral had imposed, that nobody should trade. He further said that that Indian carried some red things like nutmegs.² The boatswain of the *Pinta* said that he had found cinnamon trees. Presently the Admiral went there and found that they were not so; the Admiral showed to some of the Indians there cinnamon and pepper (supposedly of what he had brought from Castile to show), and they recognized it, it is said, and by signs told him that in the neighborhood there was much of it,³ on the route of the SE; he showed them gold and pearls, and certain old men replied that in a place that they called Bohío⁴ there was an infinite amount, and that they wore it on the neck, in the ears, on the arms, and on the legs; and also pearls. He further understood that they said that there were great ships and merchandise, and all this was to the SE. He understood also that far from there there were men with one eye, and others with dogs' heads who ate men and that in killing one they beheaded him and drank his blood and cut off his genitals.⁵ The Admiral decided to return on board ship to await the two men whom he had sent, deciding to leave and search for those lands, if they didn't bring some good news of what they desired. The Admiral says further: "This people is very gentle and timid, naked as I have said, without arms or law; these lands are very fertile, they are full of *mames* which are like carrots, and have the flavor of chestnuts,⁶ and they have beans and kidney beans⁷ very different from ours, and much cotton, which they don't sow, and it grows wild to the height of big trees, and I think that they gather it in every season, for I saw open bolls and others which were opening, and the flowers, all on one tree,⁸ and a thousand kinds of fruit, that I can't describe; and all should be very profitable." The Admiral says all this.

1. *canela*. *Canella winterana*, commonly called *curbana*, which has a strong cinnamon-like smell and is used by the natives for seasoning, is found near the coast. Br. León. The Portuguese was Juan Arias, a boy from Tavira.

2. *cosas bermejas como nuezes*. Probably the fruit of *Bixa orellana*, much used by the Cuban Indians; commonly called *achiato* or *annato*. Br. Alain.

3. *Pimenta dioica* Lin., commonly called *Pimenta criolla* (creole pepper) is found in Oriente, and its berries might well be used for pepper. *Amomis caryophyllata* Jacq., commonly called *Pimenta malagueta*, is another possible identification. Br. León and Br. Alain.

4. Haiti. See Journal for 21 October, note 6.

5. It may be suspected that the natives were "yessing" Columbus, who was trying out on them some of the

tall tales of Sir John Mandeville, who relates (chaps. 18, 19) that on certain islands off the coast of Asia there were dog-faced and one-eyed cannibals. Las Casas remarks with some indignation, "No such monsters are seen in *these* countries, although they might mean those who eat human flesh in some islands which are called Caribbee." *Historia*, chap. 45 (1951 ed. I 228).

6. Las Casas, who knew these products well, thus (*ibid.*) paraphrases this passage: "full of *mames* that are like carrots; which have a flavor like chestnuts; these are what are called *ajes* and *batatas* which are very tasty." *Batatas* are the common sweet potato, *Ipomoea batatas*. *Manihot esculenta*, the common cassava used for making bread, was probably the chestnutty yam tasted by Columbus. For thorough discussion see Pedro Henríquez Ureña "Papa y Batata, historia de las palabras," and "El Enigma del Aje" in his *Para la Historia de los Indigenismos* (Buenos Aires, Facultad de Filosofía y Letras de la Universidad) 1938. Probably the first reference in English to potatoes is in John Frampton *Briefe Description of the Portes of the West Indies* (London 1578) 8: "There be other rootes like to Turneps, whiche be called Aies, and also *Batatas*, but the *Batatas* be better, and there be fieldes full of them as be here of sowen fieldes."

7. *faxones y favas*; words more Portuguese than Spanish. The bean Columbus was familiar with was *Faba vulgaris*, the Broad Bean; but there are so many varieties of beans native to Cuba—Brother León lists no less than 10 genera—that it is useless to attempt identification.

8. *Gossypium microcarpum* is the species of wild cotton most common on the coast of Oriente, whilst *G. punctatum* is the commonest in the rest of Cuba. *G. Barbadense*, the sea-island cotton, was not there in 1492. Br. León. The most commonly found species of *Gossypium* seems to be *G. peruvianum*; the second, *G.*

hirsutum. Both must have been found wild in 1492. Br. Alain.



MONDAY, 5 NOVEMBER

At dawn, he ordered the ship and the other vessels to be run ashore,¹ but not all at the same time, so that two should always remain in the place where they were for safety; although he says that these people were very safe, and one might without fear run all the vessels ashore at the same time. Things being so, the boatswain of the *Niña* came to claim largesse of the Admiral, because he had found mastic,² but did not bring the specimen because he had dropped it. The Admiral promised it to him and sent Rodrigo Sánchez and Master Diego to the trees, and they collected a little of it, which he kept to bring to the Sovereigns, and also of the tree; and he says that he recognized it to be mastic, although it should be gathered in its season, and that there was in that neighborhood enough to pick 100 quintals every year. He found here, it is said, that wood which appears to him to be aloes.³ He says further that this Puerto de Mares is among the better ones in the world and has a better climate and more gentle people, and

as it has a cape of high rock, where a fortress could be built,⁴ so that if that place became rich and a great thing, the merchants would be protected there from any other nations, and he says, "Our Lord, in whose hands are all victories, will ordain all things for his service." It is said that an Indian told by signs that the mastic was good for the stomach-ache.

1. To careen them, clean the bottoms of weed and barnacles, and pitch them in order to discourage the tredo. See note to 3 November.

2. *almáciga*. Not the mastic yielding commercial resin, which Columbus says on 12 November that he was familiar with in Chios, but *Bursera simaruba* (L.) Sarg., commonly called Gumbo-limbo. Br. León.

3. *lignaloe*. See Journal for 21 October, note 3.

4. The rocky point on the western entrance to the inner harbor of Gibara, where Fort Fernando VII was built in colonial days. Gibara became an important shipping port for sugar and cotton in the 19th century.

TUESDAY, 6 NOVEMBER

Yesterday at night, says the Admiral, arrived the two men whom he had sent to view the interior, and they told him how they had gone 12 leagues as far as a village of 50 houses, where it is said there were 1000 inhabitants; for many live in one house.¹ These houses are in the shape of very large tents. They said that they had received them with great solemnity, according to their custom; and all, men and women, came to see them, and they were lodged in the better houses. The same people touched them and kissed their hands and feet, marvelling and believing that they came from the sky, and so they gave them to understand. Gave them to eat of what they had. Said that on arriving, the most honorable people of the village carried them in their arms to the principal house, and gave them two chairs on which they sat, and all the [people] squatted on the ground around them. An Indian who went with them described to them the Christians' manner of living, and that they were good people. After, the men went out and the women entered, and squatted in the same fashion around them, kissing their hands and feet, feeling them to ascertain if they were of flesh and bones like themselves; begging them to stay there with them at least five days. They showed the cinammon and pepper and other spices which the Admiral had given them, and they told them by signs how much of these there was around there, to the SE, but they didn't know if there was any in that place. Seeing that they had nothing that resembled a city they [the "embassy"] returned, and if they had been willing to allow those who wished to come with them, more than 500 men and women would have come with them; for they thought that they were returning to the sky. There came however with them a leading man of the town and one of his sons, and a man of his; the Admiral had speech with them, doing them much honor; they made signs of many countries and islands that there were in those regions; he thought of taking them to the Sovereigns, and he says that he knows not what fancy took the man, probably fear, for in the night he wished to go safely ashore. And the Admiral says that because he had the ship high and dry, he didn't wish to annoy him, and let him go, saying that he would return at daybreak; but he never returned. The two Christians met on the way many people who were going to their towns, women and men, with a firebrand in the hand, [and] herbs to drink the smoke thereof, as they

are accustomed:² they found no villages on the road of more than five houses, and all showed them the same reverence. They saw many kinds of trees and plants and fragrant flowers; saw birds of many kinds different from those of Spain, except partridges and nightingales³ which sang; and geese, of which there were many there; quadrupeds they saw not, except dogs which don't bark.⁴ The land is very fertile and much cultivated with yams and beans and [other] beans⁵ very different from ours, as well as panic-grass,⁶ and there were great quantities of cotton gathered and spun and woven, and in one house they saw more than 500 arrobas, and there could be had there every year 400 quintals. The Admiral says that it appears to him that they don't sow it, and that it gives fruit the year round; it is very fine, and has a large boll. All that that people possessed it is said that they give for a very low price, and a great bundle of cotton is given for a lace-tip or any other things that is offered.

"They are a people," says the Admiral, "very guileless and unwarlike, all naked, men and women, as their mothers bore them. It is true that the women wear merely a piece of cotton big enough to cover their pudendum, but no more, but they are very modest, and not very dark, less so than the Canary Islanders. I maintain, Most Serene Princes," says the Admiral here, "that if they had access to devout religious persons knowing the language, they would all turn Christian, and so I hope in Our Lord that Your Highnesses will do something about it with much care, in order to turn to the Church so numerous a folk, and to convert them as you have destroyed those who would not seek to confess the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. And after your days (for we are all mortal) you will leave your realms in a very tranquil state, and free from heresy and wickedness, and will be well received before the eternal Creator, to whom I pray to grant you long life and great increase of many realms and lordships, and both will and disposition to increase the holy Christian religion, as hitherto you have done. Amen. Today I get the ship off [the beach] and make preparations to depart on Thursday in the name of God, and to go to the SE to find gold and spicery and discover land." All these are the words of the Admiral, who intended to depart Thursday; but because the wind held contrary, he couldn't leave before 12 November.

[There is no journal for 7-11 November, which the fleet spent at Puerto Gibara.]

1. This important Indian village, one of the largest in Cuba, the seat of a cacique, was near the present town of Holguin, up the valley of the Rio Cacoyuguin about 25 miles inland from Gibara. The site has been excavated, and Señor Eduardo García Fera of Holguin has a fine collection of the objects there found, including part of a hawk's bell which may have been brought there by this expedition, and a stone *metate* which the Spaniards might have seen.

2. The first certain reference in history to smoking tobacco. Las Casas, *Historia* ch. 46 (1951 ed. I 231) describes the process. The Indians made cigars which they called *tobacos*, and inhaled the smoke. He says that the Spaniards are taking it up in Hispaniola, "though I don't know what taste or profit they find in

it." Esquemeling's *Buccaneers*, chap. xxvii (on Cuba) says "with uncut tobacco leaves they make little bullets that the Spaniards call *gigarros*, and which are smoked without a pipe."

3. *ruyseñores*. The Hispaniola mockingbird, *Mimus polyglottos dominicus*, called *ruyseñor* in Oviedo, lib. xiv, chap. 2 (1851 ed. I 443). A slender, long-tailed bird with gray back and white breast, whose song somewhat resembles that of the nightingale. Alex. Wetmore and Bradshaw H. Swales *The Birds of Haiti and the Dominican Republic* (Smithsonian Institution 1931), 331.

4. For the "geese" (*ansares*) see Journal for 22 December, note 4. For the dogs, see 28 October, note 4.

5. *manes y fexoes y habas*. See Journal for 4 November, note 4.

6. See Journal for 16 October, note 10.

MONDAY, 12 NOVEMBER

Left the Harbor and River of Mares¹ at the relieving of the dawn watch, to visit an island which many of the Indians on board declare to be *Babeque*,² where, they said by signs, the people gather gold on the beach by candles at night, and then (it is said) make bars of it with a hammer; and to go there it was necessary to turn your prow to the E by S. After having proceeded 8 leagues along the coast, he found a river, and thence going 4 more, he found another river which seemed very copious and bigger than any of the others that had been discovered.³ He did not wish to tarry nor to enter either of them for two reasons: the first and principal being that weather and wind were fair for going in search of the said island of *Babeque*; the other that if there were any populous or famous city therein near the sea, it would be visible, and to go up the river little vessels would be required, which those that they had were not;⁴ and so also much time would be lost; and such rivers are a thing to be explored separately. All that coast was heavily populated around the river, to which he gave the name *Rio del Sol*.⁵

He says that the Sunday before, 11 November, it had seemed well to capture some of the people of that river to take to the Sovereigns to learn our language, in order to find out what there is in the country, and on returning, to be interpreters of the Christians, and adopt our customs and the things of our faith. "For I saw and recognized," says the Admiral, "that this people has no religion, nor are they idolaters, but very gentle and without knowledge of what is evil, neither murder nor theft; and they are without arms, and so timid that a hundred of them flee before one person of ours, although they may be playing the fool with them; and they are credulous and cognizant that there is a God in the sky, and say that we have come from the sky, and any prayer that we tell them they repeat and make the sign of the cross. Thus Your Highnesses ought to resolve to make them Christians, for I believe that if you began, in a short time you would achieve the conversion to our holy faith of a multitude of folk, and would acquire great lordships and riches and all their inhabitants for Spain, because without doubt there is in these countries a tremendous quantity of gold; for not without reason these Indians on board say that there are in these islands places where they mine gold and wear it on their necks, ears, arms and legs, and the bracelets are very large, and also they have precious stone and pearls, and endless spicery.

"And in this Rio de Mares, whence I departed this night, without doubt there is a tremendous quantity of mastic, and more to be had if more be wanted; for the same trees, being planted, take root, and they are many and very big and have a leaf like lentisk, and the fruit, except that it is larger, both trees and fruit (as Pliny says), than what I have seen in the island of Chios in the Archipelago.⁶ And I ordered many of these trees to be tapped to see if they would yield resin to bring home, but as it was always raining while I was in the said river, I couldn't get any, save very little, which I bring to Your Highnesses; and also it may be that it is not the season for tapping them, for I believe it to be the proper season when the trees begin to come forth out of winter and seek to put forth the flowers; and here already the fruit is almost ripe. And also here there is a great quantity of cotton, and I believe it would sell very well here, without carrying it to Spain, but

to the cities of the Grand Khan which will doubtless be discovered, and many others of lords who will delight to serve Your Highnesses, and where they will take other things of Spain and of the Eastern countries, since these are to the westward of us, and here is an endless quantity of aloes,⁷ although it is not a thing to give great profit; but the mastic is worth knowing about because there isn't any except in the said island of Chios, and I believe that they [the Genoese] get out of it a good 50,000 ducats, if I don't remember amiss. And there is here in the mouth of the said river the best harbor I have yet seen, clean bottom, wide and deep, and a good place and site for having a town and fortress, for any ships whatever could lay with topsides right aboard the walls,⁸ and the country is very temperate and lofty, with very good water.

"Yesterday came aboard the ship a dugout with six young men, and five came on board; these I ordered to be detained and I am bringing them. And afterwards I sent to a house which is on the western bank of the river, and they brought seven head of women, small and large, and three boys. I did this because the [Indian] men would behave better in Spain with women of their country than without them; for already many times I happened to take men of Guinea that they might learn the language in Portugal, and after they had returned and it was expected to make some use of them in their own country, owing to the good company which they had enjoyed and the gifts that they had received; but in reaching home it never proved to be so. Others would not act thus. But these, having their women, will find it good business to do what they are told, and these women would teach our people their language which is the same in all these islands of India; and all understand each other, and they visit them all in their dugouts, which is not so in Guinea, where there are a thousand different languages, so that one does not understand the other.

"This night there came aboard in a dugout the husband of one of these women and father of three children, a boy and two girls, and said that he wished to come with them, and begged me hard, and they all now remain consoled with him who should be related to all. He is a man of over 45 years."⁹

All these are the exact words of the Admiral. He also says that it was somewhat cold, and hence it would not be good advice in winter to sail to the north to make discoveries. He sailed this Monday before sunset 18 leagues to the E by S, up to a cape to which he gave the name *Cabo de Cuba*.¹⁰

1. Puerto Gibara.

2. From the directions given, and from the fact that the *Pinta* visited it (see Journal for 6 January 1493), *Babeque* or *Babenque*, frequently mentioned hereinafter, was most probably Great Inagua Island. Las Casas thought this was just another name for Haiti, like *Bobío*, and that the tall tales of gold were founded on actual gold in the Cibao, for there was no gold on Great Inagua. *Historia*, chap. 47 (1951 ed. I 235).

3. Bahía Naranjo, and Bahía Sama. Columbus must have missed Bahía Vita by sailing a straight course to Punta Cañetes.

4. On his next voyage, Columbus was provided with small Cantabrian barques especially for exploring es-

tuaries and shoal waters; Morison *Second Voyage of Christopher Columbus* (1939) 26-27. He considered *Pinta* and *Niña* too big for coastal work.

5. Probably Bahía Sama.

6. An interesting reminiscence of his early voyages in the Aegean. But Columbus was wrong about the mastic (*almáciga*). See Journal for 5 November, note 2.

7. *lignaloë*. See Journal for 21 October, note 3.

8. Columbus is still talking about Puerto Gibara. His prediction of its future importance is better than most that he made.

9. In *Historia*, ch. 46 (1951 ed. I 232-4), Las Casas strongly disapproves this kidnapping, as contrary to natural law, justice and the law of nations.

10. Cabo Lucrecia, the large headland with three points: Sama, Lucrecia, and Mulas. The second is 29 miles from Puerto Gibara. The Journal for next day shows that Columbus named this promontory "Cape of

Cuba" because he thought it was the eastern extremity of the island, everything further to the eastward belonging to the "island of Bohio."

TUESDAY, 13 NOVEMBER

All this night he was standing off and on, as mariners say, which is beating to windward and making no progress,¹ in order to see a pass, which is an opening in the sierras, as between one sierra and another, which he began to see at sunset,² and where two very great mountains showed themselves, and it appeared that it divided the land of Cuba from that of *Vosio*,³ as said the Indians on board, by signs. When daylight came he made sail for the land, and passed a point which appeared to him last night to be distant about 2 leagues, and entered into a great gulf, 5 leagues to the SSW, and there remained 5 [leagues] more to reach the cape where between two great mountains there was an opening which he could not make out whether it was an inlet of the sea, or not. And as he wished to go to the island which they call *Veneque*,⁴ where he had news, as he understood, that there was much gold, the which island ran out to the E, [and] as he saw no large town; in order to protect himself from the violence of the wind which increased more than ever hitherto, he decided to put out to sea and proceed to the eastward with the wind which was N, and made 8 Roman miles an hour, and from 10 A.M. when he took that course until sunset he went eastward 56 Roman miles, which are 14 leagues from the Cabo de Cuba; and of the other land of *Bobio* which he left to leeward, beginning from the cape of the above-mentioned gulf, he explored, it seemed to him, 80 Roman miles, which are 20 leagues; and all that coast runs ESE and WNW.⁵

1. *estuvo a la corda*, which corresponds to the old English expression "sailing on a bowline." It may also mean sailing close-hauled, or standing off and on, i.e. making alternate "boards" or tacks off shore and back, with the sails trimmed to make slight progress, and so timed that the vessel returns as near as may be to the same position. This is evidently what Columbus did. He wished to be at about the same place at daybreak as at sunset in order to investigate the opening in the mountains.

2. On the 12th. The opening was the Mayari Valley between the Sierras del Cristal and the Sierras de Nipe. Columbus was so far off shore that the low land at the

head of the bay was below the horizon.

3. *Vosio*, *Bofio* and *Bobio* are all the same: what Columbus thought the Indians called Hispaniola. See 21 October, note 6.

4. Another spelling for *Babeque*—see 12 November, note 2.

5. A distance of 42 nautical (= 56 Roman) miles from 10 A.M. to sunset is right for a speed of 6 knots; but Columbus seems to have exaggerated more than usual. The fleet cannot have got beyond lat. 21° N, long. 75° W by nightfall. He still believes that the Mayari Valley divides Cuba from *Bobio*.

WEDNESDAY, 14 NOVEMBER

All yesterday night¹ the Admiral sailed cautiously, beating to windward, because he said it would not be wise to sail among these islands at night until they had been explored, [and] because the Indians on board said yesterday that it was a three days' journey from the Rio de Mares to the island of Babeque, by which we should understand days' journeys in their dugouts, which can make 7 leagues; and also the wind fell; and having to go to the E, he couldn't do better than E by S, and owing to other troubles which he there mentions,² he had to stand by until morning. At sunrise he decided to go

in search of a harbor, since the wind had changed from N to NE; and if he should find no harbor, it would be necessary to return to those harbors which he had left in the island of Cuba. He approached the shore, having gone that night 24 Roman miles to the E by S; steered to the S [blank] miles to land, where he saw many inlets and many islets and harbors; and because the wind was heavy and the sea very high, he didn't dare attempt to enter, but ran along the coast to the NW by W,³ watching if there was a harbor, and saw that there were many, but not very clear [to enter]. After having proceeded thus 64 Roman miles⁴ he found a very deep opening, about a quarter of a Roman mile wide and a good harbor and river where he entered, and turned her bow to the SSE and later to the S until he reached the SE, all good anchorage and very deep.⁵ There he saw so many islands that he couldn't count them, all of good size, and very high lands, full of different trees of a thousand sorts and endless palms. He marvelled greatly at seeing so many and such lofty islands, and assured the Sovereigns that the mountains which he has seen since day before yesterday, along these coasts and islands, it seems to him that there are no higher in the world, nor any so beautiful and clear, without clouds or snow, and at their edge a very great depth; and he says that he thinks that these islands are those innumerable ones which are found on the world maps at the end of the Far East; and he says that he thinks there are immense riches and precious stones and spiceries in them, and that they extend much further to the south, and spread out in every direction.⁶ Called it *La Mar de Nuestra Señora* and the harbor which is near the mouth of the entrance of the said islands he named *Puerto del Príncipe*, toward which he stood in no more than to see it from outside, until another visit, which he made on Saturday of the next week, as will then appear.⁷ He says so many and such things of the fertility and beauty and altitude of these islands that he found in this harbor, that he tells the Sovereigns not to



wonder at his praise of them, for he assures them that he thinks he tells not the hundredth part. Some of them seem to reach to the sky, and were shaped like diamond points; others have at their highest point a top like a table, at the foot of them very great depth, so that the biggest caravel could lie alongside; all full of trees and without rocks.⁸

1. Of 13-14 November.

2. At this point in the Journal there must have been some interesting nautical technique, which Las Casas unfortunately omits.

3. *sueste* in the Spanish text, an obvious scribe's error for *oueste*; "NW by SE" sounds like "The Wreck of the *Julie Plante*."

4. This distance must be meant to be cumulative. The fleet after steering 18 nautical (= 24 Roman) miles E by S, made 6 (= 8 Roman) miles S, picked up the land at Cayo Moa (as subsequently appears on 24 November), and then ran NW by W about 24 nautical (= 32 Roman) miles to Tánamo; total, 64.

5. Bahía Tánamo. But there is some corruption in Co-

lumbus's compass directions; there is an elbow in the entrance but the sailing directions are successively S, W, and SW.

6. See Journal for 14 October, note 4. It was rather an odd conceit of the Admiral to identify these islands in a landlocked bay with a Marco Polian archipelago.

7. Puerto del Príncipe, named after the Infante D. Juan, was probably Bahía Jucaro, the first anchorage inside the mouth of Tánamo Bay.

8. Barring exaggeration, this is a good description of the islands in Tánamo Bay. They are conspicuously steep and wooded, none over 250 feet high. Cayo Alto appears to have a flat top as viewed from certain angles.

THURSDAY, 15 NOVEMBER

He decided to proceed among these islands¹ with the ships' barges, and tells wonders of them, and that he found mastic and an infinite amount of aloes, and some of them [the islands] were cultivated with the roots from which the Indians make their bread,² and he found that they had lighted a fire in some places; fresh water he saw not. There were some people and they fled. Everywhere that he went he found depths of 15 and 16 fathoms, and all *basa*,³ by which he means to say that the bottom is sand and not rocks, and this the seamen like very much because rocks cut the ships' anchor cables.

1. Of Tánamo Bay.

2. Cassava or manioc.

3. Guillén remarks "The Admiral himself defines this

word, very rare in dictionaries." Nearest English equivalent would be "good holding ground." Greatest depth inside noted on the modern chart is 13 fathoms.

FRIDAY, 16 NOVEMBER

Because in all the regions, islands and lands where he entered, he always left a cross standing, he got into the barge and went to the mouth of these harbors, and on a point of land found two very big trees, one much longer than the other, and the one over the other made a cross, which it is said that a carpenter could not have made better proportioned. And, having prayed before that cross, he ordered a very big and tall cross to be made of the same trees. He found canes on that shore; and didn't know where they had grown, and believed that some river had carried them down to the beach, and in that he was right. He went to a *cala* within the entrance of the harbor, on the SE side (a *cala* is a narrow inlet that lets the sea water into the land).¹ There was there a height of stone and rock like a cape, and at the foot of it there was great depth, so that the largest carrack in the world could lie next the shore, and there was a place or corner where six ships might lie without anchors, as in a dry-dock.² It seemed that a fortress could be erected there at small cost, if at any time some famous trade arose in that Sea of Islands. Returning

to the ship, he found the Indians on board fishing for very large snails³ which there are in those seas; and he made the people dive in, to see if there was mother of pearl, which are the oysters wherein pearls grow; and they found many, but no pearls, and he attributed that to its not being the season for them, which he thought to be May and June. The seamen found an animal which seemed to be a *taso* or *taxo*;⁴ they fished also with nets, and caught among many others one fish that looked like a proper pig, not like a porpoise⁵ and which it is said that it was all shell, very hard, and it had no soft place except the neck and eyes, and an opening underneath to discharge its superfluities.⁶ He ordered it salted so that the Sovereigns might see it.

1. Best English equivalent would be "salt creek."

2. Literally, "as in a hall (*sala*)."² One of the cays just inside the entrance answers Columbus's description.

3. Conchs, no doubt.

4. Italian for "badger." It must have been a *butia*. See next day's Journal, note 4.

5. *tonina*. He means the common porpoise *Phocaena communis*; the word he uses for tunnies and bonitos is *atunes*. T.H.W.

6. Trunk-fish, or cow-fish (*Ostracion*). T.H.W. Dried specimens of this curious fish are still sold to tourists in the West Indies.

SATURDAY, 17 NOVEMBER

He got into the barge and went to see the islands he had not yet seen on the SW side; saw many others, very fertile and pleasant, and between them very great depth.¹ Some of them had *arroyos* of fresh water, and he believed that that water and the *arroyos* came from some springs on the heights of the mountains of the islands. Proceeding thence, he found a river of very fair and sweet water, and it flowed very cold along its bed; there was a very fair meadow, and many and very high palms, more than those that he had seen.² Found big nuts of the same kind as those of India,³ I believe; great rats⁴ like those of India also, and enormous crabs;⁵ many birds he saw, and there was a strong smell of musk, and he thought there should be some there. This day, of the six young men whom he captured in the Rio de Mares, and who were on board the caravel *Niña*, the two eldest escaped.

1. The fleet was still in Puerto Tánamo.

2. Cayo Largo, Puerto Tánamo, is conspicuous for a fine grove of royal palms that stand out against the sky as one sails by.

3. Columbus had doubtless read in Marco Polo lib. iii chap. 13, a description of "nuts of India," coconuts, and thought he had found the same thing here; but the coconut palm had not reached the Caribbean in 1492. The nuts that Columbus saw were probably the *Icacos* (*Chrysobalanus icaco*), which are considerably smaller than the coconut but of the same shape, and grow in

clusters in large trees. They are common along the coast of Cuba, and are edible. Br. León.

4. The large native rodent, now known as *jutia* or *butia*, of which two species are still common, *Capromys pilorides* and *C. melanurus*. The first is the more common in Oriente, where they are hunted and eaten. Br. León. The "world's greatest rat" shown in small circus side-shows in England and the United States is apt to be a Cuban *butia*.

5. *Cardisoma guanhumí*, the common land crab. T.H.W.

SUNDAY, 18 NOVEMBER

Again he went in the barges with many people from the vessels, and proceeded to set up the great cross which he had ordered to be made of the two said timbers at the mouth of the entrance to the said Puerto del Principe, in a visible place and cleared of trees; it was very tall and very fine to look upon. He said that the sea rises and falls here

much more than in any other harbor of those that he has seen in this country, and that this is no wonder because of the numerous islands, and that the tide is the reverse of ours, because here when the moon bears SW by S, it is low tide in that position.¹ Didn't leave here, because it was Sunday.

1. Puerto Tánamo has the same mean range of tides, 1.9 feet, as Puerto Gibara; it was the spring tide coming with the new moon that made it seem more. Columbus's observation about the time of high water being the reverse of what it was in Spain is correct. Bowditch gives the "mean high water lunitidal interval," more accurate than the old-fashioned "high water full and change," as 1h 40m for Huelva, and 7h 51m

for Puerto Tánamo. Thus, on a corresponding full or new moon (and new moon came on the 19th) it was low water at Tánamo at the hour, local time, when it would have been high water at Huelva or Palos. The actual mean interval between high and low water is 6h 13m; so Columbus made an error of only two minutes. This is one of his remarkably accurate observations.

MONDAY, 19 NOVEMBER

He departed before sunrise, and with light airs,¹ and afterwards at midday it blew somewhat from the E, and he sailed to the NNE. At sunset Puerto del Principe bore SSW, about 7 leagues distant. Saw the island of *Babeque* bearing due east, must have made a scant 60 Roman miles.² He sailed all this night to the NE a scant 60 Roman miles, and up to 10 A.M. Tuesday another 12, which are in all 18 leagues, and to the NE by N.³

1. *calma*, as Columbus uses it, does not mean a flat calm unless qualified by *muerta* or *chicha*, but a very light wind. He had evidently discovered the technique of departures from these narrow harbor-entrances of northern Cuba and Haiti: to leave before dawn with the land breeze; since the tradewind, drawing into the harbors, makes departure almost impossible during the

day for a sailing vessel.

2. He could not possibly have seen Great Inagua, which was about 85 miles distant. Probably the Indians, ever eager to please, pointed at a cloud in the right direction and cried "Babeque!"

3. He means that he made good 18 leagues to the NE by N.

TUESDAY, 20 NOVEMBER

Babeque or the islands of Baneque lay to the ESE, whence rose the wind so that it was contrary; and seeing that it didn't change, and the sea piling up, he decided to return to the Puerto del Principe, whence they had started, which was distant 25 leagues. Did not wish to go to the island called *Isabela* which was 12 leagues from him,¹ and where he could have come to anchor that day, for two reasons: the one, that he saw two islands to the S which he wished to look at;² the other, so that the Indians on board whom he had taken in Guanahaní (which he called San Salvador) 8 leagues from Isabela, might escape, and of them it is said it was necessary to take them to Castile, etc. They considered it understood, he says, that upon finding gold the Admiral would let them return to their country. Reached the neighborhood of Puerto del Principe, but could not make it, since it was night and the currents set them to the NW. He came about to return, and turned the prow to the NE, with a stiff breeze. The wind moderated and changed at the third night watch;³ put the bow on E by N. The wind was SSE, and changed at dawn to due S, and veered into the SE. At sunrise he figured⁴ he was off Puerto del Principe, that it bore to the SW and almost SW by W, and was distant 48 Roman miles, which are 12 leagues.

1. Another remarkably accurate calculation. His position at 10 A.M., as I plot it, making no allowance for leeway or current, was lat. $21^{\circ} 45' N$, long. $74^{\circ} 41' W$. From that point Cabo Hermoso of Fortune Island, which Columbus thought to be a part of Isabela (Crooked I.), bears 52 miles NNE, only 12 miles more than his estimate of 12 leagues (38 miles), and one point off his bearing; and Puerto del Príncipe (Tánamo) was only a few miles nearer than he guessed.

2. These islands were imaginary, as Columbus must

have ascertained within an hour or two; another instance of his not revising his Journal to delete mistakes. It may be argued that I have underestimated his run from Tánamo, and that these were the Mira por Vos Islets; but if his course is correct and distance underestimated, he would have first sighted them to the northward.

3. He must mean the watch that came on at 3 A.M.

4. *marcó*; I am indebted to Sr. Guillén for the meaning.

WEDNESDAY, 21 NOVEMBER

At sunrise he sailed to the E with wind S; made slight progress owing to head seas. Up to the hour of vespers he had gone 24 Roman miles. Afterwards, the wind changed to the E and he turned to the S by E, and by sunset had gone 12 Roman miles. Here the Admiral found that he was 42 degrees from the equator, on the north side, as in Puerto de Mares; but here he says that he has had the quadrant hung up until he reached land, to repair it; since it seemed to him that he could not be so far distant [from the equator]; and he was right, for it was impossible, since these islands were not more than [blank] degrees. To believe that the quadrant was correct it moved him to observe, he says, that the North Star was as high as in Castile,¹ and if this is the truth he had come very near and was in the same latitude as Florida. But then where now are those islands which he had in his hands? It would increase the belief in this if it had been very hot. But it is clear that *if* he had been on the coast of Florida, which would not have been hot but cold; and it's also manifest that in latitude 42° in no part of the earth is there believed to be heat, unless it be for some accidental reason; which hitherto I don't believe is known. From this heat which the Admiral says that he suffered there, he argued that in these Indies and there where he went there should be much gold.²

This day Martín Alonso Pinzón departed with the caravel *Pinta*, without the permission or desire of the Admiral, through cupidity, it is said, thinking that an Indian whom the Admiral had ordered aboard that caravel would give him much gold; and so he went off without waiting, with no cause of bad weather, but only because he wished to; and here says the Admiral, "Many other things he had done and said to me."

1. This was the second successive observation of Polaris by Columbus that gave the same erroneous result of 42° (see 30 October), the correct latitude being about 21° . See Journal for 2 November and Morison "Columbus and Polaris" *American Neptune* I (1941) 22, where I figure that he "shot" β Cephei (*Alfirk*)

instead of Polaris. Made the same "blooper" myself in November 1939.

2. The preceding paragraph, after "in Castile" is obviously an interpolation by Las Casas; Florida was not discovered until 1512.

THURSDAY, 22 NOVEMBER

Wednesday in the night he sailed to the S by E, with the wind E, and it was almost calm; at the third watch¹ it blew NNW; he was still going to the S, to see that land which lay thither, and when the sun rose he found himself as distant as on the day before, by reason of contrary currents, and the land was distant 40 Roman miles.² This night

Martín Alonso followed the course to the E, to go to the island of *Vaneque*, where the Indians said that there was much gold; he was in sight of the Admiral, about 16 Roman miles away. The Admiral proceeded all night toward the land, and had some of the sails taken in and showed a light all night, because it seemed that he [Pinzón] was coming towards him; and the night was very clear and the light wind favorable for coming to him had he so wished.³

1. Between 3 and 7 A.M.; it must have been near the beginning of this watch that *Pinta* parted from the fleet.

2. According to my plotting of the course, he was nearer the land than this. Columbus's distances are much overestimated on this run.

3. Columbus did not see *Pinta* again until January 1493,

near Monte Cristi. Capt. Cesáreo Fernández Duro, the historian who took up the cause of the Pinzón family, has an elaborate but (to me) unconvincing explanation of Martín Alonso's conduct in *Colón y Pinzón*, one of the *Memorias* of the Real Academia de la Historia (Madrid 1883). See Morison *A.O.S.* I 355.

FRIDAY, 23 NOVEMBER

The Admiral sailed all day towards the land to the S, always with light wind, and the current never let him come up to it, but he was as far off from it at sunset as in the morning. The wind was ENE and favorable to go to the S, but there was little of it; and beyond this cape stretched out another land or cape which also goes to the E, which those Indians aboard called *Bobío*;¹ which they said was very great and that there were in it people who had one eye in the forehead; and others who were called *Caníbales*, of whom they seemed to have great fear,² and when they saw that this course was taken, it is said that they were speechless, because these [people] ate them, and because they are a well-armed people. The Admiral says that he well believes that there is something in this; furthermore, because they were armed, they would be intelligent people, and he believed that they had captured some [Cubans] and that because these did not return home, it was said that those ate them. They believed the same of the Christians and of the Admiral when first they saw some of them.

1. Looking up a deep bay he saw no land, and so supposed the land beyond to be "Bobío," i.e., Haiti.

2. The first definite reference to the Caribs, from whom our word "cannibal" is derived because of their taste for human flesh.

SATURDAY, 24 NOVEMBER

He sailed all that night, and at the hour of terce made land by daylight at the flat island, the same place where he had arrived the previous week when he was going to the island of Babeque.¹ The first time he dared not approach the shore, because the sea broke heavily in that bay of mountains, and in the end² he came to the Mar de Nuestra Señora, where there were many islands, and entered the harbor that is joined to the mouth of the entrance of the islands; and says that if he had before suspected the existence of this harbor,³ he would not have busied himself in seeing the islands of the Mar de Nuestra Señora, nor would it have been necessary to return. But he says that it was all to the good that he had seen the said islands. And thus, having come to land, he sent the barge and sounded the harbor and found very good bottom at 6 fathoms, and up to 20, and clean, all sand. He entered it, turning the bow to the SW, and then turning to the W, keeping the flat

island to the N close aboard, the which, with its neighbor forms a lagoon in which all the ships of Spain could lie and be safe without cables from all winds. And this entrance on the SE side,⁴ which is entered by turning the bow to the SSE, has a way out to the W, very deep and very wide, so that it is possible passing between the said islands, and for anybody coming in from the North to get knowledge of them. The said islands lie at the foot of a great mountain,⁵ whose axis runs east and west, and it is of great length and higher and longer than all the others which are on this coast, where they are innumerable, and there is outside a reef the length of the said mountain, like a bar, which reaches up to the entrance. All this is on the SE side. And also on the side of the flat island there is another reef,⁶ although it's a little one; and so between the two there's great width and depth, as is said. Right at the entrance, on the SE side, within the said harbor they saw a great and very beautiful river, and with more water than hitherto they had seen, and one drank the fresh water as far down as the sea. At the entrance there's a bar; but inside it's very deep with 8 and 9 fathoms; all lined with palms and many trees, like the others.

1. The flat island was Cayo Moa Grande; he evidently had sighted it on 14 November, but flinched from trying the entrance owing to the surf.

2. I.e., on that former occasion.

3. Puerto Cayo Moa, which we found rather terrifying to enter in June 1940, when the marker buoy had drifted away. But Bill Stevens said "If Columbus did it we can do it," and in we went.

4. These directions are correct for entering Puerto Cayo Moa by the main channel. There is a 20-fathom sounding just inside the fairway between the breakers. The directions that follow are for the other entrance to the harbor, about 5 miles to the SE. Columbus's description of Puerto Cayo Moa is very accurate.

5. The Sierra de Moa.

6. El Bajo Yaguasey.

SUNDAY, 25 NOVEMBER

Before sunrise he entered the barge and went to see a cape or point of land to the SE of the flat island¹ about a league and a half distant, because it seemed to him that there should be a good river there. Right at the beginning of the cape, on the SE side, about two crossbow shots, he saw a large stream of very fine water, which came down from a mountain above and made a great noise.² He went to the river and saw some stones shining in it, with some veins in them of the color of gold;³ and he recollected that gold is found at the mouth of the river Tagus near the sea; and it appeared certain that [this river] must have gold, and he ordered some of those stones to be collected to bring to the Sovereigns. Being there, the ships' boys sang out that they saw pine trees;⁴ he looked toward the sierra and saw many great and such marvellous ones, that he could not exaggerate their height and straightness, like spindles, thick and elongated, whence he realized that ships could be had, and planks without number, and masts for the best ships of Spain. He saw oaks and arbutus,⁵ and a good river, and the means to build saw-mills. The land and the air are milder than hitherto, owing to the height and beauty of the sierra. He saw on the beach many other stones of the color of iron, and others that some said were from silver mines; all of which the river brought down. There he cut a lateen-yard and mast for the mizzen of the caravel *Niña*.

He went to the mouth of the river and entered a creek at the foot of that cape, on the SE side, very deep and great, in which 100 ships could lie without any cable or

anchors⁶ and the harbor, such as other eyes had never seen, the very high sierras, from which many very fine streams descended; all the sierras thick with pines, and over all very varied and beautiful forests of trees. Two or three other rivers lay behind. He describes all this in great style to the Sovereigns, and shows that to have seen it, especially the pines, he had felt inestimable happiness and delight, because here could be built as many ships as were wanted, bringing out their furniture except timber and pitch, of which here is a-plenty, and he declared that he had not described the hundredth part of what is there, and that it pleased Our Lord always to show him something better than the last; and always in what he has described up to here he goes from good to better, as well in respect of the lands and trees and plants and fruits and flowers as of the folk, and always of a different kind, and as in one place, so in another. The same in respect of the harbors and the waters. And finally he says that if he who sees it is so full of wonder, how much more will it be for him who hears of it, and that nobody can believe it without seeing.

1. Caya Moa Grande.

2. The Rio Moa, on which there is a waterfall. We rowed up as far as we could in June 1940, but failed to hear what Columbus heard.

3. Las Casas comments: "These should be stones of *margarita* [iron pyrites, fools' gold] which look like gold within the rivers, and there are many in the rivers of these islands." *Historia* chap. 47 (1951 ed. I 241).

4 The Cuban pine, *Pinus cubensis*, which grows abundantly on the slopes above this harbor; sawmills have been erected on the Rio Moa.

5. *robles y madroños*. "It is highly improbable that oaks were observed, inasmuch as our present records indicate that the only oak of the West Indies is limited in distribution to extreme western Cuba." H.U.B.

There are many Cuban trees, such as *Tabebuia angustata*, which resemble oak, and some of these are called *robles* in the West Indies. Br. Alain. Cf. Roig *Diccionario Botánico* (Havana, 1928) 612. The second tree was not *Arbutus unedo*, with which Columbus was familiar in Spain, but probably *Vaccinium cubense*, common in Oriente. Br. León.

6. The SE part of Puerto Cayo Moa, with anchorage about 3 miles long and half a mile to a mile wide. Columbus uses the hyperbole "to lie without anchoring" for any well-protected harbor, just as he says that tall palms or high islands "reach the sky." This great reef harbor with its background of greenclad mountains is singularly beautiful, as Columbus says, and still unspoiled by industry.

MONDAY, 26 NOVEMBER

At sunrise they weighed anchors from the harbor of *Sancta Catalina*¹ where he lay behind the flat island, and sailed along the coast with a light SW wind, in the direction of Cabo del Pico, which lay to the SE.² He reached the cape late because the wind dropped; and, arriving there, he sighted to the SE by E another cape which would be distant 60 Roman miles;³ and from there he sighted another cape which bore SE by S from the ship, and which seemed to him to be about 20 Roman miles distant to which he gave the name *Cabo de Campana*,⁴ which he couldn't reach by day, because of a flat calm. He proceeded that whole day about 32 Roman miles which are 8 leagues, in the course of which he noted and marked nine very remarkable harbors which all the seamen considered wonderful, and five great rivers; because he always sailed close along shore, in order to view everything well.⁵ All that country has very high and beautiful mountains, not dry and rocky but all accessible, and most beautiful valleys; and the valleys like the mountains were thick with high and leafy trees, which 'twas glorious to see; and there appeared to be many pines, and also behind the said Cabo del Pico, on the SE side, are two islets,⁶ each of which is about 2 leagues around, and within them three marvellous harbors and two

great rivers. In this entire coast he sighted no sort of settlement from the sea; there might have been some, and there are signs of it, because wherever they might wish to go ashore they found signs of their being people and many fires. He figured out that the land which today he saw on the SE side of the Cabo de Campana was the island that the Indians called *Bobío*; it seemed so, because the said cape stands out away from that land.⁷

All the people that he has found hitherto he says show tremendous fear of those of *Caniba* or *Canima*, and say that they live in this island of *Bobío*, which should not be very big, as it seems; and he believes that they [the Caribs] came to capture them in their lands and houses, since they [the natives] are very cowardly and know nothing of arms; and for this reason it seems to him, as to those Indians whom he brought [along], they are not accustomed to settle on the seacoast, because they are neighbors to that land. Of them [those on board] it is said that, after they saw that he was shaping a course for that land, they couldn't speak for fear lest they [the Caribs] make a meal of them, nor could he quiet their fears; and they said that these people had but one eye and had dogs' faces. And the Admiral believed they were lying, and thought that those who captured them must be under the sovereignty of the Grand Khan.

1. Puerto Cayo Moa. Named for St. Catherine because he discovered it on the vigil of her feast.

2. Punta Guarico. It looks sharp from the westward.

3. Probably a corruption for 6; compare the other distances for this day. If 6 miles it was Punta Jaragua that he saw. Cape Maisi is not visible from Punta Guarico.

4. "Cape Champaign." This promontory, now unnamed on maps or charts but locally called *Punta Plata*, stands out as one sails west along the coast, and first appears to be an extension of the conical mountain *El Veinto*. It has a rolling surface, and was probably cultivated by the Indians in 1492. The southern part of this cape is locally called *Punta Baez* or *Vaez*.

5. In eight leagues from the entrance of Puerto Cayo Moa he would have passed in succession Bahías Cañete and Yamanigüey, Río Jiguaney, Ensenada Jaragua,

Bahía de Taco, Puertos Cayaguaneque and Navas; and, beyond Cabo Campana, Ensenadas Naguarage, Baez, Cueva, Aguacate, and Puerto Maravi. It is a beautiful and much indented coast, and the mountains rise from behind the harbors to 1200-1800 feet altitude.

6. Cayo Medio and a peninsula unnamed on the chart, which resembles an island from seaward. These with the barrier reefs form three small harbors, Bahías Cañete and Yamanigüey, and a third unnamed. Cay and peninsula are 2½ to 3 miles in circumference. Río Jiguaney and another river empty there. Columbus's description is easily verified from the air.

7. As we sailed along this coast on 19 June 1940, there seemed to be a gap between the highlands around Punta Plata (Columbus's *Campana*) and those on Cape Maisi, so that the latter looks like an island. Columbus supposed it to be *Bobío* (Haiti).

TUESDAY, 27 NOVEMBER

Yesterday at sunset he arrived near a cape that he called *Campana*,¹ and since the sky was clear and the wind light, he did not choose to go near the land to anchor, although there were five or six marvellous harbors under his lee,² because he had tarried longer than he wished, owing to the desire that he had and delight that he received from seeing and wondering at the beauty and freshness of those lands wherever he sought to enter, and in order to tarry no more in prosecuting his enterprise. For these reasons he hove-to that night and lay-to until morning. And because the tide and currents had set him that night more than 5 or 6 leagues to the SE³ beyond where he had hove-to at nightfall, and where the land of Campana had appeared, and beyond that cape appeared a great inlet, which seemed to divide one land from the other, and had a sort of island in the middle,⁴ he gave orders to come about with the wind SW, and he came up to the place

where the opening had appeared, and found that it was only a great bay, and at the head of it, on the SE side, a cape, in which is a mountain lofty and square, that looked like an island.⁵ The wind backed into the N and he returned to take the SE course to run along the coast and discover all there was there; and he saw at the foot of that Cabo de Campana a marvellous harbor and a great river, and thence at a quarter of a league another river, and from there at half a league another river, and thence at another half-league another river; and thence at one league another river; and thence at another [league] another river; and thence at another quarter [league] another river; and thence at another league another great river, from which Cape Campana was 20 Roman miles distant and they lay to the SE.⁶ Most of these rivers had large entrances, wide and clear with wonderful harbors for very big ships, without sand bars or rocky shoals or reefs. Coming thus along the coast to the southeastward of the last-named river, he found a big village, the largest that he had found hitherto, and saw countless people come to the seashore making great shouts, all naked, with their darts in hand. He wished to speak with them, and lowered the sails and anchored and sent the barges of the ship and the caravel, with orders that they should offer no hurt to the Indians, nor suffer any; commanding that they should give them some trifles from the trading truck. The Indians made a show of not letting them jump ashore and resisting them. And as the barges approached nearer the shore and they [the Spaniards] had no fear of them, they retired from the sea. And, believing that if [only] two or three men jumped from the barges they would not be frightened, three Christians jumped out, saying in their language that they should have no fear, since they knew somewhat [of the language] through the conversation of those whom he carried on board. In the end they all took to flight; neither big nor little remained. The three Christians went to the houses, which are of straw and of the form of the others that they had seen, and found nobody, and nothing in them.

They returned to the vessels and made sail at midday to go to a beautiful cape that lay to the E, distant about 8 leagues.⁷ Having gone half a league past the same bay, the Admiral saw to the S a very singular harbor, and to the SE some lands, beautiful to admiration; like a steep plain within these mountains, and there appeared many [columns of] smoke and big villages in them, and the lands very much cultivated. Hence he determined to call at this harbor,⁸ and to try and have speech or conversation with them; and this was such that if he had praised the other harbors this one he praised the most, with its lands and wildernesses and surroundings and people. He speaks marvels of the beauty of the land and of the trees, where there are pines and palms,⁹ and of a great plain, which extends to the SSE, although it is not completely flat, but is full of smooth and low hills, the most beautiful thing in the world, and through it flow many streams of water, that fall from these mountains.

After anchoring the ship, the Admiral got into the barge to sound the harbor, which is like a little porringer.¹⁰ And when he was opposite the entrance to the S [of him] he found a mouth of a river, which was of such depth that a galley could enter it, and of such nature that it was invisible until he got there; and entering it for a boat's length it had a depth of 5 to 8 fathoms.¹¹ As he went along it was a marvellous thing to see the trees and greenery and the very clear water, and the birds and the amenity, so that he



says he did not wish to leave it. He went on, telling the men in his company that to give an account to the Sovereigns of the things that they saw a thousand tongues would not suffice, nor his hand to write, for it appeared that it was enchanted; he desired that many other persons sober and of reputation would come there and of them he says he is sure that they would not praise these things less than he does. The Admiral says more, and here are his words:

“I do not write how great will be the benefit to be derived hence. It is certain, Lord Princes, that when there are such lands there should be profitable things without number; but I tarried not in any harbor, because I sought to see the most countries that I could, to give the story of them to Your Highnesses, and also I do not know the language, and the people of these lands do not understand me nor I them, nor does anyone on board. And these Indians whom I took along I often misunderstood, taking one thing for the opposite, and I don’t trust them much, for many times they have tried to flee. But now, please Our Lord, I shall see the most that I may and little by little I shall come to understand and know, and I will have this language taught to people of my household, because I see that all so far have one language.¹² And afterwards the benefits will be known, and it will be endeavored to have all these folk Christians, for that will easily be done, since they have no religion; nor are they idolaters. And Your Highnesses will command a city and fortress to be built in these parts, and these countries converted; and I certify to Your Highnesses that it seems to me that there could never be under the sun [lands] superior in fertility, in mildness of cold and heat, in abundance of good and pure water; and the rivers are not like those of Guinea, which are all pestilential. For, praise be to Our Lord, up to the present among all my people nobody has even had a headache or taken to his bed through sickness; except one old man with pain of gravel, from which he has suffered all his life, and he was well at the end of two days. This that I say applies to all three

vessels. So may it please God that Your Highnesses send here (or that there come) learned men, and they will ascertain the truth of all. And since before I have spoken of the site of a town and fortress on the Rio de Mares because of the good harbor and the surroundings, it is certain that all I said is the truth; yet there is no comparison with what there is here or at the Mar de Nuestra Señora; for inland there must be great villages and innumerable people and things of great value; for here, and in all else that I have discovered and have hopes of discovering, before I return to Castile, I say that all Christendom will traffic with them, but most of all Spain, to which all this should be subject. And I say that Your Highnesses ought not to consent that any foreigner does business or sets foot here, except Christian Catholics, since this was the end and the beginning of the enterprise, that it should be for the enhancement and glory of the Christian religion, nor should anyone who is not a good Christian come to these parts."¹³ All these are his own words.¹⁴

There he went up the river and found some branches of the river, and going round the harbor he found at the mouth of the river were some very charming groves, like a very delightful orchard, and there he found a dugout or canoe made of one log, as large as a rowboat of 12 thwarts, very fine; it was tied up under a boathouse or shed and covered with great palm leaves so that neither sun nor rain could do it damage. And he says that there was a proper place for building a town or city and fortress for a good harbor; good water, good land, good surroundings, and much wood.¹⁵

1. See 26 November, note 4.

2. See 26 November, note 5.

3. Obviously a scribe's error for NW, since he couldn't later have "come about with the wind SW" if he had been drifting to the SE of his objective.

4. See 26 November, note 7.

5. *El Yunque* (the Anvil). This flat-topped mountain "rises to an elevation of 1932 feet at 4 miles westward of Puerto Baracoa; it is a remarkably steep and flat-topped mountain . . . and may be seen for a distance of 40 miles." *Sailing Directions for the West Indies* (1936) I A 167. We sighted it 19 June 1940 when off Punta Guarico.

6. The puzzle of fitting this description to the topography of the Oriente coast has baffled all annotators. Columbus's list cannot begin further North than Puerto Cayaguaneque, which might be called "at the foot of" C. Campana, nor continue further south than Rio Duaba, since the next harbor is Baracoa. The mouth of the Duaga is only 8 instead of 15 nautical miles SE of C. Campana. Between Cayaguaneque and Duaba there are at least 8 other rivers and coves, but their spacing does not fit Columbus's description.

7. Cape Maisi, the northern tangent of which bears E by S from off Playa de Duaba where this incident took place, distant 16 miles.

8. Puerto Baracoa.

9. Von Humboldt noticed this unique combination on the hills above Baracoa, and comments on the accuracy of Columbus's description, in *Examen Critique* III 23-

24. But the pines have since been cleared off.

10. *escodilla*, which is exactly the shape of Puerto Baracoa; by others mistranslated "bowl" and "hammer." The passage from here to the place where Las Casas begins direct quotation, is given in direct quotation by Ferdinand Columbus (*Historie* chap. 30; Keen trans. p. 74). This quotation attests the fidelity of the abstract of Las Casas, who has done nothing more than transpose from the first to the third person, and delete some of the repetitions.

11. Correct for the Rio Macaguanigua, where lighters and trading sloops moor today. This passage has been so mistranslated as to mean that the ship's boat was 5 to 8 fathoms long, from which one writer has inferred the length of the *Santa Maria!*

12. Although Columbus appears to contradict himself, his meaning is clear. The Cuban and Bahamian Arawak spoke basically the same language, but easily misunderstood one another.

13. Here may be found the first suggestion of the exclusive colonial policy that Spain and other nations followed.

14. Las Casas adds in the *Historia* lib. i chap. 48 (1951 ed. I 244), "although some of them are not in perfect Castilian language, since that was not the mother tongue of the Admiral."

15. Puerto Baracoa is now a lively shipping port for fruit, and the largest town located at any place visited by the Admiral on his First Voyage.

WEDNESDAY, 28 NOVEMBER

He remained in that harbor that day because it rained and was very overcast, although he could have run along the whole coast before the wind which was SW and dead astern; but because he might not have been able to see the land well and, not being acquainted, it was dangerous for the vessels, and he did not leave. The vessels' people went ashore to wash their clothes and some went a short distance inland; they found large villages and the houses empty, because all had fled; they returned down along another river, bigger than that [near] where they were in the harbor.

THURSDAY, 29 NOVEMBER

Because it rained and the sky accordingly was overcast, he did not depart; some of the Christians went to another village around the NW side and they found in the houses nobody and nothing, and on the way met an old man who could not flee. They took him and told him that they sought to do him no ill, and gave him some little things of the trading truck, and let him go. The Admiral would have liked to have seen him to clothe him and have speech, because he was much pleased with the felicity of that land and its suitability to make a settlement there, and he judged that there ought to have been great villages. They found in a house a cake of wax that he brought to the Sovereigns; and he said that where wax was found, there should also be a thousand other good things.¹ Also the seamen found in a house a man's head in a basket, covered with another basket and hanging to a post of the house; and they found another of the same sort in another village. The Admiral believed that they must be those of some ancestors of the family; because those houses were of a kind where many persons live in one, and they should be relations descended from only one.²

1. Las Casas observes (lib. i, chap. 48; 1951 ed. I 245), that this wax could not have been made in Cuba, but came from Yucatan, probably by means of canoes that

were wrecked on Cape Maisi.

2. This was indeed a sepulcher; the Cuban natives were not head hunters.

FRIDAY, 30 NOVEMBER

He could not depart because the wind was E, very contrary to his course. He sent 8 men well armed, and with them two Indians of those he had on board, to view those towns of the back country, and to have speech. They went to many houses, and found nobody nor anything, for all had fled. They saw four young men who were digging in their fields. When they saw the Christians they turned to flee; couldn't catch them. They went, it is said, a considerable way, saw many villages, and very fertile land all cultivated, and great rivers of water, and near one they saw a dugout or canoe of 95 palms' length, of a single log, very handsome, and 150 persons could find room in it and navigate.

SATURDAY, 1 DECEMBER

He did not depart for the same reason of contrary wind, and because it rained hard. He raised a great cross at the entrance of that harbor (which I believe he called *Puerto*

Santo)¹ upon some bare rocks. The point is the one on the SE side of the harbor entrance, and whoever wishes to enter this harbor should favor more the point on the NW than that of the SE side, because, although next the rocky shores of both there is 12 fathoms' depth and very clear, at the entrance to the harbor to the SE there is a rock which rises above the water,² which is distant from the point so much that one could pass between if necessary; since at the foot of the rock and of the cape, there is everywhere 12 or 15 fathoms' depth; and at the entrance you should turn your bow to the SW.

1. Puerto Baracoa; the remark is Las Casas's, and his conjecture is correct. It is so called on Juan de la Cosa's map dated 1500.

2. Roca Buren, an isolated rock located about 20 yards west of Punta Barlovento, is steep-to and uncovered at

low water. There is only a boat passage between it and the shore. The 12-fathom curve bends slightly from a straight line between the two points at the harbor entrance.

SUNDAY, 2 DECEMBER

The wind was still contrary and he couldn't leave. He says that every living night there is a land breeze, and that all the vessels that might lie there need have no fear of any storm whatsoever, because it could not reach inside by reason of a rock which is at the beginning of the harbor, etc.¹ In the mouth of that river it is said that a ship's boy found certain stones that seemed to contain gold. Brought them along to show to the Sovereigns. He says that there are large rivers a lombard shot thence.

1. Roca Buren is no protection against the tradewind swell, which comes into the harbor, and where vessels generally moor bow and stern.

MONDAY, 3 DECEMBER

Because the weather was still contrary he did not leave that harbor, and decided to go and see a very fine cape, a quarter-league from the harbor to the SE.¹ He went with the boats and some armed men. At the foot of the cape there was a mouth of a good river; he turned the bow to the SE to enter, and it was 100 paces wide, had a fathom's depth at the entrance or mouth; but within there were 12 fathoms and 5, and 4, and 2, and as many ships as there are in Spain could lie there.² And leaving an arm of that river he went to the SE and found a creek in which he saw 5 very great dugouts, which the Indians call canoes, like rowboats, very handsome and well worked, which was, it is said, a pleasure to see; and at the foot of the mountain he saw everything cultivated. They were under very thick trees; and going by a path which led to them, they came across a boathouse very well ordered and covered, so that neither sun nor water could do them damage, and within it was another canoe made of a single log like the others, like a rowboat³ of 16 thwarts, and it was a pleasure to see their workmanship and fine appearance. He climbed a mountain and behind it found it all level, and planted with many things of the country, and pumpkins,⁴ so that it was glorious to see; and in the midst of it was a great village. He came suddenly upon the people of the village, and when they saw them, men and women took to flight. The Indian from on board whom they had along with them, told them that they need not fear, for these were good people. The Admiral had them given hawk's bells and brass rings and green and yellow glass beads, with which

they were well pleased, seeing that they had neither gold nor other precious thing, and that it would suffice to leave them in peace, and that the whole neighborhood was inhabited, and that the rest had fled from fear. And the Admiral assures the Sovereigns that 10 men could put to flight 10,000, so cowardly and timid are they; and neither do they bear arms, except some darts, on the end of which they have a sharp reed, fire-hardened. He decided to return. He says that he got all the darts away from them by a good ruse, bartering in such manner that they gave them all.

Turning then to where they had left the boats, he sent certain Christians to the place where they had climbed up, since it seemed to him that he had seen a great apiary. Before those whom he had sent returned, many Indians gathered and came to the barges where the Admiral and all his people were assembled; one of them went into the river next the stern of the barge and made a great speech, which the Admiral did not understand, except that from time to time the other Indians raised their hands to the sky and gave a great shout. The Admiral thought that they were reassuring him and that his coming pleased them; but he saw the face of the Indian whom he took with him change color and become yellow as wax, and he trembled much, saying by signs that the Admiral had better leave the river, that they sought to kill them. And he went up to a Christian who held a loaded crossbow and showed it to the Indians, and the Admiral understood that he told them that they would all be killed, because that crossbow shot far and to kill. Also he took a sword and drew it from its scabbard, brandishing it, saying the same; the which when they heard, all took to flight, the said Indian still trembling from cowardice and slight courage, and he was a strong man of good stature. The Admiral would not leave the river until he had rowed over to that land where they were, and they were very many, all painted red and naked as their mothers bore them, and some of them with feathers on the head and other plumes, all with their bundles of darts.

"I went up to them and gave them some pieces of bread and demanded their darts, for which I gave to some a hawk's bell, to others a brass ring, to others some beads, so that all were pleased, and all came to the barges, and gave what they had for whatever they were given. The seamen had killed a turtle and the shell was in the barge in pieces; and the ships' boys gave them bits as big as a fingernail and the Indians gave them bundles of darts. They are people like the others that I have found," says the Admiral, "and of the same credulity; they think that we have come from the sky, and of that which they have, they give readily for whatever is given them, without saying that it is little, and I think they would do so with spicery and gold, if they had them. I saw a beautiful house, not very big, and with two doors, for so they all are, and I entered it and saw a marvellous work like rooms,⁵ made in a certain way that I know not how to describe, and hanging from the ceiling of it shells and other things. I thought that it was a temple, and called them, and asked by signs if they said prayers there; they said no; and one of them climbed up and gave me all there was there, and I took some of it."

1. Punta Rama, about $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles from the harbor.

2. This must have been the Rio Miel, which empties into Miel Bay just E of Baracoa. The mouth has now silted up and the river is navigable only by canoes.

3. *fusta*, a long boat fitted with sails but mostly propelled by oars. A rough equivalent in nautical English would be a 16-oar barge.

4. *calabazas*. This must have been either *Langenaria*

vulgaris, the bottle gourd, or *Cucurbita moschata*, the edible winter squash; *C. pepo*, the common pumpkin, had not yet reached Cuba. (Br. Alain.) The context shows that the calabash tree (*Crescentia cujete*) was

not the plant observed. The European gourd, *Lagenaria siceraria*, was not a native of the W.I. See L. H. Bailey *The Garden of Gourds* (N.Y. 1937) 91-93.
5. *cámatas*, probably woven mats used as partitions.

TUESDAY, 4 DECEMBER

He hoisted sail with a light wind, and left that harbor which he called *Puerto Santo*. At two leagues' distance he saw a good river of which he spoke yesterday. He went along the coast and ran by the whole country, passing the said cape ESE and WNW, up to *Cabo Lindo*, which is E by S of *Cabo del Monte*, and from one to the other is 5 leagues.¹ A league and a half from Cape Monte there is a great river, somewhat narrow.² It seems to have a good entrance and was very deep, and thence at three quarters of a league he saw another very great river, and it must come from very far. At the mouth it is a good 100 paces wide, and in it no bar, and in the mouth 8 fathoms and a good entrance, because he sent the barge to view and sound it;³ and fresh water comes down to the sea, and it is one of the most considerable that he had found, and ought to have big villages. After *Cabo Lindo* there is a great bay, which would be a good passage-way⁴ for ENE and SE and SSW.

1. *Cabo Lindo* must be Punta Fraile, which is just 13 miles E by S of Punta Rama, the one that he calls *Cabo del Monte*.

2. *Puerto Boma*, $4\frac{1}{4}$ miles from Punta Rama.

3. *Puerto Mata*, $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles from *Puerto Boma*, a little

round harbor with a least depth of 40 feet at the entrance, and a river flowing in.

4. The Windward Passage. Columbus, having twice been fooled by bays that he thought were straits, at first thought that the Windward Passage was just another bay. *Pozo*, evidently an error for *passo*, passage.

WEDNESDAY, 5 DECEMBER

All this night he sailed off-and-on off Cape Lindo, where he passed the night, in order to see the land which went to the E, and at sunrise he saw another cape to the E, at $2\frac{1}{2}$ leagues;¹ passed it, saw that the coast turned to the S and trended to the SW, and saw a very beautiful and high cape on the said course, and the two were 7 leagues apart.² He would have liked to go there, but from the desire that he had to go to the island of Babeque which lay to the NE, according to what the Indians said, he gave it up. Neither could he go to Babeque because the wind that arose was NE. Proceeding thus he looked to the SE and saw land, and it was a very great island, of which it's said he already had information from the Indians that they called it *Bohío*, [and it] was inhabited by people.³ Of these people it is said that they of Cuba or Juana and all the other islands have great fear, because it is said that they eat men.⁴ Other and very marvellous things the said Indian related by signs, but the Admiral doesn't say that he believes them, and that those of that island *Bohío* must be more astute and of better skill than they to capture them; because they are very weak-hearted. So, as the wind was NE and northerly he decided to leave Cuba or Juana, which up to then he had considered mainland by reason of its extent;⁵ for he had easily gone about 120 leagues along it.⁶ And he departed to the SE by E. Since the land that he had sighted lay to the SE he took this precaution, because always the wind veered from the N to the NE, and thence to E and SE.⁷ The wind increased greatly

and he hoisted all his sails, the sea being smooth and the current favoring since the morning, so that up to 1 P.M. he made 8 Roman miles an hour, and there were 6 hours, though not complete; for he says that there the nights were about 15 hours long.⁸ Afterwards he made 10 Roman miles per hour, and thus up to sunset must have gone 88 Roman miles which are 22 leagues, all to the SE.⁹ And as night was coming on he ordered the caravel *Niña* to go ahead and sight the harbor by daylight, because she was speedy; and arriving at the mouth of the harbor,¹⁰ which was like the Bay of Cadiz, and because it was already night, she sent in her barge to sound the harbor, and which showed the light of a candle; and before the Admiral came up to where the caravel was beating about, and hoping that the barge would show signals to enter the harbor, the light on the barge went out. The caravel, when she saw no light, ran off shore and showed a light to the Admiral, and coming up to her, they told him what had happened. At this point they of the barge showed another light; the caravel went to it, and the Admiral could not, and stayed all that night beating about.¹¹

1. Cape Maisi, the easternmost extremity of Cuba, about 6½ miles southeasterly of Punta Fraile. Columbus named it *Cabo Alpha et Omega* on his Second Voyage.

2. Punta Negra, a conspicuous dark, barren, and steep point, is about 11 miles southwesterly of a position well off C. Maisi.

3. Haiti at last! Columbus sighted the mountains behind Cape St. Nicolas at a distance of about 40 miles. For the name Bohío see 21 October, note 6.

4. This is the first statement that Columbus had named Cuba *Juana* after the infante Don Juan, heir of Castile. The name appears on some early maps but did not endure. But the Haitians were not cannibals; the nearest Caribs were in Puerto Rico.

5. Both this and the foregoing mention of Cuba suggest that Columbus was losing faith in its continental character. But Las Casas says (lib. i, chap. 50) that the Admiral named Cape Maisi *Alpha et Omega* because he thought it was the end of the Asiatic mainland, as Cape St. Vincent was of Europe; that he was led to this belief by the letter of Toscanelli, and considered Cuba to be China, and Hispaniola, Japan.

6. He had only coasted along it some 240 nautical miles, but without counting the various doublings and tacks. Another instance of his using a "land league."

7. A very keen observation of the diurnal variation in the tradewind. Columbus kept to windward of his course, knowing that he would be headed during the day.

8. The correct length was 13½ hours from sunset to sunrise.

9. Columbus's reckoning for the Windward Passage is difficult to follow, and was certainly inaccurate whatever way you figure it. Between 10.00 A.M. and sunset, when the fleet was off Port St. Nicolas, it cannot have logged more than 45 nautical or 60 Roman miles, even allowing for the current, which flows contrary to what he thought; he therefore overestimated his speed by at least 10 per cent.

10. Port St. Nicolas, Haiti.

11. The bearings that he took at dawn 6 December show that during the night he sailed to the NE with the land breeze, in order to get a good slant when the tradewind made up.

THURSDAY, 6 DECEMBER

When day dawned he found himself 4 leagues from the harbor; gave it the name *Puerto Maria*,¹ and saw a fine cape to the S by W to which he gave the name *Cabo de la Estrella*,² and it appeared to him that it was the furthest land of that island to the S, and the Admiral was distant from it 28 Roman miles. There appeared another land to the E like an island, not large, and he was distant from it about 40 Roman miles.³ There lay to the E by S another cape very fine and well formed, to which he gave the name *Cabo del Elefante*,⁴ and it was distant 54 Roman miles. There lay to the ESE another cape to which he gave the name *Cabo de Cinquín*.⁵ It was distant about 28 Roman miles. There lay a great fissure or opening or gorge to the sea, which seemed to be a river, to the SE east-

erly;⁶ there were about 20 Roman miles between him and the gorge. It appeared that between⁷ the Cabo del Elefante and that of Cinquín there was a very great channel, and some of the seamen said that it was the separation from the island to which he gave the name *Isla de la Tortuga*.⁸ That great island appeared to be very high land, not surrounded with mountains but level with fine fields, and appeared all cultivated, or a great part of it, and the crops looked like those of wheat in the month of May in the fields of Cordova.⁹ They saw many fires that night, and by day many [columns of] smoke like beacons, which appeared to be as a warning of some people with whom they were at war. All the coast of this land trends to the E.

At the hour of vespers he entered the said harbor, and gave it the name *Puerto de San Nicolao*, because it was the feast of St. Nicholas, for his honor; and at the entrance thereof he marvelled at its beauty and graciousness; and although he had given great praise to the harbors of Cuba, he says that without doubt this is no less, surpassing them, and none is its equal. At the mouth and entrance it is a league and a half wide, and the vessel's bow should be held to the SSE, although from the great breadth the bow can be turned where you wish. It extends in this manner to the SSE 2 leagues.¹⁰ On the S side of the entrance there's a sort of cape, and from there extends about the same distance to a cape, where is a very fine beach and a field of trees of a thousand kinds, and all laden with fruit which the Admiral believed to be spiceries and nutmegs (but they weren't ripe and he didn't recognize them), and a river in the middle of the beach.¹¹ The depth of this harbor is marvellous, since at the distance of a [blank] from the shore the sounding-line or lead found no bottom at 40 fathoms,¹² and within that distance it has a depth of 15 fathoms and very clean [bottom], and so the depth of this entire harbor inside from cape to cape at a *passada* from shore is 15 fathoms and clear; and in the same way all this coast is on soundings and clear, so that there does not seem to be a single shoal; and at its foot, at as much as a boat oar's length from land, there are 5 fathoms. And beyond the length of the said harbor as one goes to the SSE, and throughout that length a thousand carracks could beat up. An arm of the harbor opened up to the NE, going in for a good half league, and always of the same breadth, as if they had measured it with a string. It lay in such a manner that when within that arm, which would be about 25 *pasos* wide, the mouth of the great entrance couldn't be seen, so that the harbor was landlocked; and the depth of this arm is 11 fathoms at the beginning as at end, and all mud or clean sand, and near enough to the shore to put the gunwales alongside the grass, there are 8 fathoms.¹³

The whole harbor is very breezy and uninhabited, clear of trees. All this island seemed to him more rocky than any other that he had found hitherto, trees smaller, and many of them of the same sort as in Spain, such as live oaks and arbutus¹⁴ and others, and the same with the plants. The land is very high, and all open country or clear, and with very good air, and no such cold has been seen as here, although it is not to be reckoned as cold, but he called it so in comparison with the other countries. Facing that harbor there's a beautiful plain, and in the middle of it the above-mentioned river; and in that neighborhood he says there should be large villages, judging from the dugouts in which they navigate, as many and as large as a rowboat of 15 thwarts. All the Indians ran away

and fled when they saw the ships. Those of the smaller islands whom he had on board had a great desire to go to their own country, since they thought, says the Admiral, that after leaving there he had to take them home, and they regarded it as suspicious that he didn't take the course for their homes; on account of which he says that he didn't believe what they said, nor did he understand them well, nor they him, and he says that they had the greatest fear in the world of the people of that island. And thus, to try and have speech with the people of that island, it would have been necessary to tarry some days in that harbor; but he didn't do this because he saw much country, and from doubt that the weather would hold. He hoped in Our Lord that the Indians on board would come to know his language and he theirs, and later he would return and talk with these people, and it would please His Majesty, says he, that he would find some good trade in gold before he returned.

1. Promptly renamed *Puerto de San Nicolao*, as stated in the next paragraph. It is still called Port St. Nicolas, or St. Nicolas Môle; a magnificent harbor which the British Navy used during the Napoleonic wars, and which the United States tried to acquire as a naval base in the 19th century. The place was almost deserted when I visited it in 1940.

2. Columbus later identified this with the present Cape St. Nicolas Môle but it is probable that this bearing was taken on Cape Foux, which juts out about 3 miles to the SW of St. Nicolas Môle.

3. Tortuga. The bearing was evidently taken on the highest point.

4. Called on modern maps Cape Carenero, Pointe de Carénage, or Grande Pointe. It does resemble an elephant's head and trunk as you approach from the west; but Columbus was probably thinking of Aristotle's example of elephants in Africa and India to prove that parallels of latitude produced like fauna and flora.

5. Probably so called because it was the fifth place named. Now Pointe Jean Rabel. This four-point bearing was remarkably accurate—see note 8.

6. I have been unable to identify this gorge, and those more familiar with the coast than I insist that there is none.

7. This must be a corruption for *al norte del* (to the N

of), for the rest of the sentence shows that the *entrada* was Tortuga Channel, and from bearings taken this and next day it is certain that *Cabo del Elefante* was C. Carenero, east of Port de Paix.

8. "of the turtle": still known as Tortuga or La Tortue. This and Cape St. Nicolas are the earliest names given by Columbus that have never been changed. These four bearings taken by the Admiral were very accurate, and place him at lat. 20° 03' N, long. 73° 24' W, about 13 miles N by E of Cape St. Nicolas Môle. The distances, however, are much exaggerated.

9. Tortuga has a level sky-line from a distance; the "cultivated fields," however, were woods.

10. For "leagues" in this and the previous sentence, read "nautical miles."

11. The river now disappears under the sand behind the beach.

12. The 40-fathom line runs at a distance of 300 to 700 yards from the shore up to a point off the village of Le Môle. In parts of the harbor no bottom has been found at 100 fathoms.

13. The *Carénage* or inner harbor is 5 to 7 fathoms in depth, with a few soundings of 11. The width is much greater than Columbus says, 1200 feet at the narrowest part.

14. *madroños*. See 25 November, note 5.

FRIDAY, 7 DECEMBER

At the relieving of the dawn watch¹ he made sail and left that *Puerto de Sant Nicolás*, and sailed with the wind SW 2 leagues to the NE, up to the cape that the Carénage makes,² and a promontory lay to the SE and the *Cabo de la Estrella* to the SW, distant from the Admiral 24 Roman miles.³ Thence he sailed eastward along the coast up to Cabo Cinquín, which would be 48 Roman miles. The truth is that 20 were made to the E by N,⁴ and that coast is all very high and of very great depth, close to the shore there are 20 or 30 fathoms, and as near as a lombard's shot, no bottom could be found;⁵ all of which the Admiral discovered that day along the coast, much to his delight, with the wind SW.

The promontory above-mentioned extends, it is said, within a lombard shot of Port St. Nicolas, so that if the space were intercepted or cut through, it would be made an island; the rest measured in a circuit would be 34 miles.⁶ All that country was very high, and no great trees, but only ilex⁷ and arbutus, like to the country of Castile, it is said. Before they reached the said Cabo Cinquín, some 2 leagues, he found a craggy spot which seemed to be an opening in a mountain, through which he discovered a very great valley, and saw that it was all sown as with barley, and felt that there must be large villages in that valley, and at its sides there were great and very high mountains, and when he reached the Cabo Cinquín the cape of the Island of Tortuga lay to the NE of him, it was probably about 22 Roman miles; and at a lombard's shot distance is a rock in the sea, which sticks up high and can easily be seen.⁸ And, the Admiral being off the said cape, the *Cabo del Elefante*,⁹ bore E by S and distant 70 Roman miles, and the whole country very high and after 6 leagues [more] he found a great promontory, and saw in the land behind many great valleys and plains and very high mountains, all resembling Castile; and thence at 8 Roman miles he found a very deep but narrow river, although a carrack could easily enter it, and the mouth all clear without bar or rocks;¹⁰ and thence at 16 Roman miles he found a very wide and deep harbor; found no bottom at the entrance nor less than 15 fathoms at the edges three *pasos* from the shore, and runs inland a quarter of a league.¹¹ And although it was yet early, about one hour after midday, and the wind was aft and still strong, because the sky showed that it was trying to rain heavily, and it was very overcast, dangerous [conditions] for a known shore (and how much more for an unknown one), he decided to enter that harbor, which he called *Puerto de la Concepción*,¹² and went ashore in a not very great river, which was at the head of the harbor, which comes through some plains and fields whose beauty was a wonder to see. He cast nets to fish, and before he reached land a mullet¹³ like those of Spain jumped right into the boat; up to that time he had not seen fish like those of Castile. The seamen fished and caught some, and soles¹⁴ and other fishes like those of Castile. He went a short distance into that country, which is all cultivated, and heard sing the nightingale and other songbirds like those of Castile. They saw five men; but they would not await them, and fled. He found myrtles¹⁵ and other trees and plants like those of Castile, and such is the country and the mountains.

1. 7:00 A.M.

2. The low, narrow neck at the head of the Carénage. It is a 6 to 7 mile sail from Columbus's anchorage around Cape St. Nicolas Môle to the north side of this neck.

3. Cape St. Nicolas can be sighted, bearing SW, over this low neck at the head of the Carénage, but it was not more than 8 miles distant.

4. Apparently Columbus is here checking up on himself, and correcting his faulty estimate of 48 Roman miles, made when he first sighted Pte. Jean Rabel (*Cabo Cinquín*) from the Môle. The correct distance is 16 nautical (=21 Roman) miles.

5. Correct; the 100-fathom line runs up to half a mile off this coast.

6. Navarrete reads this "3 or 4 miles," which is about the correct circumference. The neck is about half a

mile wide, which gives some indication of what Columbus meant by the length of a lombard shot.

7. *carrascas*. *Ilex spp.*, the live oak, of which there are about 15 species in Haiti, any one of which might have been thought to be the European ilex.

8. There is no such rock off Jean Rabel today; but one or more are marked on Bellin's *Carte de Saint Domingue* (1753) and Charles Roberts's *Chart of the Windward Passage* (London 1795). It has evidently been eaten away by the sea.

9. Cape Carenero, see 6 December, note 4.

10. Port à l'Écu, which is just 6 miles E of Pointe Jean Rabel.

11. Baie des Moustiques. The 100-fathom line still comes within the two points that make the harbor, but the edges are not now quite so deep as Columbus reports.

12. It was the vigil of the feast of the Immaculate Conception.

13. *Liça*. Baron Cuvier called it "mullet" in his notes to the French translation of Navarrete, but Joseph Cornide *Ensayo de una historia de los peces y otras producciones marinas de la costa de Galicia* (1788) 55-56, states that whilst some people consider the *lisa* a kind of mullet (*Mugillidae*), he believes it to be equivalent to Linnaeus's *Perca nilotica* (now known as *Lates nilotica*), which is a form close to the sea-bass (*Serranidae*). On the other hand Delaroche *Observations sur des poissons recueillis dans un voyage aux îles Baléares* (1809) gives the common name of *Mugil chelo* as *lissa*, and Franz Steindachner *Ichthyologischer bericht* (1866) states that this same species is known in Spain by the common names of *lisa* and *liza*; the fish known in Cuba as *liza* is called *Mugil Lebranchus* in Felipe Poey *Conspectus piscium cubensium* (Havana 1861). If any further evidence is required, the fact that the Admiral described his *liça* as jumping into the boat throws even more weight in favor of its being a mullet, since these fish are more frequently seen jumping out of the water than sea-bass. T.H.W.

14. *lenguados*, the common Spanish name for the sole, and the common name cited by Poey (*op. cit.*) for eleven species of flatfish found in Cuba. T.H.W.

15. *arrajuán*. There are a large number of myrtle-like plants in Haiti, of the genus *Eugenia*, including *E. uniflora*. *Myrtus communis* L., the classic myrtle, is the plant with which Columbus was doubtless familiar in the Mediterranean. H.U.B.



SATURDAY, 8 DECEMBER

There in that harbor it rained heavily, with a very strong N wind. The harbor is protected from all winds except the N, but that cannot do any damage, because the surf is great, which gives no occasion for the ship to work on her cables, nor the water of the river.¹ After midnight the wind veered to the NE, and later to the E, from which winds that harbor is well protected by the island of Tortuga, which faces it at 36 Roman miles distance.

1. *ni el agua del rio*. These words do not make sense, nor does the rest of this day's work. *Sailing Directions for the West Indies* (1936) says that Moustique Bay "is open to the northward and is not as comfortable an anchorage as Port à l'Écu, . . . the bottom is irregular and rocky." And Tortuga is only 7½ nautical miles

distant. For detailed analysis of this part of the voyage, see Morison "Route of Columbus along the North Coast of Haiti and the Site of Navidad" *Transactions of American Philosophical Society* XXXI Part iv (Phila. 1940) 239-85, with detailed chart.

SUNDAY, 9 DECEMBER

This day it rained and the weather was wintry as in Castile in October; he had seen no village and but one very fine house in Port St. Nicolas; it was better built than those in other regions that he had seen. The island is very big, and the Admiral says it would

not be surprising if it is 200 leagues around; has seen that it is all well cultivated; he believes that the villages must be far from the sea, and that thence they look out when he arrives and thus all flee, and carry off all they have, and they raise beacon fires like warlike people. This harbor at its entrance is 1000 *pasos* wide, which is a quarter of a league,¹ within there is neither bar nor shoal, on the contrary one finds almost no bottom until [you reach] land at the edge of the sea,² and within it extends for 3000 *passos*, all clear and level, so that any ship could anchor in it without anxiety, and enter without precaution. At the head of it there are two river mouths, which bring down little water; facing it are some plains, the most beautiful in the world, and almost like the lands of Castile; rather, these are better. For which he gave the name to the said island *la Ysla Española*.³

1. This is one of the few checks on Columbus's units of distance. The Roman mile was originally *millia passum* or 1000 paces, each pace being 5 Roman feet. The Roman mile that Columbus used measured 4,855 English feet. But the actual width of Moustique Bay at the entrance, measured on a modern chart, is three-eighths of a nautical mile, or 2280 feet. It would seem that he must have measured the distance from East Point to the outer Western headland, which is a little more than a Roman mile, rather than across the actual mouth of the harbor. Later, it will be observed, he similarly treated the mouth of Acul Bay. Curiously enough the accurate Samuel de Champlain, who sailed

along this coast a century after Columbus, says that the entrance of Moustique is 2000 paces wide. *Works* I 25 (Champlain Society ed. 1925) I 25.

2. This is true only outside the harbor proper.

3. Whence our *Hispaniola*. Las Casas says, "seeing the grandeur and beauty of this island and its resemblance to the country of Spain, although much superior, and because they had caught fish like the fish of Castile, and for other similar reasons, the Admiral decided on Sunday, 9 December to name this island *Isla Española*." *Historia* lib. i chap. 52 (1951 ed. I 256). The name means "Spanish Island," not "Little Spain," as has often been said.

MONDAY, 10 DECEMBER

Blew hard from the NE, and made them drag their anchors a half cable's length, at which the Admiral was surprised, and he ascribed it to the fact that the anchors were well in toward the land, and the wind came over it;¹ and seeing that [the wind] was contrary to go where he desired, he sent ashore 6 men well equipped with arms to go 2 or 3 leagues inland, to see if they could have speech. They went and returned, having found neither people nor houses; they found however some cabins and very wide paths, and places where many had made fires. They saw the best lands in the world, and found many trees of mastic² and brought in some, and said that there was much, but that this is not the season to gather it, because it doesn't harden.

1. Meaning, that when the NE tradewind blew up, the ships overrode their anchors and tripped them.

2. See 5 November, note 2.

TUESDAY, 11 DECEMBER

He did not depart owing to the wind, which all day was from the E and NE. Facing this harbor, as was said, was the island of Tortuga, and it appeared to be a great island, and its coast trends like Hispaniola, and it would be from one to the other 10 leagues at the most, that is to say from Cabo Cinquín to the end of Tortuga, which is to the north of Hispaniola; afterwards, its coast runs to the S.¹ He says that he wished to see that channel between these two islands, to view the island Hispaniola, which is the fairest thing in the

world, and because, according to what the Indians on board said, it was the way to go to the island of Babeque, which they said was a very great island with very great mountains and rivers and valleys;² and they said that the island of Bohío was greater than Juana, which they call Cuba, and that it was not surrounded with water; and it appears that they give it to be understood to be mainland, which is here behind this Hispaniola, and which they call *Caritaba*, and it is endless,³ and perhaps they are right, for they are wrought upon by cunning folk, because all these islands live in great fear of those *Caniba*. "And so I repeat what I have said before," says he, "that *Caniba* is nothing else than the people of the Grand Khan, which should be very near and own ships, and they come to capture them, and since they don't return they suppose that they've been eaten. Every day we understand these Indians better, and they us, although as many times they have understood one thing for another," says the Admiral. He sent people ashore; they found much mastic, not yet gummy;⁴ he says that the wet weather must do this, and that in Chios they collect it in March, and that in January it would harden in these countries because they are so temperate. They caught many fishes like those of Castile: dace, pompanos, hake, dories, porgies, mullets, croakers, lobsters, and they saw sardines.⁵ Found much aloes.

1. From Cabo Cinquin (Pte. Jean Rabel) to the western cape of Tortuga is less than 14 miles, or 4½ leagues; from his anchorage in Moustique Bay the nearest point of the island is about 8 miles.

2. For Babeque, see 12 November, note 2. Great Inagua's highest elevation is 132 feet, and it has no rivers.

3. The syntax here is confusing, but Columbus evidently believes that Hispaniola is an island, as he has just so named it; *Caritaba* is the mainland.

4. *sin quajarse*.

5. *albures, salmones, pijotas, gallos, pánpanos, licas, corvinas, camarones, sardinas*. Cornide (*op. cit.* 1788) 103, says that *albur* is *cyprinus Leuciscus* Lin., now known as *Leuciscus vulgaris*, the common dace. True salmon do not occur in the West Indies. Oviedo realized this, and, enumerating the Antillean fishes in lib. xiii, chap. 1 of his *Historia General y Natural* which first appeared in 1535 (1851 ed. I 424), says *salmonados (no digo salmones)*—"salmon-like fishes, I don't say salmon." In Cuba *Seriolichthys pinnulatus*, the pompano of the North American fish-markets, is commonly called salmon, and that is doubtless what Columbus meant. The Spaniards' *pijota* was *Merluccius merluccius*, the common hake (Cuvier and Cornide, *op. cit.*), but nothing like hake occurs in the

West Indies. Both Rondelet (1554, p. 329) and Gesner (1558) speak of the *faber* (now *Zeus faber*, the John Dory) as *gallus marinus* and synonymous with the Spanish *gallo*. Some forms related to the true *gallo*, such as *Zenopsis conchifis*, the Buckler Dory, look very like the John Dories and have more recently been taken in the Western Atlantic, and thus might be the form referred to by Columbus. Gesner (1558) 490, and Aldrovani *de Piscibus* (1612) 195 indicate that the Spaniards, then as now, referred to *Stromateus fiatola* as the *pámpano*. Cornide on the other hand identifies the common *pámpano* with the Linnean species *Sparus salpa* (now *Sarpa salpa*) a kind of porgy of a different family of fishes. But Steindachner (1866-68) supports the earlier citations in identifying several species of the genus *Stromateus* found in Spanish waters with the *pámpano*.

In Cuba *Blepharis crinitus* and *Caranac analis* of the closely related, but different family, *Carangidae*, are known as *pámpanos*. *Licas*, as we have seen, are a kind of mullet; *corvinas*, croakers; and *camarones*, a sort of rock lobster. There are no true sardines in America, but any small fish, like young herring, is commonly so called, to compete with the Mediterranean sardine. T.H.W.

WEDNESDAY, 12 DECEMBER

He did not depart this day for the same reason of contrary wind; raised a great cross at the entrance of the harbor, on a very conspicuous height "as a sign," says he, "that Your Highnesses hold the country for yours, and principally for a sign of Jesus Christ Our Lord, and honor of Christianity." The which being set up, three seamen set forth for the mountain to see the trees and plants, and they heard a great crowd of people, all naked like those before, to whom they halloed, and went after them, but the Indians fled; and

finally they captured a woman, because they couldn't catch more, "because I," he says, "had ordered them to capture some in order to treat them well and make them lose their fear, that something profitable might be had, since it didn't seem possible to be otherwise judging by the beauty of the land." And so they carried this very young and beautiful woman to the ship, and she talked with those Indians, since all had one language. The Admiral had her clothed and gave her glass beads and hawk's bells and brass rings; and he sent her ashore very honorably, according to his custom, and sent some people of the ship with her, and three of the Indians on board, to speak with that folk. The seamen who went in the boat, when they put her ashore, told the Admiral that she did not now wish to leave the ship, but would remain with the other Indian women whom he had taken at Puerto de Mares of the island Juana or Cuba. All these Indians who went with that Indian girl say that they came in a canoe, which is their caravel, in which they navigate somewhere; and when they took a peep at the harbor entrance and saw the ships they turned back and left the canoe there somewhere, and made tracks for their village. She pointed out the position of the village. This woman wore on her nose a little piece of gold, which was a sign that there was gold in that island.

THURSDAY, 13 DECEMBER

The three men whom the Admiral had sent with the woman returned at three o'clock of the night; and they didn't go with her to the village, because it seemed to be far and they were afraid. They said that another day many people would come to the ships, because they would be reassured by the news that the woman would give. The Admiral, from desire to know if there were anything profitable in that country, and to have some speech with that folk, because the land was so fair and fertile, and they had a mind to serve the Sovereigns, decided to send again to the village, trusting in the news that the Indian girl would have given of the Christians being good people, for which he told off nine men well equipped with arms and apt for such a business, with whom there went one of the Indians on board. These went to the village, which was $4\frac{1}{2}$ leagues to the SE, which they found in a very great valley; and it was deserted, because already perceiving the Christians, all fled inland, taking what they had.¹ The village was of 1000 houses and more than 3000 men. The Indian whom the Christians took along ran after them shouting, saying that they need have no fear, that the Christians were not from Caniba but from the sky, and that they gave many fine things to all those whom they met. So much did he impress them with what he said that they were reassured and more than 2000 came up to them; and all came to the Christians and placed their hands on their heads, which was a sign of great respect and friendship; they were all trembling despite their reassurance. The Christians said that as soon as they had lost fear all went to their houses, and everyone brought out to them what he had to eat, which is bread of sweet potatoes,² which are some roots like great carrots that they grow and plant in all these countries, and it is their living; and they make bread of it, and cook and roast it, and it has the flavor proper to chestnuts, so that nobody eating them would wish or think that they were not chestnuts. They gave them bread and fish, and of what they had. And because the



Indians aboard had understood that the Admiral wanted a parrot, it seems that that Indian who went with the Christians told them something of it, and so they brought parrots, and gave them as many as they wanted, without asking anything for them. They asked them not to leave that night, and that they would give them many other things that they had on the sierra. At the time when all these folk were with the Christians they saw a great muster of people with the husband of the woman whom the Admiral had honored and sent back, whom they brought along riding on their shoulders, and they came to give thanks to the Christians for the honor that the Admiral had shown her and for the gifts that he had given her. The Christians told the Admiral that these were all very fine people and of better condition than any other that they had hitherto found; but the Admiral says that he knows not how they could be of better condition than the others, it being understood that all those whom they had found in the other islands were of very good condition. As for beauty, the Christians said there was no comparison, of men and women alike, and that they are whiter than the others, and that among these they saw two wenches as white as they can be in Spain. They also spoke of the beauty of the lands they had seen, that there was no comparison between them and Castile for beauty and excellence. And the Admiral saw it was so from those which he had seen and those that were nearby, and they told him that there was no comparison between those of that valley (which the plains of Cordova did not equal), with as much difference as between day and night. They said that all those lands were cultivated and that down the centre of that valley flowed a very wide and great river which could irrigate all the lands. All the trees were green and full of fruit, and the plants all flowery and very tall, the paths very broad and good. The air was like April in Castile, the nightingale and other little birds were singing as in that month in Spain, so that he said it was the greatest delight in the world. At night some little birds sang sweetly, the crickets and frogs made themselves heard, the fishes were as in Spain; they saw much mastic and aloes and cotton trees; gold they found not, and it is no wonder that in such little time they found none. Here the Admiral made an experiment of the length of day and night, and from sun to sun he found that there passed 20 *ampolletas*, which are half-hour glasses, although he

says that there could be some mistake because either they didn't turn them so promptly or [the sand] failed to pass through. He says also that he found by the quadrant that he was distant from the equator 34 degrees.³

1. Judging from the direction, this village must have been on Trois Rivières.
2. *niamas*, probably a bad copy of *mames*. See Journal for 4 November, note 6.
3. This passage shows in a striking manner the difficulty of making observations without instruments of precision; a leak or a clot of sand in the glass, or a lazy ship's boy, could ruin any calculation of time. The actual length of day from sunrise to sunset in that latitude on 13/22 December is a few minutes less than 11 hours. Magnaghi points out in "Ancora dei prestesi

errori di Colombo" 11 (reprint from *Boll. R. Soc. Geog. Ital.* 6th ser. VII 497 ff.) that according to the table of Ptolemaic "climates" that Columbus copied into his *Imago Mundi* the shortest day of the year (13 December) on the 4th "climate" which began at lat. 33½° N, was 9h 43m. Columbus was trying to check his latitude by the length of day as well as by Polaris. The Polaris observation was not much better than those in Cuba, for 34° is the latitude of Wilmington, N.C. Columbus had again shot the wrong star. See Morison "Columbus and Polaris" *American Neptune* I (1941) 15-18.

FRIDAY, 14 DECEMBER

Left that Puerto de la Concepción¹ with the land breeze, and a little after it fell calm, and he experienced it every day of those that he was there. Later the wind came E, he sailed with it NNE,² arrived at the island of Tortuga, saw a point of it that he called *Punta Pierna* which bore ENE of the head of the island and was distant 12 Roman miles;³ and thence discovered another point that he called *Punta Lançada* on the same NE rhumb which was distant 16 Roman miles; and thus from the head of Tortuga up to the *Punta Aguda* is about 44 Roman miles, which are 11 leagues to the ENE.⁴ On that route there are some long stretches of beach. This island of Tortuga is a very high land but not mountainous,⁵ and it is very beautiful and very populous like the island Hispaniola, and the whole country is so cultivated that it looks like the plain of Cordova. Seeing that the wind was contrary and they couldn't go to the island of Babeque, he decided to turn back to the Puerto de la Concepción, whence he had set forth, and he couldn't fetch a river which is on the E side 2 leagues from the said harbor.⁶

1. Moustique Bay, Haiti.
2. Six points on the wind. Square-riggers in the great days of sail could seldom better that.
3. Unless the bearing is corrupted, this *pierna* ("leg o' mutton") point, must have been on the north side of Tortuga. Columbus's accurate outline of the island in his sketch map of 1493 suggests that he inspected that coast.
4. It is about 12 nautical (= 16 Roman) miles from the western cape of Tortuga to the most northerly

point of the island. Perhaps this was the Admiral's *Lançada*, but what then is his *Punta Aguda*, 28 Roman (= 21 nautical) miles further to the ENE? The N coast of Tortuga trends ESE beyond the putative *Punta Lançada*; and the south coast trends consistently E by S to ESE.

5. He means that it has a fairly uniform skyline, around 1200 feet altitude.
6. The mouth of Trois Rivières. The current evidently carried him to leeward of it.

SATURDAY, 15 DECEMBER

Departed Puerto de la Concepción¹ once more on his course; but on leaving the harbor it blew strong from the E (a foul wind for him) and he shaped a course for Tortuga, right up to it; and thence came about to see that river which yesterday he sought to see and examine, and could not; nor on this tack could he fetch it, but anchored half a league to leeward off a beach, good clean holding ground.² Having moored his vessels he

went with the barges to view the river, and entered an arm of the sea which is half a league away from it and was not the mouth; returned, and found the mouth which was not even a fathom deep, and [the current] came very strong. He entered it with the barges to reach the villages seen by those whom he had sent the day before yesterday; and ordered the hawser to be got ashore, and the seamen, hauling on it, pulled the boats two lombard shots' distance, but could proceed no further from the force of the river's current. He saw some houses and the great valley where the villages were, and said that nothing more beautiful he had ever seen, than the river flowing through the midst of that valley. He also saw people at the entrance of the river, but all fled. He says further that the folk must be hunted hard, since they live in so great a fear; for in travelling when they [the Spaniards] reached any place, no matter what, beacon fires lighted up over the entire country; and this happened more in that island Hispaniola and in Tortuga (which is also a great island) than in the others that he had left behind. He called the valley *Valle del Paraíso* and the river *Guadalquivir*, because it is said that it flows as large as the Guadalquivir at Cordova, and on its verge or banks there is a beach of very pretty pebbles, and it is all navigable.³

1. Moustique Bay, Haiti.

2. The cove about 1½ miles W of the mouth of Trois Rivières.

3. Trois Rivières, a mountain stream, and its valley. I can state from personal experience, after visiting this locality with Colonel Cham of the Garde de Haiti in

January 1939, following the course of Columbus's brief boat trip upstream, and chatting with the women who were washing their clothes on the pebbly beach, that the Admiral's description is not exaggerated. Esquemeling *Buccaneers of America* (chap. 6) asserts that in his day Trois Rivières ran so full as to make the sea water fresh two leagues from its mouth.

SUNDAY, 16 DECEMBER

At midnight with the light land breeze he made sail to leave that channel, and coming from the coast of the island Hispaniola, sailing close-hauled,¹ because at the hour of terce the wind came E. In midchannel he found a canoe with a solitary Indian in it; concerning which the Admiral wondered how he could keep afloat, the wind being strong. He had him and his canoe hoisted on board the ship and to please him gave him glass beads, hawk's bells and brass rings; carried him in the ship and put him ashore at a village which was 16 Roman miles thence, on the sea.² There the Admiral anchored, and found good anchorage off the beach next the village, which appeared to be newly built, because all the houses were new. The Indian went straight ashore with his canoe, and gave news that the Admiral and the Christians were good people, although they already regarded them as such through what had happened to the others where the six Christians had gone; and presently there arrived more than 500 men, and a little after, their king,³ all on the beach next the vessels, because they were anchored very near the land. One by one, and many by many, they came to the ship, bringing nothing with them, although some wore some grains of finest gold in the ears or in the nose, which they gave with good grace. The Admiral ordered honor to be done to them all, and he says "because they are the best people in the world and above all the gentlest," says he, "I have much hope in Our Lord that Your Highnesses will make them all Christians, and they will be all yours, as for yours I hold them." He also observed that the said king stayed on the beach and

that all showed him reverence. The Admiral sent him a gift, which it is said he received with much state; and [says that] he was a youth of about 21 years, and had an old tutor and other counsellors, who advised him and replied, and that he spoke very few words. One of the Indians that the Admiral carried spoke with him, and told him how the Christians came from the sky, and that he went in search of gold, and that he wished to go to the island of Babeque; and he replied that it was well and that in the said island there was much gold, and to the Admiral's marshal⁴ who took him the gift, he showed the course that was necessary to take, and that in two days he could go there thence, and that if from his country they had need of something, he would give it with very good will. This king and all the others went naked as their mothers bore them, and so too the women, without any shame; and they are the most handsome men and women that he had found hitherto; so white that if they went clothed and protected themselves from the sun and air⁵ they would be almost as white as in Spain. For this country is sufficiently cool and better than tongue can tell; it is very lofty and on the biggest mountain oxen could plow, and all made up of plains and valleys. In all Castile there's no land that can compare with it for beauty and excellence; all this island and that of Tortuga are all cultivated like the plain in Cordova. Planted in them are yams,⁶ which are certain little branches that they set out, and at the foot of them grow some roots like carrots which serve as bread, and they rasp and knead and make bread of them; and afterwards they proceed to plant the same little branch in another place, and again it gives four or five of the same roots, that are very palatable, like the taste of chestnuts. Here they have the biggest and fattest that he had seen in any [land], because also he says that he had seen them in Guinea; those here were as fat as your leg. And he says that the trees are so luxuriant that their leaves ceased to be green, and were of blackish verdure. It was a wonderful thing to see those valleys and rivers and sweet waters, and the lands [fit] for crops and cattle of all sorts (of which they have none), for orchards, and for everything in the world that man can want.

Later, in the evening the king came out to the ship; the Admiral showed him due honor, and caused him to be told that it belonged to the Sovereigns of Castile, who were the greatest princes on earth. But neither the Indians whom the Admiral had on board, who were the interpreters, believed anything [of this], nor the king even so much; they believed that they came from the sky, and that the realms of the Sovereigns of Castile were in the sky and not in this world. They offered the king to eat certain things of Castile, and he ate a mouthful, and afterwards gave it all to his counsellors and to the tutor and to the others that he brought with him.

"Your Highnesses may believe that these lands are of such extent, good and fertile, and especially these of this island Hispaniola, such that there is no person who could tell, and nobody can believe, without seeing it. And you may believe that this island and all the others are as much yours as Castile, that here is wanting nothing save a settlement, and to command them to do what you will. I, with the people on board, who are not many, could overrun all these islands without opposition; for already I have seen that when only three of the mariners went ashore, where there was a multitude of these Indians, all fled, without seeking to do them ill. They bear no arms, and are completely defenseless and of

no skill in arms, and very cowardly, so that a thousand would not face three; and so they are fit to be ordered about and made to work, to sow and do all else that may be needed; and you may build towns and teach them to go clothed, and to [adopt] our customs.”⁷

1. *à la volina*; the old English expression “sailing on a bowline” is the same. The bowline kept taut the windward leaches (edges) of square sails so that they would not shiver when sailing close to the wind.

2. The later description of this anchorage suggests that it was at the present Port de Paix, where there is no proper harbor but a good roadstead off a beach.

3. This “king” and the others whom Columbus encountered were subordinate chiefs to the cacique Guacanagari, whose kingdom of Marien covered the northwestern coast of the present Republic of Haiti.

4. *alguazil*. This was Diego de Harana of Cordova, a cousin of the Admiral’s mistress, Beatriz Enríquez de Harana. An *alguacil* in those days corresponded to a justice of the peace, and from the *Diccionario Marítimo Español* (1831) it seems that the Spanish Navy kept up this rating in order to decide disputes among the crew. Similarly, English vessels of the 16th–17th

century carried a “marshal” to keep order.

5. As did the Spanish ladies, and most of the men too; even sailors in the tropics went clothed in wool from neck to ankle, and wore a woolen cap, to protect themselves from the sun. The modern mode of stripping down and courting sunburn would have seemed indecent as well as dangerous to Europeans of those days. That is one reason why all letters and popular accounts of Columbus’s voyages stressed the nakedness of the Indians, which was not only outlandish, but suggested that they had not shared the consequences of Adam’s fall.

6. *ajes*; see Journal for 4 November, note 6.

7. In this direct quotation, as in the one of 12 October, may be seen the germ of the Spanish policy of enslaving the Indians, which they did to such good purpose that the entire native population of the Antilles was extinct by 1550.

MONDAY, 17 DECEMBER

That night the wind blew hard from the ENE; the sea didn’t make up much because the island of Tortuga which is opposite and makes a shield, protected and sheltered it. So he stayed here¹ that day. He sent the seamen to fish with nets; the Indians sported much with the Christians and brought them certain arrows of the *Canibales* of *Canibato*, and they are of spikes of canes, and they point them with little sticks, firehardened and sharp, and they are very long. They showed them two men from whose bodies some bits of flesh were missing, and gave them to understand that the Cannibals had eaten them by mouthfuls. The Admiral didn’t believe it. He proceeded to send certain Christians to the village, and by way of truck for glass beads, they bartered some pieces of gold worked into thin leaf. They saw one whom the Admiral took for governor of that province, who was called *cacique*² with a piece as big as your hand of that gold leaf, and it seemed that he wished to do barter. He went into his house, and the others stayed in the plaza, and he caused little bits to be made of that piece, and bringing out one little bit at a time, bartered it. After he had no more, he said by signs that he had sent for more, and that on another day they would bring it. All these things and the manner of them, and their customs and gentleness and counsel, showed them to be a more alert and intelligent people than the others whom hitherto they had found. Says the Admiral: “In the evening came here a canoe from the island of Tortuga with a good 40 men; and on arriving at the beach, all the people of the town who were assembled there sat them down as a signal of peace; and some from the canoe, and almost all, went ashore. Alone the cacique rose, and with words which seemed to be menacing, ordered them to go back to the canoe, and threw water at them, and picked up pebbles from the beach and threw them in the water; and after all [the visitors] with much obedience had placed themselves in the canoe and shoved off, he took a pebble and placed it in the hand of my marshal whom I had sent

ashore with the secretary³ and others to see if they could bring back something of value, for him to throw it, and the marshal didn't wish to throw it." Herein the cacique showed strongly that he was well disposed toward the Admiral. The canoe presently made off, and after it had gone they told the Admiral that in Tortuga there was much more gold than in the island Hispaniola, because it was nearer to Babeque. The Admiral said that he thought that neither in that island Hispaniola nor in Tortuga were there mines of gold, and that they bring little from Babeque because they have nothing to give for it; and that country is so rich that there is no need to work much to sustain life or to be clothed, since they go naked. And the Admiral believed that he was very near the source, and that Our Lord would show him where the gold came from. He had news that from here to Babeque is four days' journey, which would be 30 or 40 leagues, so that in one day of fair weather they could go there.

1. Off the present Port de Paix.

2. First appearance of this Arawak word for chief, which in modern Spanish became the word for a political boss, and in colonial South Carolina was a title of nobility.

3. Rodrigo de Escobedo, the scribe or secretary of the fleet, whose duty it was to record all taking-possessions, write letters for the Admiral, and perhaps make up his log from dictation.

TUESDAY, 18 DECEMBER

He was anchored at that beach¹ all this day, because there was no wind, and also because the cacique had said that he would bring gold, not because the Admiral cared much for such gold (he said) as he could bring, since there were no mines there; but he would more easily find out where they got it. Presently at daybreak he ordered the ship and the caravel to dress with escutcheons and banners for this feast day of St. Mary of the "O," or commemoration of the Annunciation,² they fired many lombard shots, and the king of that island Hispaniola, says the Admiral, had started before dawn from his house, which would be 5 leagues distant, so far as he could judge, and arrived at the hour of terce at that village, where were some men out of the ship the Admiral had sent to see if gold was coming; the which said that more than 200 men came with the king, and that four men carried him on a litter, and he was a youth, as has been said above. Today, when the Admiral was dining below the sterncastle, he came to the ship with all his people. And says the Admiral to the Sovereigns:

"Without doubt his dignity and the respect in which all held him would appear well to Your Highnesses, although they are all naked. He, when he came on board, found that I was dining at the table below the sterncastle, and at a quick walk he came to sit down beside me, nor would he let me rise to meet him or get up from the table, but [begged] that I should eat. I thought that he would like to eat our viands; I gave orders that he should straightway be brought somewhat to eat. And when he entered [the cabin] below the castle, he made signs with the hand that all his suite should stay outside, and so they did with the greatest readiness and respect in the world, and they all seated themselves on the deck, except two men of mature age, whom I took to be his counsellors and tutor, who came and seated themselves at his feet. And of the viands which were placed before him he took of each as much as one would take for a pregustation and then

sent the better part to his suite, and all ate of it; and so he did with the drink, which he simply raised to his lips and then gave to the others, and all with a wonderful dignity and very few words; and those that he said, according to what I could understand, were well arranged and sensible, and those two watched his lips and spoke for and with him, and with much respect. After dinner a squire brought a belt which is like those of Castile in shape but of different workmanship, which he took and gave me, and two pieces of worked gold which were very thin, so that I believe that here they obtain little of it, although I hold that they are very near to where it comes from, and much exists. I saw that a tester which I had over my bed pleased him; I gave it to him, and some very good amber beads which I wore at my neck, and some red shoes, and a bottle of orange water, with which he took such satisfaction that it was marvellous. And he and his tutor and counsellors were much troubled because they understood not me nor I them. Withal I recognized that he said that if anything here pleased me, the whole island was mine to command. I sent for some more beads, among which for a symbol I had a gold *excelente*³ on which was portrayed Your Highnesses, and showed it to him, and told him again, as yesterday, that Your Highnesses ruled and were lords over the better part of the world, and that there were none such great princes; and showed him the royal banners and the others with the cross. With this he was much impressed and said before his counsellors what great lords Your Highnesses must be, since they had sent me without fear from so far and from the sky. And many other things were said, but I understood not, except that I saw well that he held everything in great admiration."⁴



After it was late and he wished to leave, the Admiral sent him away in the boat very honorably, and gave him numerous lombard shots; and, once ashore, he got into his litter and went off with more than 200 men, and his son was borne behind him on the shoulders of an Indian, a very honorable man. To all the seamen and people of the ships wherever he found them he ordered to be given food and much honor. His son went a short space behind the king with as large a company of people as he; and [so did] another man, likewise a brother of the same king, except that the brother walked, and two honorable men held him by the arms. This [brother] came to the ship after the king; the Admiral gave him some things of the said barter truck, and here the Admiral learned that they called the king *cacique* in his language. On this day he bartered, he says, little gold; but the Admiral learned from an old man that there were many neighboring islands a hundred leagues or more away, as far as he could understand, in which very much gold was

produced; he even told him of an island that was all gold, and in the others there was so great a quantity that they gather it and sift it as in a sieve, and smelt it and make bars and a thousand things of art; he represented the work by signs. This old man indicated to the Admiral the route and the position where it was; the Admiral determined to go there, and said that if the said old man had not been so important a subject of that king, he would have detained him and taken him along; or, if he had known the language, he would have invited him, and he believes, considering the good relations between him and the Christians, that he would have done it with good will; but, since he already held those people for the Sovereigns of Castile, and there was no sense in irritating them, he decided to let him go. [The Admiral] raised a very heavy cross in the middle of the plaza of that village, where the Indians helped much, and offered up prayer, he says, and adored it, and from the signs that they made, the Admiral hopes in Our Lord that all these islands will be Christian.

1. Port de Paix.

2. The Annunciation of the Virgin is celebrated on 15 August; the feast for 18 December, now properly called Our Lady's Expectation, at that time was called the Annunciation of Our Lord. For instance, in the Portuguese *Regimento do estrolabio* of 1509 reproduced in facsimile by Joaquim Bensaude (Lisbon 1924), 18 December is *Annunciaçam da senhor*. Since

the canticles for that day begin with "O" the popular name for the feast was *Santa Maria de la O*.

3. A gold coin of Castile worth two *castellanos*, and weighing about six dollars in gold.

4. This same direct quotation is in Ferdinand's *Historie* chap. 32 (Keen trans. 78-80), and continues over the events reserved by Las Casas for the following paragraph.

WEDNESDAY, 19 DECEMBER

Tonight he made sail to leave that channel which the island of Tortuga makes with Hispaniola; and with the coming of day the wind turned E, with which all this day he could not get clear of those two islands, and at night he could not make a harbor which showed up there. He made out four capes of the land and a great bay and river,¹ and thence he saw a very great cove and it had a village, and behind it a valley between very many high mountains, full of trees, which he judged to be pines; and over the "Two Brothers"² there was a very high and big mountain which went from NE to SW; and to the ESE of *Cabo de Torres* was a little island to which he gave the name St. Thomas, because tomorrow is his vigil.³ The whole circuit of that island has wonderful capes and harbors, as he sized it up from the sea. Before reaching the island, on the west side, there is a cape which juts out considerably in the sea, high and low, to which he gave the name *Cabo Alto y Baxo*.⁴ From Cape Torres 60 Roman miles to the E by S is a mountain higher than the rest which juts into the sea, and which from a distance appears to be an island by itself, owing to a depression on the landward side. He gave it the name *Monte Caribata*, because that province is called *Caribata*.⁵ It is very beautiful and full of bright green trees, without snow or any clouds; and the weather there, as for air and mildness, was like March in Castile, and as for the trees and plants, like May. It is said that the nights were 14 hours long.

1. Probably Pointes Palmiste, de l'Est, Chouchou and Limbé, and any one of the harbors between them.

2. *Dos Hermanos*; probably the *mamelons* of 389 and 526 feet altitude, noted but not named on the modern

chart; the sierra behind seems to run from NE to SW as one approaches from the westward.

3. This "Cape of Towers," was probably Cap au Borgne, the most salient promontory between Grande

Pointe and Cape Haitien; the St. Thomas isle is Mari-got, the most prominent island along that coast. The feast of St. Thomas the Apostle falls on 21 December. 4. "Cape High-Low." This description fits Pointe Limbé as one sees it from about long. 72° 30'.

5. Le Morne du Cap, the mountain range of Cape Haitien. It looks like an island when one first sights it from the entrance to Tortuga Channel. The bearing is correct, but the distance is 20 nautical miles.

THURSDAY, 20 DECEMBER

Today at sunset he entered a harbor which was between the island of St. Thomas and the Cape of Caribata, and anchored.¹ This harbor is most beautiful, and one in which all the ships in Christendom could probably lie. Its entrance seems from the sea to be impossible to those who have not entered it, by reason of some rocky reefs which extend from the mountain almost to the island, and not placed in order, but some here and others there, some toward the sea and others toward the land; hence it is necessary to be alert to come in by some entrances which it has, very wide and good for entering without fear; and all is very deep, 7 fathoms; and after clearing the reefs, within there is 12 fathoms. The ship can be moored with any cable whatever in any kind of wind. At the entrance of this harbor he says there is a channel, which lies to the westward of a little sand islet,² and on it many trees, and at the edge of it 7 fathoms. But there are many shoals in that neighborhood, and it is essential to keep your eye peeled up to the harbor entrance; afterwards there is no fear of all the storms in the world. From that harbor appeared a very great valley, and all cultivated, which comes down to it from the SE, all surrounded by very high mountains, which seem to reach the sky, and most beautiful, full of green trees, and doubtless there are there mountains higher than the island of Tenerife in the Canaries, which is considered to be one of the highest that can be found.³ From this side of the island of St. Thomas there is another islet a league away,⁴ and inside it another, and in all there are wonderful harbors, but one must look out for shoals. He also saw villages and the smoke that they made.

1. Lombardo Cove, Acul Bay. See Columbus's sailing directions in his Journal for 24 December. The fleet evidently sailed to the eastward all night with a full moon, turned into the harbor during the morning, and took all day to reach Lombardo Cove, which is completely landlocked and sheltered. The Admiral's experience was borne out in 1934 by the yacht *Alice*, which rode out a norther there without taking up the slack on her cable. Acul is one of the loveliest bays in the Caribbean, and as one sails up to it one can see the Citadel built by King

Henri Christophe atop the Bonnet de l'Evêque. A detailed chart of the bay, with Columbus's course, will be found in article mentioned in note to 8 December, p. 254.

2. Rat Island, which Columbus named *La Amiga*. The sounding is correct.

3. The highest mountain in Hispaniola is almost 2,000 feet lower than Tenerife (12,200 feet).

4. Ile Limbé; the distance is correct.

FRIDAY, 21 DECEMBER

Today he went with the ships' barges to view that harbor, which he saw to be such that he declares that none of those he had ever seen equals it, and he excuses himself saying that he has praised the former ones so much that he knows not how to extol it, and that he fears that he will be judged to have exaggerated it excessively, but that it is the truth. He defends himself by saying that he ships ancient mariners, and these say and will say the same, and so with all who go to see, viz., that all the praises that he has said con-

cerning the former harbors are true, and it's equally true that this is the best of all. He says further to this effect, "I have followed the sea for 23 years¹ without leaving it for any time worth reckoning, and I have seen all the East and West"²—his way of saying he had gone on the northern route, to England—"and I have been to Guinea, but in all those regions will not be found the perfection of the harbors . . .³ always found the [blank]⁴ better than the other, so that I scanned my writing with great care, and repeat that I declare that I have written accurately, and that now this [place] is superior to all, and would hold all the ships of the world, and so protected that one could moor with the ship's most ancient cable." From the entrance head was 5 leagues.⁵

He saw some well cultivated lands, although all are so, and ordered two men to land from the boats and climb up a height to see if there was a village, since from the sea none could be seen, although that night about 10 o'clock there came to the ship in a canoe certain Indians to see the Admiral and the Christians to wonder at them, and he gave them of the barter goods, with which they were well satisfied. The two Christians returned and said where they had seen a big village, a short distance from the sea. The Admiral ordered them to row to the place where the village was, until they came near the land, and saw some Indians who came to the edge of the sea, and it seemed that they came fearfully; for which he ordered the boats to wait, and that the Indians on board should speak with them [and say] that they would do them no harm. They then approached nearer the sea and the Admiral nearer the shore, and after all had lost their fear, so many came, men and women and children, that they would cover the land, giving a thousand thanks. Some ran here and others there to bring us bread which they make of *niames* which they call *ajes*, which is very white and good, and they brought us water in calabashes and in earthenware pitchers of the shape of those of Castile, and everything they had in the world and knew that the Admiral wanted; and all with such good will and joy that it was a marvel. "And it should not be said that they gave it freely because it was worth little," says the Admiral, "for those who had pieces of gold gave them just the same, and as freely as those who gave a calabash of water; and it is easy to recognize," says the Admiral, "when something is given with a real heart to give." These are his words. "This folk has neither spears nor darts nor arms of any sort, nor have the others of this entire island, and I hold that it is very big. They are as naked as their mothers bore them, women as men; for in the other lands of *La Juana* and the others of the other islands, the women wear in front some little cotton things to cover their genitals, like a flap of a man's drawers, especially after they pass the age of 12 years; but here neither wench nor woman [wears a thing]. And in the other places all the men try to conceal their women from the Christians out of jealousy, but here not; and the women have very pretty bodies, and they were the first to come to give thanks to Heaven and to bring what they had, especially things to eat, bread of yams, and nut-colored (or shrivelled) quinces,⁶ and five or six kinds of fruit," of which the Admiral ordered care to be taken to bring them to the Sovereigns. No less, he says, did the women in the other regions before they were concealed; and the Admiral in all regions ordered all his people to take care not to annoy anyone in anything and to take nothing from them against their will, and so they paid them for all that they received. Finally the Admiral says that he can't believe that man has

seen such good-hearted people so free to give, and so timid that they were all eager to hand the Christians as much as they had, and when the Christians arrived, they ran up to bring them all.

Afterwards the Admiral sent six Christians to the village, to see what it was, and to whom they showed all honor they could and knew how, and gave them what they had, because no doubt remained, but they believed that the Admiral and all his people had come from the sky. The Indians that the Admiral brought from the other island believed the same, notwithstanding they had already been told what they should think. After the six Christians had gone, certain canoes came to ask the Admiral on behalf of a lord that he would come to his town when he departed. A canoe is a boat in which they navigate, some are big and some little. And seeing that the town of that lord lay on his way on a point of land, with many people expecting the Admiral, he went there; and before he left, there came down to the beach so many people that it was marvellous, men, women and children, shouting that he should not leave but stay with them. The messengers of the other lord who had come to invite him, were waiting with their canoes, so that he should not leave without seeing that lord; and so he did and as soon as the Admiral arrived where that lord was waiting and they had lots of things to eat, he had all his people sit down and ordered them to carry what they had to eat to the barges where the Admiral was, next the seashore. And when he saw that the Admiral had received what he offered, all or most of the Indians ran to the town which would be nearest to bring more to eat, and parrots and other things that they had, with such free hearts that it was marvellous. The Admiral gave them glass beads and brass rings and hawk's bells, not that they demanded anything but that it seemed to him right; and moreover, says the Admiral, because he already considered them Christians, and for the Sovereigns more than the people of Castile. And he says that nothing was lacking but to know the language and to give them orders, because every order that was given to them they would obey without opposition. The Admiral left that place for the vessels; and the Indians, men, women and children, shouted that the Christians should not go but remain with them.

After these departed there came to the ship whole canoes full of them, to whom he showed much honor and gave them to eat, and other things which they had on board. There had also come earlier another lord of the western part, and also very many people came swimming, and the ship was more than a good half league from shore. "The lord of whom I spoke has returned, I sent him certain persons to see him and ask him about these islands." He received them very well and took them to his town to give them certain big pieces of gold; and they reached a big river which the Indians swam across; the Christians could not, and so turned back.

In all this region there are very high mountains which appear to reach the sky, so that the mountain of the island of Tenerife appears nothing in comparison, in height and beauty. And all are green, covered with groves, so that it is marvellous. Between them are very delightful plains, and at the end of this harbor, to the South, is a plain so great that eyes cannot see to the very end, but there's no mountain to prevent, and it seems to be 15 or 20 leagues long. Through it flows a river, and all inhabited and cultivated, and it is as green as if it had been in Castile in May or June, although the

nights are 14 hours long and the land so far north. This harbor is very good for all the winds that may blow, protected and deep, and all inhabited by a people very good and gentle and without arms, good or bad. Any ship can lie in it without fear that other ships might come by night to attack them, because although the mouth may be more than two leagues wide it is well closed in by two reefs of rock, that scarcely appear above water, except a very narrow passage in this reef which looks as though it were made by hand and which left an opening through which ships can enter. In the mouth there are 7 fathoms of depth up to the edge of a flat little island⁸ which has a beach and trees at the edge of it; on the west side is the channel and a ship may without fear come close enough to place her gunwale aboard the rock. To the northwest there are three islands, and a great river at a league from the head of this harbor. It is the best in the world; he gave it the name *Puerto de la Mar de Sancto Thomás*, for today was his feast; called it a "sea" owing to its extent.⁹



1. For a discussion of the date when Columbus first went to sea, see Morison *A.O.S.* I 26-30 (1-vol. ed. 26).

2. *todo el levante y poniente*. This phrase was commonly used by the Portuguese to describe a voyage from the Eastern Mediterranean to Northern Europe, and it was doubtless from them that Columbus picked it up. Azurara in his *Chronica do Descobrimento e Conquista de Guiné* (Paris ed., 1841, 33-34) says that the Infante D. Henrique founded a town at Sagres, "Porque todollos navijos que atravessassem do levante pera o poente, podessem ally fazer devisa."

3. Lacuna of a line and a half in the text.

4. Lacuna of one word, probably "last."

5. It is about 5 Roman miles from Pointe Marie to the head of the bay.

6. *gonca avellanada*, a doubtful and possibly corrupted reading; Professor J. D. M. Ford assigned this as the literal meaning. There are four native American fruits that might have seemed quinces to the Admiral, and are brown or ashy gray in color, and shrivelled when fully ripe: *Achras zapota*, the Sapodilla; *Annona muricata*, the Sour-sop; *A. reticulata*, the Custard-apple; and *A. squamosa*, the Sweet-sop. All are native to the West Indies except the first, which originated in South America, but may have been cultivated in Haiti as early as 1492. R.C.R.

7. Apparently a quotation from the original Journal, inserted by Las Casas without explanation. The "lord" was Guacanagarí, cacique of Marien.

8. Rat Island, which Columbus named *La Amiga*; from a distance there seem to be continuous reefs to the W of it. See sailing directions in Journal for 24 December.

9. By this name he meant the entire bay between Pointe Limbé and Cape Haitien.

SATURDAY, 22 DECEMBER

At break of day he made sail in order to lay a course in search of the islands that the Indians told him had much gold, and some of which had more gold than earth. The weather did not permit it, and he had to return to anchor, and send the barge to fish

with the net. The lord of that country, who had a seat nearby,¹ sent him a big canoe full of people, and in it one of his principal servants, to invite the Admiral to go with the vessels to his country, and that he would give him all that he had. He sent by him a belt which in place of a purse bore a mask which had two large ears of hammered gold, as well as the tongue and the nose.² And as this folk is very open-hearted, so that they give whatever is asked with the best grace in the world, it appears that asking something of them does them great favor (thus says the Admiral), they came upon the barge and gave the belt to a ship's boy, and came with their canoe aboard the ship with their embassy. Before he understood them there passed some part of the day; nor did the Indians on board understand them well, because there was some difference in words for the names of things. Finally he managed by signs to understand their invitation.

He decided to leave for that place Sunday, although he was not used to leave harbor on Sunday, merely from his piety and not from any superstition; but with the hope, he says, that those peoples should be Christians, on account of the good will that they show, and subjects of the Sovereigns of Castile, because he already holds them as theirs, and in order that they may serve him lovingly, he tries and endeavors to give pleasure to all. Before he departed today he sent six men to a very big village 3 leagues away to the W, because the lord of it came the day before to the Admiral, and said that he had some pieces of gold. When the Christians arrived there the lord took the hand of the Admiral's secretary, who was one of them, and whom the Admiral had sent in order that he might not consent to any dishonest dealings with the Indians. For the Indians were so free, and the Spaniards so covetous and overreaching, that it was not enough that for a lace-tip or a little piece of glass and crockery or other things of no value, the Indians should give them what they asked; even without giving anything they [the Spaniards] wanted to get and take all, which the Admiral had always forbidden; although there were many things of slight value, other than the gold, that they [the Indians] gave to the Christians. The Admiral, observing the open heart of the Indians, and that for six glass beads they would and did give a piece of gold, therefore ordered that they [the Spaniards] take nothing from them unless they gave them something in payment. Thus the lord took the secretary³ by the hand and brought him to his house with all the folk, who were very many, who accompanied him, and gave them to eat, and all the Indians brought him many things of cotton, woven and spun on skeins. After evening fell the lord gave them three very fat geese,⁴ and some little pieces of gold; and a great number of people came with them, and they bore all the things that they had bartered there, and they strove among themselves to carry the men pick-a-back; and indeed did carry them so across some rivers and through some swampy places. The Admiral ordered the lord to be given some things, and he and all his folk rested in great contentment, believing truly that they had come from the sky, and to see the Christians they held themselves very fortunate. This day more than 120 canoes came to the vessels, all charged with people, and all [these] brought something, especially their bread and fish and water in earthen jars, and seeds of many sorts that are good spices; they threw a grain into a porringer of water and drank it, and, said the Indians whom the Admiral took along, this was a most wholesome⁵ thing.

1. "This was Guacanagarí, lord of Marien, where the Admiral raised the fortress and left the 39 Christians" (marginal note of Las Casas).

2. Las Casas says in his *Historia* chap. 57, apparently quoting the original Journal, "This belt was of very fine jewelry work, like baroque pearls, made of white fishbones and some red ones interspersed like embroidery, so sewed with cotton thread and by such nice skill that on the side of the thread and the reverse of the belt, it seemed very pretty embroidery, although all white, which it was a pleasure to see, as if it were a web in a frame, and in the manner that the embroiderers make the orphreys on the chasubles in Castile; and it was stiff and so strong that I believe that

an arquebus could not penetrate it, or with difficulty; it was four fingers wide, of the sort that they use in Castile for the Sovereigns and great lords, the belts embroidered in a frame or cloth of gold" (1951 ed. I 272).

3. Rodrigo de Escobedo.

4. *ánsares*. There are no native geese in the Caribbean region. The West Indies Tree Duck, which looks somewhat like a goose, belongs to a connecting group between the true ducks and the geese, and is still domesticated by Indians in Central and South America; it is undoubtedly the species presented to Columbus. L.G.

5. *santísima*; probably a mistake for *sanísima*, very healthy.

SUNDAY, 23 DECEMBER

He could not depart with the vessels to the land of that lord who had sent to ask and to invite him, for lack of wind; but he sent the barges with their crews, and the secretary, with the three messengers who waited. While these were on their way, he sent two of the Indians whom he brought along to the villages which were near adjacent to the anchorage of the vessels,¹ and they returned with a lord to the ship, with news that in that island Hispaniola there was a great quantity of gold, and that they came to buy it from other regions, and told him that there he would find as much as he wanted. Others came who confirmed that there was much gold, and showed him the way in which they collected it. All this the Admiral understood with difficulty; yet he held it for certain that in those regions there was a tremendous quantity of it, and that if the place whence it came were found, he would have it cheap, and, as he imagined, for nothing. And he repeats that he believes he ought to have much, because in the three days which he had to stay in that harbor he had got good pieces of gold, and he cannot believe that they bring it there from another country. "Our Lord, who holds all things in his hands, be pleased to help me and to grant whatever will be for his service." These are the words of the Admiral.

He says that in that hour he believes more than 1000 persons had come to the ship, and that all brought something that they owned, and that before they come within half a crossbow shot of the ship, they stand up in their canoes with what they brought in their hands, saying "Take! take!" Also he believes that more than 500 came to the ship swimming for want of canoes, and the ship was anchored about a league from the shore. He judged that five lords and sons of lords with all their households, women and children, had come to see the Christians. To all the Admiral ordered to be given, for it is said that it was well spent; and he says: "Our Lord in his goodness guide me that I may find this gold, I mean their mine, for I have many here who say they have knowledge of it." These are his words. In the night the barges arrived,² and they said that it was a long way whence they came, and that at the mountains of *Caribatán*, they found many canoes with very many people, who came to see the Admiral and the Christians from the place where they went, and held for certain that if that feast of Christmas could be held in that harbor, all the people of that island, which he now guessed to be bigger than England, would

come to see them; all these returned with the Christians to the village, which it is said they affirmed to be bigger and better laid out as to streets than any others passed and found hitherto. The which it is said lies in the direction of *Punta Sancta*³ almost 3 leagues to the SE, and as the canoes travel fast with oars, they went ahead to make it known to the *caçique*, as he is called there. Up to that time the Admiral had been unable to understand whether they used this [word] for "king" or for "governor." Also they used another name for "grandee" which they call *nitaýno*, he didn't know whether they say this for "hidalgo" or "governor" or "judge." Finally the cacique⁴ came to them, and there assembled in the plaza, which was very clean, the whole population, more than 2000 men. This king showed much honor to the ships' people, and the populace, every one, brought them something to eat and drink. Afterwards the king gave to each one some cotton cloth which the women wear, and parrots for the Admiral, and some pieces of gold. The populace also gave some of the same cloth and other things of their houses to the seamen, for any little thing that they gave, and which, according to the reception thereof, it seemed they valued as sacred objects. And at evening, wishing to depart, the king asked them to wait until another day; the same did the whole town. Seeing that they were determined to go, they came with them much of the course, carrying on their backs what the cacique and the others had given them down to the boats which remained at the entrance to the river.

1. In Acul Bay.

2. After visiting Guacanagarí near Cape Haitien. The rest of this day's entry relates their experiences.

3. Pointe Picolet, Cape Haitien. Later called *Cabo Santo* by Columbus.

4. A principal chief below the king, like a Spanish grandee, explains Las Casas.

MONDAY, 24 DECEMBER

Before the sun rose he weighed anchors with the land breeze. Among the many Indians who had come yesterday to the ship, who had given them indications of their being gold in that island, and had named the places where they procured it, he saw one who seemed better disposed and devoted or who spoke with more pleasure, and he complimented him and asked him to go with him and show the gold mines. This one brought along another comrade or relation, and they, among the other places that they named where gold was procured, spoke of *Çipango*, which they called *Çybao*, and they declared that there was a great quantity of gold there, and that the cacique bore banners of beaten gold, but that it was very far to the east.¹ The Admiral here says these words to the Sovereigns:

"Your Highnesses may believe that in all the world there can be no better or gentler people. Your Highnesses should feel great joy, because presently they will be Christians, and instructed in the good manners of your realms; for a better people there cannot be on earth, and both people and land are in such quantity that I don't know how to write it. For I have spoken in superlative degree [of] the folk and country of *Joana*, which they call Cuba, but there is as much difference among them and between these and the others as between day and night. Nor do I believe that anyone else who has seen this would have done or said less than I have said and done. It is true that the things here are marvel-

lous, and the great towns of this island *Española* (for so I called it, and they call it *Bobío*), and all show the most singular loving behavior and speak kind, not like the others who it seems when they speak are making threats; and they are of good height, men and women, and not black. It is true that all dye themselves, some with black and others with different colors, most of them with red (I have learned that they do this on account of the sun that it may not harm them so much); and the houses and villages are so fair and with government in all, such as a judge or lord thereof, and all obey him so that it is a marvel. And all these lords are men of few words and fair manners; and their command is [effected] more by signs of the hand, and it is understood, which is wonderful." All these are words of the Admiral.

Whoever would enter the Sea of St. Thomas should stand a good league over beyond the mouth of the entrance, over a small flat island which lies near the middle and which he named La Amiga, bringing the bow to bear upon it; and when one has come within a stone's throw of it, he must leave the western side [of the channel] and seek the eastern, and favor that and not the other side, since a very great reef makes out from the west (and even in the sea outside there are three different shoals), and this reef comes to within a lombard shot of La Amiga, and passing between them one will find at least 7 fathoms and gravelly bottom, and within he will find harbor for all the world's ships, even without cables.² Another reef and shoals make out from the east side of the said island Amiga, and are very big and stretch far out to sea, and come within 2 leagues of the Cape [Haitien]; but between them it seems that there is a passage, at two lombard's shots' distance from La Amiga,³ and at the foot of Mount Caribatán, on the west side, there is a very good and large harbor.⁴

1. The Cibao was then and still is the name of central Hispaniola, including the Vega Real and the surrounding mountains. The Indians' reports of gold there proved to be correct, and a certain amount of it is still yielded by placer mining. In Marco Polo's name for Japan, *Cipangu*, the C is pronounced Ch; but the Spaniards pronounced it like S; hence the Indian word *Cibao* suggested that the fleet was rapidly approaching Japan.

2. These, the earliest detailed sailing directions for the New World, are very accurate; I entered Acul Bay with them in January 1939. It is the Middle Channel that Columbus is describing. Cf. *Sailing Directions for the West Indies* (1936) I A 289, and chart on p. 254 of Morison article mentioned in note to 8 December.

3. The East Channel to Acul Bay.

4. Port des Français.

TUESDAY, 25 DECEMBER, CHRISTMAS DAY

Sailing with a light wind yesterday from the Sea of St. Thomas to *Punta Sancta*¹ from which he was distant one league when the first watch had passed, which would be at 11 o'clock at night,² he decided to stretch out and sleep, because there were two days and a night that he hadn't slept. As it was calm, the seaman who steered the ship decided to go to sleep, and handed over the tiller to a ship's boy, which the Admiral³ had always strictly forbidden during the entire voyage, come wind come calm; namely, that they should let a ship's boy steer. The Admiral felt secure from shoals and rocks because on Sunday, when he sent the barges to that king, they had passed west-east of the said Punta Sancta a good 3½ leagues, and the mariners had seen the whole coast and the shoals that lie to the ESE of the said Punta Sancta for a good 3 leagues, and saw where one could

pass, which hadn't occurred the whole voyage. It pleased Our Lord that at midnight, after they had seen the Admiral lie down and rest, and seeing there was dead calm and the sea like [water] in a porringer, all lay down to sleep, and the tiller remained in the hand of that small boy, and the currents carried the ship upon one of those banks which, even though it were night, made a sound so that they could be heard and seen a good league off; and [the ship] went upon it so gently that it was hardly felt. The boy, who felt the tiller, and heard the sound of the sea, gave tongue, at which the Admiral jumped up and was so prompt that no one had yet felt that they were aground. Immediately the master of the ship,⁴ whose watch it was, came up, and the Admiral told him and the others to pull in the boat that they were towing astern, and to take an anchor and carry it out astern; and he with many others jumped into the boat, and the Admiral supposed they were doing what he had ordered. They cared for nothing save to flee to the caravel, which was half a league to windward.⁵ The caravel, behaving correctly, wouldn't receive them, and therefore they returned to the ship; but the barge of the caravel reached her first. When the Admiral saw that they were fleeing, and his own people at that, and the water growing shallower,⁶ and that already the ship lay athwart the sea, seeing no other remedy, he ordered the mainmast to be cut away and the ship to be lightened as much as they could, to see if they could get her off; but as the water continued to grow



shallower, they could do nothing, and she lay on her beam ends across the sea (although there was little or no sea running) and then the planking⁷ opened, but not the ship. The Admiral went to the caravel, to place in safety on board her the ship's people; and as already a light land breeze blew, and there still remained much darkness—nor did they know how far the shoals extended—he lay-to until daylight, and then made tracks for the ship from behind the line of reef. First he sent the gig ashore with Diego de Harana of Cordova, marshal of the fleet, and Pero Gutiérrez, a butler of the royal household, to notify the king who had sent to invite them on Saturday to bring the ships to his harbor,

and whose town was distant about a league and a half from the said shoal; and who, when he learned it (they said), wept and sent all the people of the town with very big and many canoes to discharge everything from the ship; and so it was done and he cleared the decks in a very short time.⁸ Such was the great haste and care that that king gave. And he in person, with brothers and relatives, were taking care alike on the ship as in watching what was brought to land, so that everything might be very well secured. From time to time he sent one of his relatives to the weeping Admiral to console him, telling him that he must not be troubled or annoyed; that he would give him whatever he had. The Admiral assures the Sovereigns that in no part of Castile could everything have been placed in such good security, without losing a lace-point. He ordered everything to be stowed next the houses, while they emptied some houses that he wished to give, where they might stow and keep everything. He ordered armed men to be posted around everything, to watch all night. "He and all the people wept. All," says the Admiral, "are people of love and without greed, and suitable for every purpose. I assure Your Highnesses that I believe that in all the world there is no better people nor better country. They love their neighbors as themselves, and have the sweetest talk in the world, and gentle, and always with a smile. They go naked, men and women, as their mothers bore them. But Your Highnesses may believe that among themselves they have very good manners, and the king [keeps] a very wonderful state, with a certain manner so self-restrained, that it is a pleasure to see all of it, and the memory which they have, and the wish to see all and inquire what it is and what for." All this the Admiral says thus.

1. From Acul Bay to Pointe Picolet, the NE point of Cape Haitien. A detailed discussion and chart of the events of this day will be found in Morison article mentioned in note to Journal for 8 December.

2. Here is an indication that the night watches in Columbus's fleet were from 7 to 11, 11 to 3, and 3 to 7, the last being the dawn watch. That explains why he frequently mentions things happening at 3 A.M., when the watch changed. Ferdinand Columbus (*Historie*, chap. 32, Caddeo ed. I 201) calls this 7 to 11 P.M. watch *il primo quarto*; mariners are so conservative that they still call the 8 P.M. to midnight the "first" watch.

3. Beginning here, Ferdinand Columbus in his *Historie* chap. 33 (Keen trans. 81-3) gives everything in direct quotation from the Admiral's Journal. Comparison shows that Las Casas merely transposed the story to the third person.

4. Juan de la Cosa, who was also part owner of the *Santa Maria*. The place of this shipwreck was one of the three buoyed coral reefs between Limonade Bord-de-Mer and the barrier reef; for discussion, see Morison *A.O.S.* I 388-91, and article mentioned in note to 8 December.

5. *Niña*, which lay to the eastward, having passed

ahead of *Santa Maria*.

6. *E che scemavano le acque* in Ferdinand's *Historie* chap. 33 (Caddeo ed. I 203). I take this to mean that the ship, having hit the reef bow on, was being driven higher up by the swell; it is also true that the tide was falling; but as there is only two feet of tide there, the difference in an hour would not have been sensible.

7. *conventos*. Las Casas *Historia* chap. 59 (1951 ed. I 278) says that this word means *los vagos que hay entre costillas y costillas*, "the planking between the ribs," and Guillén agrees. The rest of the sentence means that the frame remained intact. Ferdinand (chap. 33) here quotes directly from his father: "But, the water diminishing all the time, the caravel [*Santa Maria*] could not recover; but, heeling over somewhat, she opened up in proportion as she filled below. In that juncture the boat of the caravel [*Niña*] came to my help, because seeing that my men in the boat had fled, I had no means of getting away; wherefore he was obliged to return to the ship. Not finding any means of saving her, I went to the caravel to save the people."

8. "Observe the humanity of the Indians toward the tyrants who have exterminated them"—Las Casas's marginal note.

WEDNESDAY, 26 DECEMBER

Today at sunrise the king of that country, who was in that place, came to the caravel

Niña where the Admiral was, and almost weeping said that he must not show grief, that he would give him all he had and that he had given the Christians who were ashore two very big houses, and would give more if it were necessary, and as many canoes as could lade and discharge the ship, and bring ashore as many men as he might wish, and all this as he had done yesterday, without taking a morsel of bread or anything else. "To such extent," says the Admiral, "are they loyal and without greed for that of others, and so was that king virtuous above all." And while the Admiral was having speech with him, another canoe came from another place, which bore certain pieces of gold which he sought to give for a hawk's bell, because they desire nothing so much as hawk's bells, so scarcely had the canoe come alongside when they shouted and showed pieces of gold, saying *chunque, chunque* for hawk's bells; they were on the point of going mad for them. After having seen this, and these canoes had left which belonged to those other places, they called to the Admiral and asked him that he order a hawk's bell to be kept until another day, for which they would bring him four pieces of gold as big as the hand. The Admiral rejoiced to hear this and later a seaman who came from shore said to the Admiral that it was marvellous the pieces of gold that the Christians ashore bartered for nothing; for a lace-point they gave pieces of gold worth more than two *castellanos*, and that this was nothing in respect to what it would be after a month. The king rejoiced much to see the Admiral merry, and understood that he desired much gold, and said by signs that he knew a place near at hand where there was plenty in great abundance, and that he should be of good cheer, that he would give him as much gold as he wanted; and, it is said, with respect to that he was right, and especially that there was some in *Çipango*, which they call *Cybao*, such a quantity that they hold it for naught, and that he would bring it to him there, although in that island Hispaniola, which they call Bohío, in that province of Caribata there is much more.

The king dined on board the caravel with the Admiral, and afterwards went ashore with him, when he showed the Admiral much honor, and gave him a banquet of two or three kinds of yams, rock lobsters, game and other viands that they had, and of their bread that they call *caçabi*.¹ Thence he took him to see some groves of trees next the houses; and there went with him a good thousand people, all naked. The lord now wore a shirt and gloves, that the Admiral had given him, and over the gloves he made more rejoicing than anything that he had given him. In his eating, by his decency and fine sort of cleanliness, he well showed that he was of good birth. After having eaten, as he remained a good time at the table, they brought him certain herbs with which he rubbed his hands a great deal. The Admiral believes that he did so to soften them, and they gave him water for washing hands. After they had finished eating, he brought the Admiral to the beach, and the Admiral sent for a Turkish bow and a handful of arrows, and the Admiral caused a man of his company to shoot, for he knew how; and it seemed a great show for the lord, as he knew not what arms were, because they don't have them or use them. Also, it is said, the beginning [of this] was talk about those of *Caniba*, whom they call *Caribes*, that they come to capture them, and carry bows and arrows without iron; for in all those countries there is no knowledge of it nor of steel, nor of any other metal except gold and copper, but of copper the Admiral had only seen a little. The Admiral

said by signs that the Sovereigns of Castile would order the Caribs destroyed, and would order them all brought with their hands bound. The Admiral ordered a lombard and a musket to be fired, and seeing the effect of their force and what they pierced, he was left wondering, and when his people heard the shots they all fell to earth. They brought to the Admiral a big mask, which had great pieces of gold in the ears and the eyes and in other parts, which he gave with other gold ornaments, which the same king himself had put upon the Admiral's head and neck, and he also gave many things to the other Christians who were with him.

The Admiral took much pleasure and consolation from these things that he saw, and the grief and pain which he had received and had from the loss of the ship, and recognized that Our Lord had caused the ship to run aground there, in order that he might have a settlement there. "And in addition to this," he says, "so many things came to hand, that in truth it was no disaster but great luck; for it is certain," says he, "that if I had not run aground, I should have kept to sea without anchoring in this place, because it is situated within a great bay and in it two or more reefs of rocks; nor on this voyage should I have left people here, or had I desired to leave them could I have given them good equipment, or so many weapons or supplies, or materials for a fortress. And it is true that many people of those on board have asked and made petition that I grant them permission to stay.² Now I have given orders to erect a tower and fortress, all very well done, and a great moat,³ not that I believe it to be necessary for these people, for I take it for granted that with this people that I have I could conquer all this island, which I believe to be bigger than Portugal and double the number of inhabitants, but they are naked and without arms and very cowardly, beyond hope of cure. But it is right that this tower should be built, and it is as it should be, being so far from Your Highnesses, and that they may recognize the skill of Your Highnesses' subjects, and what they can do, so that they may serve them with love and fear. And so they shall have boards of which to build the whole fortress, and provisions of bread and wine for more than a year, and seeds to sow, and the ship's barge, and a caulker, a carpenter, a gunner and a cooper, and many of them men who are very zealous for the service of Your Highnesses, and to give me the pleasure of learning of the mine where the gold is collected. So, then, all has occurred much to the purpose that a beginning be made; and above all, when the ship ran aground it was so gentle that almost nothing was felt, there was no sea or wind."

All this says the Admiral; and he adds more, to show that it was great luck and the predestined will of God that the ship should run aground there so that he might leave people there; that, if it had not been for the treachery of the master and the people (who were all, or the most part, of his country)⁴ in refusing to run out the anchor from the stern to kedge off the ship as the Admiral ordered, the ship would have been saved, and thus he would not have known the country, says he, as he learned it in those days that he was there; and later, by those whom he intends to leave there, because he always went with the intention to discover and not tarry in a place more than one day, if it were not for want of wind, because the ship (it is said) was very heavy and not suitable for the business of discovery; and for taking such a ship (it is said) the men of Palos were responsible, because they did not fulfil with the King and Queen what they had promised him,

to give vessels suitable for that voyage, and had not done so.⁵ The Admiral concludes in saying that of all that he had in the ship he had not lost a lace-point, a board or a nail, because she remained whole as when she set sail, except that she was cut and razeed somewhat to get at the vessels,⁶ and all the merchandise, and they brought everything ashore, and well guarded, as was said. And he says that he hopes to God that on his return, which he intends to make from Castile, there would be found a cask of gold, which those whom he left behind would have obtained by barter, and that they would have found the mine of gold and the spicery, and that in so great quantity that the Sovereigns within three years would undertake and prepare to go and conquer the Holy Sepulchre, "for so," says he, "I declared to Your Highnesses that all the gain of this my Enterprise should be spent in the conquest of Jerusalem; and Your Highnesses smiled and said that it pleased you, and that even without this you had that strong desire." These are the words of the Admiral.

1. *Manihot esculenta*, cassava, or manioc, from the roots of which tapioca and cassava meal are prepared, after the poison is leached out. Cassava bread was used by Columbus on his return voyages in 1493 and 1496, and it is still an important food in the West Indies.

2. The thought of having first go at the gold evidently overcame any natural disinclination to be left behind in a strange land. The fortress of Navidad that the Admiral caused to be erected next an anchorage that he called the Harbor of Navidad has been located by the editor at the village called Limonade Bord-de-Mer, directly ashore from the reef of the shipwreck, and a few miles from Guacanagari's village in the neighborhood of Caracol. For details, see Morison "The Route of Columbus . . . and the Site of Navidad" *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* n.s. XXXI part iv (1940) 263-84. Las Casas *Historia*, says that the fortress was built in ten days and of materials from the *Santa Maria* (1951 ed. I 285).

3. *cava*. Correction in Shelton ed. of Cecil Jane's *Journal of Christopher Columbus* (1961) 209 cheerfully accepted.

4. Juan de la Cosa came from Santoña in the Basque country, and there were several of his countrymen in the crew.

5. Palos, as we have seen (above, Part I, 4, doc. e) had been required to furnish only two caravels, as punishment for some municipal misdemeanor. *Santa Maria* was chartered from her owner—master Juan de la Cosa—at the joint expense of Columbus and the Crown. The Admiral's "sour grapes" attitude toward the gallant and able ship that had conducted him on his great discovery does not commend him to seamen; but it must be remembered that it is simply a part of the pattern that he ascribes to the will of God.

6. *vasija*, the jars in which wine, oil and fresh water were carried.

THURSDAY, 27 DECEMBER

At sunrise the king of that country came to the caravel and told the Admiral that he had sent for gold, and that he wished to cover him with it before he went away; rather, he asked him not to go. And there dined with the Admiral the king and a brother of his and another very intimate relation, both of whom said that they wished to go to Castile with him. At this juncture, arrived [certain Indians with news]¹ that the caravel *Pinta* was in a river at the end of that island; the cacique promptly sent there a canoe, and in it the Admiral sent a seaman,² for he [Guacanagari] so greatly loved the Admiral that it was marvellous. Already the Admiral was making preparations, with as much speed as could be, to get ready for his return to Castile.

1. Las Casas supplies the bracketed words in the *Historia* (1951 ed. I 284).

2. Las Casas (*ibid.*) says that the seaman carried a warm

letter from the Admiral to Martín Alonso Pinzón, concealing his pain and grief, and begging him to come back, because Our Lord had shown them so much favor.

FRIDAY, 28 DECEMBER

To hasten arrangements and press on completing the building of the fortress, and to settle which men should remain there, the Admiral went ashore; and it seemed to him that the king observed him when he was in the barge, for he at once entered his house, dissembling, and sent his brother that he might receive the Admiral, and brought him to one of the houses that he had given to the Admiral's people, which was the largest and best of that town. In it they had prepared a dais of palm bark, where they caused him to sit down. Afterwards, the brother sent one of his squires to tell the king that the Admiral was there, as if the king didn't know that he had come, although the Admiral believed that he dissembled to show him much more honor. When the squire told him, the cacique proceeded, it is said, to run to the Admiral, and hung on his neck a great plate of gold that he carried in his hand. He stayed there with him until evening, discussing what had to be done.

SATURDAY, 29 DECEMBER

At sunrise, there came to the caravel a nephew of the king, very young and of good understanding and good disposition, as the Admiral says, and as always he endeavored to find out where the gold was collected, he inquired of everyone, because he now understood somewhat by signs; and so this lad told him that at four days' journey there was an island to the east which was called *Guarioné*, and others which were called *Maricorix* and *Mayonic*, and *Fuma*, and *Cybao*, and *Coroay*,¹ in which there was endless gold; which names the Admiral wrote down, and when a brother of the king knew what he had said, he scolded him, as the Admiral gathered. On other occasions also the Admiral understood that the king endeavored that he shouldn't know whence the gold came or was collected, because he didn't wish him to barter or buy elsewhere; "but there's so much and in so many places, in this same island Hispaniola," says the Admiral, "that it's marvellous." Being already night, the king sent him a great gold mask, and sent to ask for a hand washbasin and a jar. The Admiral believed that he wanted these in order to have others made, and therefore sent them to him.

1. Las Casas remarks, "from this it seems that the Admiral understood nothing from the Indians, because the places that they named were not islands but provinces

of this island, and lordships which were called from the names of their caciques." (1951 ed. I 287.)

SUNDAY, 30 DECEMBER

The Admiral went ashore to dine, and arrived just as five kings subject to the one called Guacanagarí had come all with their crowns, representing a very high estate, so that the Admiral says that Their Highnesses would have been pleased to see their condition. On going ashore the king came to receive the Admiral, and led him by the arm to the same house as yesterday where there was a dais and chairs, on which he seated the Admiral, and immediately took off the crown from his head and placed it on the Admiral's, and the Admiral took from his neck a collar of good bloodstones and very hand-

some beads of many pretty colors, which appeared very good in every way, and put it on him; and he took off a cloak of fine scarlet cloth that he was wearing that day, and invested him with it; and sent for some colored boots that he had him shod with, and placed on his finger a large silver ring, because people had told him that they had seen a silver earring on a mariner, and had done much for [to obtain] it. He remained very merry and much pleased, and two of those kings who were with him, came to where the Admiral was with him, and brought the Admiral two great plates of gold, each one his own. And as he was there an Indian came, saying that he had left the caravel *Pinta* two days to the eastward in a harbor. The Admiral returned to the caravel [*Niña*] and *Vicęynte Anes*, her captain, declared that he had seen rhubarb and that it was in the island of *Amiga*, which was at the entrance of the Sea of St. Thomas, that was 6 leagues thence, and that he had recognized the branches and roots. They say that the rhubarb throws out small branches from the earth, and some fruits that look like almost dry green mulberries, and the stem which is near the root is as yellow and fine as the best color that can be had for painting; and underground it has a root like a big pear.¹

1. Columbus had no hankering for rhubarb pie—*Rheum rhabonticum* was not introduced into Europe until a century later. He was looking for the related Chinese rhubarb, from the root of which an important drug was, and still is, extracted. The powdered rhubarb root was brought to Europe by caravan, and commanded a very high price. Columbus had doubtless read in Marco Polo that it came from China, hence its existence in Hispaniola would be another proof that he had found "the Indies." Unfortunately, he was wrong

again. The plant that Vicente Yáñez dug up was undoubtedly *Morinda citrifolia*, the *fausse rhubarbe* of Haiti and *ruibarbo de la tierra* in Cuba. It bears green berries somewhat like mulberries; and the roots, of a strong yellow color, have a purgative and tonic effect like that of true rhubarb. R. de Grosourdy *El Médico Botánico criollo*; Nicolson *Essai sur l'histoire naturelle de l'Isle de Saint-Domingue* (Paris 1776) 302. See the learned and informing note by Von Humboldt in his *Examen Critique* III 21-23. Br. León and R.C.R.

MONDAY, 31 DECEMBER 1492

This day he was busy taking on water and wood against departure for Spain, to give prompt news to the Sovereigns, that they might send ships to discover what remained to be discovered; for already the business appeared so great and of such moment as to be a marvel, said the Admiral. And he says that he wished not to depart until he had seen all that country which there was to the eastward, and gone along the whole coast, to learn also, it is said, the distance from Castile to it, to bring cattle and other things. But as he was left with only one vessel, it did not seem reasonable to expose himself to the dangers that could occur in discovering; and he complains that all that evil and inconvenience came from the parting of the caravel *Pinta*.

TUESDAY, 1 JANUARY 1493

At midnight he dispatched the boat, which went to the island *Amiga* to fetch the rhubarb. It returned at vespers with a basket of it; they brought no more, because they had no spade to dig; he brought this to show to the Sovereigns. The king of that country says that he had sent many canoes for gold. The canoe came and the seaman who went to find out about the *Pinta*, and they didn't find her. The seaman said that 20 leagues thence they had seen a king who wore on his head two great gold plates, and as soon as the Indians

of the canoe spoke to him, he took them away, and he also saw much gold on other people. The Admiral believed that the king Guacanagarí must have forbidden everyone to sell gold to the Christians in order that everything might pass through his hands. But as I said, the day before yesterday,¹ he had learned of the places where it was in so great a quantity that they held it of no value. Also the spicery that they eat, says the Admiral, is abundant and more valuable than black and malagueta pepper.² He left a recommendation to those whom he wished to leave there, that they should get as much as they could.

1. *como digo antier*—Las Casas is speaking.

2. The first is the black pepper that Europe imported by caravan from the Far East; the second is the pepper

that the Portuguese procured on the coast of Guinea. The local "spicery that they eat" was chile. Cf. Journal for 15 January, note 6, and p. 218, note 12.

WEDNESDAY, 2 JANUARY

He went ashore in the morning to take leave of the king Guacanagarí and to depart in Our Lord's name, and gave him one of his shirts; and showed him the force and effect that the lombards had, for which he ordered one to be loaded and fired at the sides of the ship that was aground. This was apropos a conversation about the Caribs with whom they were at war, and he saw how far the lombard carried and how it pierced the side of the ship and how the ball went far out to sea. He also arranged among the people of the vessel a sham fight with arms, telling the cacique that he need have no fear of the Caribs, even if they should come. All this it is said the Admiral did, that



he [Guacanagarí] might hold the Christians whom he left behind as friends, and to give him a scare that he might fear them. The Admiral took him to dine at the house where he was lodged, and the others who went with him. The Admiral commended to him greatly Diego de Haraña and Pero Gutiérrez and Rodrigo Escobedo, whom he was leaving as his joint lieutenants over those people whom he left behind, that all should be well regulated and governed for the service of God and Their Highnesses. The cacique showed the Admiral much love, and great grief at his parting, especially when he saw him embark. An intimate of that king told the Admiral that he had ordered to be made a statue of pure gold as large as the Admiral himself, and that in ten days they would bring it. The Admiral embarked with the intention of setting out at once, but the wind wouldn't allow him to.

He left in that island of Hispaniola, which the Indians it is said call Bohío, 39 men in the fortress,¹ and it is said that they were great friends of that king Guacanagar, and over them as his lieutenants [he left] Diego de Harana, a native of Cordova; Pero Gutiérrez, butler of the king's dais and aide to the chief butler; and Rodrigo d'Escobedo, a native of Segovia, nephew of Fray Rodrigo Pérez, with all his powers that he held from the Sovereigns. He left them all the merchandise that the Sovereigns ordered to be purchased for bartering (which was considerable) so that they should truck and barter for gold with all that the ship carried. He also left them bread and biscuit for a year and wine and much artillery and the ship's barge, so that they, seamen as they were for the most part, might go when it suited them to discover the mine of gold, in order that when the Admiral returned he should find much gold and also a place where he might establish a town; for that was not his idea of a harbor;² especially because the gold that they brought there it is said came from the east, and the more they were to the eastward the nearer they were to Spain. He also left them seeds to sow and his officials, the secretary and marshal; and among them a ship-carpenter and caulker, a good gunner who was a good engineer, and a cooper and a physician, a tailor, and all, it is said, men of the sea.³

1. An alleged list of them is printed in C. Fernández Duro *Colón y Pinzón* (1883) 324; but Alice Gould, who studied the subject exhaustively, proves that this list is worthless, including men who never went on the voyage. She believes, however, that about 40 men, equal to the crew of *Santa María* but including some from

Niña, were left behind.

2. Puerto de Navidad is not protected from northers.

3. Las Casas *Historia* chap. 63 (1951 ed. I 290-91) adds a pathetic parting speech of the Admiral full of good advice to the garrison.

THURSDAY, 3 JANUARY

He did not leave today, because last night, it is said, three of the Indians whom he had brought from the islands, and who had been left, came and told him that the others and their women would come at sunset. Also the sea was somewhat rough and the barge couldn't go ashore. He decided to leave tomorrow, the grace of God permitting; he said that if he had had with him caravel *Pinta* he would surely have managed to ship a cask of gold, for he would have dared to follow the coasts of these islands, which he dared not do alone, lest some accident occur and interfere with his return to Castile, and the news that he owed to the Sovereigns of everything that he had found. And if he had been certain that caravel *Pinta* would arrive safely in Spain with that Martín Alonso Pinzón, he said he would not have left off doing what he wished; but [hurried along] because he knew naught of him, and that in case he [Pinzón] goes [alone] he can give false information to the Sovereigns, so that they may not order the punishments that he deserved for having done wrong by having parted company without permission, and impeding the good things that they might have done and learned in that time, says the Admiral. He trusted that Our Lord would give him fair weather and put all things right.

FRIDAY, 4 JANUARY

At sunrise he weighed anchor with a light wind, and sent the barge to lead [*Niña*] on a NW course, to get clear of the reef by another channel wider than that by which

he entered;¹ the which and others are very good for coming in front of the town of Navidad, and in all of which the least depth that he found was 3 to 9 fathoms, and these two [channels] extend from NW to SE, the full length of the reefs, which were large and stretched from Cabo Santo² to the *Cabo de Sierpe*³ which is more than 6 leagues, and outside in the sea [they extend] a good 3 [leagues] and beyond Cabo Santo for one league there is no more than 8 fathoms depth, and within the said cape, on the E side, there are many shoals and channels to enter by them;⁴ and all that coast runs NW-SE and is all beach, and the land very flat, as far as 4 leagues inland. Behind there are very high mountains, and all is well populated with big villages, and good people, as they proved themselves with the Christians.

He sailed to the E, on a course towards a very high mountain which seems to be an island but is not one, because it is connected with very low land, and which has the shape of a very fine tent,⁵ to which he gave the name *Monte Christo*, which lay due E of Cabo Santo, distant 18 leagues. That day, since the wind was scant, he could not make Monte Cristi by 6 leagues. He found four very low sand islets, with a reef that jutted out far to the NW and extended far to the SE; behind is a great gulf that goes thence to the said mountain to the SE a good 20 leagues,⁶ and which should be all of slight depth and many sand banks, and behind it along the whole coast many unnavigable rivers, although that seaman whom the Admiral sent with the canoe to get news of the *Pinta*, said that he saw a river into which ships could enter. The Admiral anchored there 6 leagues from Monte Cristi in 19 fathoms, having put out to sea in order to avoid the many shoals and reefs there were there; and there he spent that night.⁷ The Admiral gives notice that he who has to go to the town of Navidad should pick up Monte Cristi and put out to sea 2 leagues, etc., but because that land is already known and more in that direction, it is not set down here.⁸ He concludes that *Cipango* was in that island, and that there is much gold, spicery, mastic, and rhubarb.

1. Presumably the Limonade Pass, where there are 14 fathoms today; the eastern, Caracol Pass, has only 1½ fathoms.

2. Pointe Picolet, Cape Haitien.

3. "Cape of the Serpent." This name, which does not recur in Columbus's writings, probably indicates the point to the W of the entrance of Fort Liberté Bay, where two *mamelons* resemble a serpent's back as one views them from a distance.

4. A good description of Cape Haitien harbor.

5. *alfaneque*, a large Moorish tent or pavilion. Monte Cristi has exactly the appearance of a big brownish-yellow tent with a long ridgepole as one approaches it from the westward. The name is now applied to the nearby town; the "island" is called *La Granja* (the barn), and the hill, which has 825 feet elevation, *El*

Morro. Its actual bearing from a point a league off Cape Haitien is E by N—no great mistake in a compass bearing—and the distance as usual is exaggerated; it is about 10 leagues from Cape Haitien.

6. The islets are the Seven Brothers, of which Columbus counted only the four outer ones; the shoals that extend to the WNW of them, with a least depth of 4½ fathoms; and Manzanilla Bay. Its depth is exaggerated, but Columbus could not see the head of it from where he was.

7. From the courses given next day he probably anchored in the 18-fathom spot 2½ miles W of Monte Cristi shoal, and 3½ leagues NW of the mountain.

8. Ferdinand, more obliging to posterity than Las Casas, gives the directions, or a digest of them, in his *Historie* chap. 35 (Keen trans. 86).

SATURDAY, 5 JANUARY

When the sun was about to rise, he made sail with the land breeze; afterwards it blew E, and he saw to the SSE of Monte Cristi, between it and an islet,¹ there seemed to

be a good harbor to anchor that night, and took the course to the ESE and then to the SSE a good 6 leagues towards the mountain, and when the 6 leagues had been covered, he found 17 fathoms depth and very clear, and carried the same water for 3 leagues. Later, nearer the head of the mountain it shoaled off to 12 fathoms, and at a league's distance from the head of the mountain he found 9, and all clear, fine sand. Thus he followed his course until he entered between the mountain and the islet where he found $3\frac{1}{2}$ fathoms depth at low water, a very remarkable harbor, where he anchored. Went with the barge to the islet, where he found a fire and traces that there had been fishermen there. He saw there many colored stones, or a quarry of such stones naturally shaped, very fair, it is said, for church edifices or other royal works, like those he found in the island of San Salvador.² He also found in this islet many plants of mastic. This Monte Cristi, it is said, is very beautiful and high and accessible, of very fair shape, and all the country around it is low, very pretty champaign; and it is so high that, seeing it from afar, it seems to be an island that has no connection with any land.³ Beyond the said mountain to the east he saw a cape at 24 Roman miles which he called *Cabo del Bezerro*,⁴ and from it up to the said mountain some reefs of rocks stretched out a good two leagues into the sea. It seemed that between them were channels by which one could enter, but it would better be by day, and with the barge going ahead and sounding. From the said mountain to the east up to Cape Bezerro for 4 leagues it is all beach, and the land very low and beautiful, and the rest is all very high country, and great mountains, cultivated and beautiful, and inland a sierra runs from NE to SE, the most fair he had ever seen, it appeared just like the sierra of Cordova. There appeared also very far away other very high mountains toward the S and SE and many great valleys, very green and beautiful, and many rivers; all this in such pleasing quantity that he didn't think he had exaggerated the thousandth part. Afterward he saw to the E of the said mountain a land that appeared to be another mountain, like Monte Cristi in size and beauty; and from there, to the E and NE the land is not so high, there would easily be about 100 Roman miles of it, or about that.

1. Isla Cabra or Goat Island.

2. A flat coral reef, with lines on it like a checkerboard, is at Long Bay, San Salvador, where Columbus landed on 12 October, and is there mentioned in the

Journal.

3. "He speaks true, but it is mainland, not island, and it looks like a heap of wheat." (Las Casas's marginalia.)

4. "Cape of the Calf." Probably Punta Rucia.

SUNDAY, 6 JANUARY

That harbor¹ is sheltered from all winds except the N and NW, and he says that they seldom blow in that country.² And also from them one can shelter behind the islet; [the harbor] has 3 to 4 fathoms. At sunrise he made sail to run along the coast, all of which trends to the E, except that it is necessary to look out for the many reefs of rock and sand that are on the said coast. The truth is that within them there are good harbors and good entrances for their channels.³ After midday it blew strong from the E, and he ordered a seaman to the masthead to look out for shoals, and he saw the caravel *Pinta* coming down wind, and she came up to the Admiral, and because there was no place to anchor, for it was very shoal, the Admiral came about for Monte Cristi to go back

over the 10 leagues that he had made, the *Pinta* with him. Martín Alonso Pinzón came to the caravel *Niña*, where the Admiral was, to excuse himself, alleging that he had left him against his will, giving reasons for it. But the Admiral says that they were all false, and that from much insolence and greed he had separated that night that he parted from him,⁴ and that he knew not, says the Admiral, whence came the insolence and disloyalty that he had shown him on that voyage, which the Admiral wished to forget, in order not to help the evil works of Satan, who wished to hinder that voyage, as he had done up to that time; but it was said by an Indian of those that the Admiral had entrusted to him, with others that he had on board his caravel, he had told him that in an island called Babeque there was much gold, and as he had a lively and swift ship, he sought to part and to go by himself, leaving the Admiral; but the Admiral wished to wait and coast along the island Juana and Hispaniola, since all was an eastern course. After Martín Alonso had been to the island Babeque, it is said, and found no gold, he came to the coast of Hispaniola through the information of other Indians who said that there was in that island Hispaniola, that the Indians called Bohío, a great quantity of gold and many mines; and for that reason he arrived near the town of Navidad, about 15 leagues, and that was more than 20 days ago.⁵ From which it seems that the news was true that the Indians gave, on account of which the king Guacanagarí sent the canoe, and the Admiral the mariner, and that he must have been away when the canoe arrived. And the Admiral says here that the caravel bartered much gold, so that for a lace-point they gave good pieces of gold the size of two fingers, and at times of a hand; and Martín Alonso took half and divided the other half among his people. The Admiral adds, speaking to the Sovereigns, "Thus, lord Princes, I realize that Our Lord miraculously ordered that ship to stay there, because it is the best place of the whole island to make a settlement, and nearest to the mines of gold." Also it is said that he knew that behind the island Juana to the south was another great island, in which there is a much greater quantity of gold than in this, and of such quantity that they gather pieces bigger than beans; and in the island Hispaniola they gather pieces of gold as large as grains of wheat. They called that island, he said, *Yamaye*.⁶ Also it is said that the Admiral knew that from here toward the east there was an island where there were none but women,⁷ and he says that he learned this from many persons, and that this island Hispaniola or the other island *Yamaye* was distant from the mainland 10 days' journey by canoe, which would be 60 or 70 leagues, and that there the people were clothed.

1. Between Isla Cabra and La Granja, Monte Cristi.

2. Oh! don't they! "He had never experienced the fury of those two winds," comments Las Casas on the margin.

3. There are about five harbors for small craft with about 2 fathoms of water between Monte Cristi and Cape Isabela.

4. See above, 21 November.

5. Ferdinand, chap. 35 (Keen trans. 87) says that this was the harbor that the Admiral afterwards named Rio de Gracia, and that Martín Alonso tarried there 16 days, and found plenty of gold, which he concealed from the Admiral.

6. Probably the Indians meant Jamaica, but Las Casas thought they meant Yucatan, for he comments, "He speaks truth, but it is mainland, not an island." Las Casas comments marginally on the gold nuggets, "and also like a big loaf of bread of Alcalá, and like a quarter-loaf of Valladolid have been found pieces of gold in Hispaniola, and I saw it, and many others of a pound, and 2, and 3, and one of 8 pounds was found in Hispaniola." After that, the Admiral may well be believed.

7. Here is the first mention of the Isle of Women mentioned by Marco Polo, which Columbus finally decided to be Martinique.

MONDAY, 7 JANUARY

This day he pumped out the water which the caravel had taken in, and caulked, and the seamen went ashore to cut wood, and it is said that they found much mastic and aloes.

TUESDAY, 8 JANUARY

Owing to the high wind from the E and SE that blew, he departed not this day. Accordingly he ordered the caravel to take on water and wood and everything necessary for the whole voyage, because, although he intended to sail along the whole coast of that Hispaniola, which he might have done in his course; yet, since those whom he placed in the caravels as captains, who were brothers, viz. Martín Alonso Pinzón and Vicente Yáñez, and others who followed them, estimating with insolence and greed that all belonged to them, unmindful of the honor that the Admiral had done and shown them, had not and did not obey his orders, but did and said many improper things against him; and Martín Alonso left him on 21 November up to 6 January with no other cause or reason than his disobedience which the Admiral had suffered and overlooked to give a good end to his voyage. Hence, to get rid of such bad company, with whom he says that he had to dissemble (for they were undisciplined people), and although he had along many men of good will (but it was no time to deal out punishment), he decided to return and delay no more, but to make the greatest possible haste.

He entered the barge and went to the river which is near there to the SSE¹ of Monte Cristi a good league, where the seamen went to get water for the ship, and found that the sand at the mouth of the river, which is very great and deep, was, it is said, all full of gold, and of such quality that it is marvellous, but it was very fine. The Admiral believed that in coming down that river it was pulverized in that way, but he says that in a small area he found grains as large as lentils, and of the fine dust he says that there was a great quantity. And because the sea was smooth, and the salt water mingled with the fresh, he ordered the boat to go up the river a stone's throw. They filled the barrels from the boat, and returning to the caravel, they found bits of gold adhering to the barrel-hoops, and the same to the pipe-hoops.² The Admiral gave the river the name *Rio del Oro*, and within, having passed the entrance, it is very deep, although the entrance is shallow and the mouth very wide, and from it to the town of Navidad is 17 leagues,³ and there are many other great rivers between them, especially three, which he thought should have much more gold than that, because they are greater, although this is almost as large as the Guadalquivir at Cordova, and from them to the mines of gold it is not 20 leagues. Further, says the Admiral, he didn't care to take any of the said sand that contains so much gold, since Their Highnesses would have it all in their own hands and at the very gate of their town of Navidad; but [he wished] to arrive first at full speed to bring the news and to quit the bad company that he had, and that he had always said they were a mutinous lot.

1. An obvious mistake for SSW; the distance is correct for the Rio Yaque del Norte. Las Casas has a marginal note in the ms. "This river is the Yaque, very mighty

and with much gold and it could be that the Admiral found it there then, because then it was virgin, as they say. But all the same I think that much of it

would have been *magasita* (fool's gold) because there's much of it in that place, and the Admiral was much too inclined to think all's gold that glitters." In this case, however, the Bishop was wrong and the Admiral right; for there was and still is gold in the bed of the Rio Yaque. My friend Preston Davie, who had a cotton plantation in that region in 1916, tells me that the local Negro women panned out gold from the river

sands, and collected the grains in turkey quills, which they brought to market.

2. *los aros de la pipa*. The pipe, still used as a unit in the wine trade, was a long, tapering cask holding about 155 imperial gallons.

3. The actual distance, by the shortest route, is about 27 miles, but by the roundabout route the Admiral had taken thither from Navidad it was about 15 leagues.

WEDNESDAY, 9 JANUARY

At midnight he hoisted sail with the wind SE and sailed to the ENE. Arrived at a point which he called *Punta Roja*,¹ which is 60 Roman miles due E of Monte Cristi, and in the shelter of it anchored in the afternoon, which would be 3 hours before nightfall. He didn't dare to leave there by night because there were many reefs, until they were known; afterwards they would be advantageous if they had (as they must have) channels through them, and there is there great depth and good holding ground, sheltered from all winds. These lands, from Monte Cristi up to there where he anchored, are very high and flat, and many fair fields, and in the rear very fine mountains which run from E to W, and are all cultivated and green, so that it is a marvellous thing to see their beauty, and they have many rivers of water. In all this country there are many turtles, of which the seamen took some at Monte Cristi when they came ashore to lay eggs, and they were very big like a large wooden shield. The day before, when the Admiral went to the Rio del Oro he said that he saw three mermaids who rose very high from the sea, but they were not as beautiful as they are painted, although to some extent they have a human appearance in the face.² He said that he had seen some in Guinea on the coast of Malagueta.³ He says that this night in the name of Our Lord he would depart on his voyage without detaining himself further, since he had found that which he was seeking, and because he wanted no more trouble with that Martín Alonso until Their Highnesses learned the news of his voyage, and of what he had done; "and afterwards I shall not suffer," he says, "the deeds of lewd fellows devoid of virtue, who contrary to him who conferred honor upon them, presume to do their own will, with slight respect."

1. "Point Red," probably the present Punta Rucia, although the distance is exaggerated. Puerto Juanita in the shelter of Punta Rucia fits the description of the reefs.

2. These were the Caribbean Manatees or sea-cows, *Trichechi manati* L., formerly common on the shores of the Caribbean. They are not, as the Admiral observed, very seductive, but have a neck and arm-like fore limbs, suckle their young, and have an uncanny human appearance as they rise out of the sea. Smart Yankees used to

bring home the calves alive, or kill and stuff the cows, to exhibit at country fairs as "genuine mermaids." *Sirenia*, indeed, is the name of the mammalian order in which they are classified.

3. The West African manatee, *Trichechus senegalensis*, is what Columbus had seen on the Grain Coast between Liberia and Cape Palmas, where Malagueta pepper was found. T.H.W.

THURSDAY, 10 JANUARY

He set out from the place where he had anchored, and at sunset had reached a river 3 leagues to the SE to which he gave the name *Rio de Gracia*.¹ Anchored at the mouth, which is good holding ground, on the E side. To enter within, there's a shoal

which has no more than 2 fathoms of water, and very narrow; within it is a good land-locked harbor, but there are many teredos² and from them the caravel *Pinta* in which Martín Alonso sailed suffered much damage; for he says that he stayed there trading 16 days, where they bartered much gold, which was what Martín Alonso wanted. That fellow, when he heard from the Indians that the Admiral was on the coast of the same island Hispaniola and he couldn't avoid him, came to meet him, and he says that he wished to have all his crew swear that he had only been there 6 days. But it is said that his wickedness was so notorious that he couldn't cover it up; and he, says the Admiral, had made regulations that half the gold that he bartered or procured was for him; and when he left there, he took four Indian men and two wenches by force, and the Admiral ordered them to be given clothes and set ashore to go home, "the which," says he, "is for the service of Your Highnesses, since men and women are alike [subjects of] Your Highnesses, so especially in this island as in the others. But here, where Your Highnesses already have a settlement, honor and favor should be shown to the people, because in this island there is so much gold and good lands and spicery."³

1. "This river is the one they call 'of Martín Alonso Pinzón,' which is 5 leagues from Puerto Plata" (note of Las Casas, who knew that region well). Columbus's description meets Puerto Blanco better than Puerto Souffle, which lies 3 miles further to the eastward.

2. *mucha bruma*, meaning *broma*, the teredo.

3. It is not clear why Columbus thought it wicked for Pinzón to kidnap Indians, which he himself had been doing all along.

FRIDAY, 11 JANUARY

At midnight he set out from the Rio de Gracia with the land breeze, sailed to the east up to a cape that he called *Bel Prado*, 4 leagues, and from there in the SE is the mountain which he called *Monte de Plata*, and says that it's 8 leagues from there.¹ From Cape *Bel Prado* to the E by S is the cape that he called *del Angél*, 18 leagues,² and from this cape to Monte de Plata there's a gulf and the best and prettiest lands in the world, all open fields, high and fair, which extend far inland, and behind there's a sierra that runs from E to W, very great and fair, and at the foot of the mountain there's a very good harbor, and in the entrance there are 14 fathoms;³ and this mountain is very high and beautiful, and all is much inhabited, and the Admiral believed that there would be good rivers and much gold. From Cabo del Angél to the E by S at 4 leagues there's a point which he named *del Hierro*, and on the same course 4 leagues is a point that he called *Punta Seca*, and thence on the same course at 6 leagues is the cape that he called *Redondo*, and thence to the E is *Cabo Françés*, and on this cape, on the E side, is a great bay; but it didn't seem to have anchorage.⁴ One league thence is the *Cabo del Buen Tiempo*, and from this to the S by E one good league is a cape that he called *Tajado*;⁵ from this he caught sight of another cape to the south, and it appeared to be about 15 leagues distant.⁶ Made great progress today, because the wind and currents were with him. Dared not anchor for fear of the shoals, and so lay-to all night.⁷

1. Columbus's Monte de Plata is the present Loma Isabela de Torres (2673 ft.) behind Puerto de Plata; Las Casas, who began his *Apologética Historia de las Indias* in a monastery on its slopes, in 1527, has a mar-

ginal note: "This mountain he called *de Plata* because it is very high and there is always a cloud over the summit which looks white or plated, and at the foot of it is a harbor which is called Plata after that moun-

tain." The distances given in the text are confusing. Punta Patilla would seem to be Bel Prado as it is the only cape between the two harbors, and is long and low, sloping gradually to the point; but it is only 6 miles from the mouth of Puerto Blanco, 2½ miles from Puerto Souffle, and 10 miles from Puerto de Plata.

2. Probably Cape Macoris.

3. The modern chart marks 12-15 fathoms at the mouth of Puerto de Plata.

4. Again, the distances are confusing. Cabo Francés is certainly the present Cabo Viejo Francés, so called in the colonial period to distinguish it from Cap Français, Cape Haitien. There the coast falls away to the S. But

it is only 10 leagues from Cabo Macoris (Angel).

5. I.e., "sheer." These distances fit the present Punta Tres Amares and Punta Savanata, both parts of Cabo Viejo Francés. "Of all these names of capes none remain today," wrote Las Casas in his *Historia* chap. 67 (1951 ed. I 302). Yet Cabo Tajado is an alternate name on the modern chart for Punta Savanata.

6. Probably Cape Cabron, which lay about 13 leagues to the ESE. From a statement made on the 13th it is clear that he never saw the head of Escocesa Bay, and thought that the Samaná peninsula was an island.

7. *Niña* evidently spent the night hove-to outside Escocesa Bay.

SATURDAY, 12 JANUARY

At the dawn watch¹ he steered to the E with a fresh wind, and so proceeded up to daylight; and in this time [made] 20 Roman miles, and in the next two hours must have gone 24 Roman miles. From there he saw land to the south, and went towards it, and it was 48 Roman miles from there, and he says that, respecting the vessel,² he would have proceeded this night 28 Roman miles to the NNE. When he saw the land, he called a cape that he saw, the *Cabo de Padre y Hijo*, because at the point, on the E part, were two rocky pinnacles, one bigger than the other.³ Afterwards 2 leagues to the east he saw a great and very beautiful opening between two great mountains, and saw that it was



a very great harbor, good, and with a very good entrance;⁴ but because it was very early in the morning and to avoid delay because for the most part of the time there it blows E and at that time NNW, he didn't wish to tarry longer. He followed a course to the E up to a very high and beautiful cape, all of sheer rock, to which he gave the name *Cabo del Enamorado*,⁵ which was to the east of that harbor, which he called *Puerto Sacro*,⁶ 32 Roman miles; and when he reached it he discovered another [cape] much more beautiful and high and rotund, all of rock, like Cape St. Vincent in Portugal, and it was distant from the Enamorado to the east 12 miles.⁷ After he was abreast of the Enamorado he saw between it and the other that there was a very great bay, which was 3 leagues broad, and in the midst of it a tiny little island.⁸ The depth is great at the entrance near the land; he anchored there in 12 fathoms, sent the barge

ashore for water, and to see if they could have speech; but the people all fled. He also anchored to see if all this was one land with Hispaniola, and whether that which he supposed to be a gulf didn't make another island. He remained amazed at how big was the island Hispaniola.

1. 3 to 7 A.M.

2. Meaning, by estimating her speed.

3. "Cape Father and Son." He probably stood well out to sea during the night, and this cape was Cabo Cabron.

4. Probably Puerto Rincon, which lies between Capes Cabron and Samaná, which are two leagues apart.

5. Evidently Cape Samaná, a headland of steep, jagged red cliffs.

6. It is not clear what he meant by this harbor, not previously mentioned; something on the W side of Cape Cabron, probably.

7. There is nothing east of Cape Samaná until you reach Africa. Cape Rafael, the other headland of Samaná Bay, lies to the SE about 20 miles and is low. The next sentence shows that it must be this cape that is meant; but Cape Samaná is about 500 feet in elevation and looks much more like Cape St. Vincent than does any other headland in that region.

8. Cayo Levantado just inside Samaná Bay; see chart in Morison *A.O.S. I* 400 (one-vol. ed. 312). There is a 12-fathom sounding inside it, near the shore. Three leagues is accurate for the width of Samaná Bay between Punta Balandra and Punta Jovo.

SUNDAY, 13 JANUARY

He didn't leave this harbor because there was no land breeze to leave with; he wished to leave to go to another and better harbor, since that one was rather exposed, and because he wished to see where he might await the conjunction of the moon with the sun, which he expected on the 17th of this month, and the opposition of it [the moon] with Jupiter and conjunction [of Mars] with Mercury, and the sun in opposition with Jupiter, which is the cause of great winds.¹ Sent the barge ashore on a fine beach, to obtain yams to eat, and they found some men with bows and arrows, with whom they waited to talk, and bought of them two bows and many arrows, and asked one of them to go and speak to the Admiral in the caravel, and he came; of whom it is said that he was very ugly in appearance, more than the others that he had seen. He had his face all stained with charcoal,² although in all parts they are wont to use different colors; he wore his hair very long and drawn together and fastened behind, and gathered into a little net of parrots' feathers; and he as naked as the others. The Admiral judged that he would be one of the Caribs who eat men, and that gulf that he had seen yesterday made a separation of the land, and [this] would be an island by itself. He questioned him about the Caribs, and he made signs to him to the east of there, which it is said that the Admiral had seen yesterday before he entered that Bay; and the Indian told him that there was much gold in it; pointing to the poop of the caravel [to show] that it was very great and that there were pieces so great; he called gold *tuob* and didn't understand *caona*, which they called it in the first part of the island, nor *noçay*, as they called it in San Salvador and the other islands.³ Of the island of *Matinino*⁴ that Indian said that it was entirely inhabited by women without men, and that in it there was much *tuob*, which is gold or copper, and that it is more to the east of *Carib*. Also he spoke of the island of *Goanín*, where there is much *tuob*.⁵

Of these islands the Admiral says that he had information from many persons some days before. The Admiral says further that in the islands passed they were in great fear of the Carib (in some they call it Caniba but in Hispaniola Carib), and that it must be an

audacious folk, since they go through all these islands and eat the people that they can get. He says that he understood some words, and that the Indians on board understood more; but that they found a difference of languages, owing to the great distance of the lands. He ordered the Indian to be given food, and gave him pieces of green and red cloth, and little beads of glass, to which they are very much attached, and sent him back ashore, and told him to bring him gold, if he had it, which he believed from certain little things of his that he wore. When the barge reached the shore there were behind the trees some 55 naked men with very long hair, as the women wear it in Castile. At the back of the head they wore plumes of feathers of parrots and other birds, and everyone carried a bow. The Indian went ashore and caused the others to lay aside their bows and arrows and a piece of wood which is like a very heavy [cudgel]⁶ which they wear instead of a sword. Afterwards they came to the barge and the people of the barge jumped ashore and began to buy the bows and arrows and other arms, because the Admiral had so ordered. Having sold two bows, they wished to give no more, but prepared rather to attack the Christians and capture them. They were running to pick up their bows and arrows where they had cast them aside, and returned with ropes in their hands to bind the Christians, it is said. Seeing them running towards them, the Christians, being prepared as always the Admiral advised them to be, fell upon them, and gave an Indian a great slash on the buttocks, and wounded another in the breast with an arrow. Seeing that they could gain little, although the Christians were not more than seven, and they 50 and more, they began to flee, until not one remained, one leaving his arrows here, and another his bows there.⁷ The Christians would have killed many of them, it is said, if the pilot who went with them as their captain had not prevented it. The Christians returned to the caravel with their boat, and when the Admiral knew of it he said that on the one hand he was sorry and on the other not, since they would have fear of the Christians, because without doubt, says he, the folk there are bad actors (as one says), and he believed that they were Caribs, and ate men; and accordingly, if the barge that he left with the 39 men in the fortress and town of Navidad came that way, they would fear to do them any harm; and that if they are not Caribs, at least they must be their neighbors and have the same customs, and fearless people, not like the others of the other islands, who are cowards and without arms, beyond reason. All this says the Admiral, and that he wished to take some of them. He says that they made many smoke signals, as was usual in that island Hispaniola.

1. Las Casas remarks in the margin, "by this it seems that the Admiral knew something of astrology, but these planets appear to be not well placed, through fault of the bad scribe who copied it." In the *Historia* chap. 67 he says it was "through the defect of him who transcribed the Admiral's *libro de la navegaci3n*" (1951 ed. I 303). That was the original title of the Journal. What this passage proves is that the Admiral had a copy of Regiomontanus's *Ephemerides* (Nuremberg 1485), which predicted new moon (in conjunction with sun), conjunction of Mars with Mercury, and opposition of sun and Jupiter, for the 17th.

2. In the *Historia* (*ibid.*), Las Casas says, "not charcoal,

but a certain dye that they make of a certain fruit." And in the margin of the Journal he says, "these should be those [Indians] who are called *Çiguayos*, who all wear their hair thus very long." They were Arawaks who, in defense against the Caribs of Puerto Rico, had adopted Carib weapons. He adds, "There were no Caribs in Hispaniola, ever."

3. Las Casas's marginal note: "they call gold *caona* in the major part of the island Hispaniola, but there are two or three other languages."

4. Martinique. Las Casas comments: "the Admiral didn't understand that Indian" about the women.

5. Las Casas comments: "this *Guanin* was not an

island, as I think, but base gold, which according to the Indians of Hispaniola has an odor for which they prize it much, and this they call *guanín*." See the Third Voyage for Columbus's direct contact with this alloy of gold and copper.

6. Lacuna. Las Casas's marginal note: "This is from the palm tree, which is very hard, made in the manner of an iron pan which is used to fry eggs or large fish, of four palms' length, blunt at both ends, which is called *macaña*." Cf. *Historia* chap. 67 (1951 ed. I 304).

The natives of Haiti still carry a palm cudgel like these, which they call *macacque*.

7. Las Casas's marginal note: "the first brawl between the Indians and Christians in the island Hispaniola." In his day Samaná Bay was called Bahía de las Flechas (of the Arrows). The point of land where the fight took place, directly north of the islet and the anchorage, is still called Las Flechas; there is a pretty beach there, as the Admiral says. Cf. Journal for 16 January, note 1.

MONDAY, 14 JANUARY

He wished to send this night to find the houses of those Indians to take some of them, believing that they were Caribs, and owing to the strong E and NE wind and high sea running [he could not]. But as soon as it was day they saw many Indians ashore, for which the Admiral ordered the barge to go there with people well armed. All immediately came to the stern of the barge, especially the Indian who the day before had come to the caravel, and to whom the Admiral had given the barter truck. With them, it is said, came a king, who had given to the said Indian some beads for him to give to those in the barge, as a sign of security and peace. This king with three of his people entered the barge and came to the caravel; the Admiral ordered them to be given biscuit and honey to eat, and gave him a red cap and beads and a piece of red cloth, and also pieces of cloth to the others; he said that he would bring tomorrow a mask of gold, declaring that there was much of it there, and in *Carib* and in *Matinino*.¹ Afterwards he sent them ashore well content. The Admiral says further that the caravels were taking in considerable water through the keel, and he complains much of the caulkers who in Palos caulked them very ill, and that when they saw that the Admiral understood the defects of their work and wished to force them to make it good, they made off. But, despite the considerable water that the caravels were making, he trusted in Our Lord, who led him, that He would through His goodness and mercy return him, that His Divine Majesty well knew how much controversy there was before he could set out from Castile; that no other was in his favor but Him, because He knew his courage, and after God, Their Highnesses; and the majority had been against him without any reason, and he says further thus: "And they have been the cause that the royal crown of Your Highnesses has not 100 millions more revenue now than it has, since I came to serve you (which was seven years ago on the 20th day of January this same month), and more, by which it would be increased from this time forth; but Almighty God will remedy all."² These are his words.

1. Puerto Rico and Martinique.

2. He means that if his propositions had been accepted promptly, the Sovereigns could have commenced ex-

tracting gold from the Indies some six years earlier.

This passage fixes the date of Columbus's first interview with the Sovereigns.

TUESDAY, 15 JANUARY

He says that he wished to leave, because already there was no profit in tarrying, owing to those disagreements which had occurred; he meant to say that skirmish with the

Indians. He says also that today he has learned that all the abundance of gold was in the region of the town of Navidad of Their Highnesses, and that in the island of Carib¹ and in Matinino there was much copper, but that there would be difficulties in Carib, because that people, it is said, eat human flesh, and that their island was in sight from there,² and he was determined to go to it, since it is on the way, and to that of Matinino, which it is said is wholly inhabited by women without men, and to see one and the other and to take, says he, some of them.³ The Admiral sent the boat ashore, and the king of that country had not come because it is said the village was far off, but he sent his crown of gold as he had promised, and there came many other men with cotton and bread and yams, all with their bows and arrows. After all had been bartered, there came, it is said, four youths to the caravel, and they seemed to the Admiral to give a very good account of all those islands that there were to the east on the same route that the Admiral had to take, which decided him to take them back with him to Castile.⁴ There, he says that they had no iron or other metal that he had seen, but in a few days he couldn't learn much about a country, both from the difficulty of language, which the Admiral didn't understand except by guess, and because they knew not what he was trying to say in a few days. The bows of that people, it is said, were as big as those of France and England, the arrows are like the darts of the other folk whom he had hitherto seen, for they are made of the shoots of canes, when they are seeding, which are very straight and a yard⁵ and a half or two yards long, and afterwards they put on the head of it a bit of sharp wood a palm and a half [long], and at the tip of this stick some insert a fish tooth, and the most of them put on poison; and they do not shoot as in other regions, but in a certain manner that can't do much harm. There is very much cotton, and very fine and long, and there is much mastic; and it seemed to him that the bows were of yew, and that there is gold and copper. Also there is much *axí*, which is their pepper,⁶ and it is stronger than pepper, and the people won't eat without it, for they find it very wholesome. One could load 50 caravels a year with it in Hispaniola. He says that he found much weed in that bay of the kind that they found in the gulf when he came upon the discovery;⁷ whence he believed that there were islands directly to the east where he began to find it; for he holds for certain that that weed grows in slight depth near the land, and says that if it is so, these Indies were very near the Canary Islands, and for that reason he believed that they were less than 400 leagues distant.⁸

1. Las Casas's marginal note: "it seems that this island should be that of San Juan [Puerto Rico]—but they don't eat human flesh."

2. Again that intriguing island to the eastward. José González Ginorio *El Descubrimiento de Puerto Rico* (1936) believes that it was Puerto Rico; but they couldn't possibly have seen that island from Samaná Bay, as the nearest point of it, Borinquen, was 127 miles distant from his anchorage.

3. The Arawaks had a myth collected by Fr. Ramón Pane in 1497 and reported in Ferdinand's *Historie* chap. 62 (Keen trans. 153-5) of a culture-hero Guaguayona leaving all the women in the island of Matinino, which is identified as Martinique. Oviedo gives an-

other version in his *Historia General y Natural* lib. xxv chap. 14 (1851-55 ed. II 310-12), from which the Amazon river derives its name, by association with the classical myth. Marco Polo, moreover, tells in his lib. iii chap. 34 a tale, which Columbus had read, of male and female islands in the Indian Ocean. What Columbus picked up of the Arawak myth regarding Matinino he therefore connected with Marco Polo's story, as additional evidence that he was in the real Indies; and as he had not yet identified any of Marco Polo's localities he was eager to locate the Amazonian isle.

4. Las Casas comments: "he did very ill to carry them off against their will." The one survivor was returned

to Samaná Bay in November 1493, on the Second Voyage.

5. *vara*, which the dictionary states equals 2.78 English feet.

6. Capsicum, the chile of Mexico. Las Casas comments that the Christians have become addicts of chile.

7. Gulfweed again; cf. Journal for 16 September, note 2. During certain seasons Samaná Bay is full of it; in others, there is none.

8. Less than half the correct distance. Columbus is still snatching at any hint to prove the ocean to be narrower than it is.

d. *HOMEWARD PASSAGE, 16 JANUARY–15 MARCH 1493*

WEDNESDAY, 16 JANUARY

He departed three hours before daybreak with the land breeze from the gulf which he called *de las Flechas*,¹ afterward with the wind W, turning the bow to the E by N, to go, he says, to the island of Carib, where were the people whom all those islands and countries hold in so great fear, because it is said that with their countless canoes they range over all those seas, and it is said that they eat the men whom they can take. The route, it is said, had been pointed out by some Indians of those four whom he took yesterday in *Puerto de las Flechas*. After having gone, in his calculation, 64 Roman miles, the Indians made signs to him that the said island would lie to the southeast. He wished to change course and ordered the sails to be trimmed, and after he had gone 2 leagues, the wind freshened, very fair to go to Spain. He observed among the people that they began to be downhearted because they were deviating from the direct course, owing to the considerable water that both caravels were making, and they had no remedy save in God. He had to abandon the course that he thought led to the island, and turned to the direct course for Spain, NE by E,² and thus up to sunset made 48 Roman miles, which are 12 leagues. The Indians told him that on that route he would find the island of Matinino, which it is said was inhabited by women without men, which the Admiral much wished [to see], in order to bring, he says, 5 or 6 of them to the Sovereigns; but he doubted whether the Indians knew well the route; and he didn't care to tarry from the danger of the water that the caravels were making; but he says that it was certain that there were these [women] and that at a certain time of the year the men came to them from the said island of Carib, which was 10 or 12 leagues from them; and if they give birth to a boy, they send him to the island of men, and if a girl, they keep her with them. The Admiral says that those two islands should not be distant more than 15 or 20 leagues from the place whence they departed, and he believes that they are to the SE, and that the Indians didn't know how to tell him the route. After having lost sight of the cape that he named *Sant Théramo*³ of the Island Hispaniola, which was 16 leagues to the W, he made 12 leagues to the E by N. Very fine weather prevailed.

1. "Of the Arrows"; see 13 January, note 7.

2. This clause is the key to the Admiral's plan of navigation for the return voyage, discussed in Morison *A.O.S.* I 405–7 (one-vol. ed. 316–17). His plan seems to have been to make as much northing and easting as he could on the starboard tack, with the tradewind, until he reached the latitude of the Azores, where he could expect to find westerlies, as he had heard of the Portu-

guese navigators who sailed west of those islands being baulked by the headwinds.

3. Las Casas marginally defines this as Cape Engaño, the easternmost point of Hispaniola, but it is more probably Balandra Head, Samaná Bay, which bore W $\frac{1}{4}$ S distant 43 miles from what we calculate to have been *Niña's* position. Cape Engaño, on the contrary, then bore about SE $\frac{1}{2}$ E. J.W.McE.

THURSDAY, 17 JANUARY

Yesterday at sunset the wind moderated somewhat. Must have sailed for 14 glasses (each a half-hour or a little less) until relieving of the first watch, and made 4 Roman miles an hour, which amounts to 28 Roman miles. Afterwards the wind freshened, and thus he proceeded all that watch, which was 10 glasses; and afterwards another 6 [glasses] till sunrise, at 8 Roman miles an hour, and so went in all about 84 Roman miles, which are 21 leagues, to the NE by E. And until sunset he proceeded about 44 more Roman miles, which are 11 leagues, to the E.¹ Here a booby came to the caravel, and afterwards another, and he saw much of that weed which is in the sea.²

1. The Journal for each day of the return passage begins at sunset the previous day, and ends at sunset on the day of the entry. See J. W. McElroy in *American Neptune* I (1941) 226-40 for discussion of this crossing, and for each day's position. Chart *ibid.* 244, and in Morison *A.O.S.* I 292 and one-vol. ed. 222. In checking Columbus's dead reckoning it must be remembered that he had no timepiece but the half-hour glass, knew nothing of local civil time, had no almanac giving him the hours of sunrise and sunset at different latitudes, and was unable to take an accurate meridional observation of the sun with quadrant or astrolabe. Presumably he had one of the sun-dial compasses then made by Regiomontanus, whose almanac he carried, and started his first glass flowing by estimating high noon with this instrument when at anchor in Samaná Bay.

This "clock" would lose time every day going E, but he would be unaware of that for several days. This day's journal, by exception, starts at 4 P.M. on the 16th, not at sunset, which came about 5:50. He sails 7 hours at 3 knots to 11 P.M., when the first watch was relieved; total run, 28 Roman (21 nautical) miles. The wind freshens, and if for the next 10 glasses (5 hours) we assume a speed of just under 5 knots, he would have made 32 Roman (24 nautical) miles until 4 A.M. Why the "graveyard watch" stayed on duty an extra hour I cannot guess. Another 6 glasses (3 hours) at 6 knots, making 24 Roman (18 nautical) miles, take him to sunrise at 7 A.M. Total, 84 Roman (63 nautical) miles.

2. See note 1 to Journal for 19 September. None of the remarks on birds on the return passage imply any kinds except regular pelagic species. L.G.

FRIDAY, 18 JANUARY

He sailed with light wind this night to the E by S 40 Roman miles, which are 10 leagues, and later to the SE by E 30 Roman miles, which are 7½ leagues, until sunrise. After sunup he sailed this whole day with light wind from the ENE and NE and also E more or less. Her head pointed N and at times N by E and [at times] NNE,¹ and so, reckoning one thing with another, he thought he must have made 60 Roman miles, which are 15 leagues. There was little weed, but he says that today or yesterday the sea appeared to be covered with tunnies,² and the Admiral believed that from there they would go to the tunny fisheries of the Duke of Conil and of Cadiz.³ Because a fisher called the frigate-bird⁴ flew around the caravel and later made off to the SSE, the Admiral believed that in that quarter there were some islands; and on the same parallel as Hispaniola he said that the islands of Carib and Martinino and many others lay.

1. This passage, badly mangled in Jane's and Markham's translations, is most interesting as showing what the *Niña* could do, or what the Admiral thought she could do, on the wind. Assuming that the three winds NE, ENE, E, correspond respectively to the three courses, N, N by E, NNE; *Niña* and *Pinta* were sailing an average of 5 points on the wind, which is as well as a modern gaff-headed schooner can do under oceanic conditions. But *Niña* must have made plenty of leeway on these courses.

2. *atunes*. Rondelet *de Piscibus Marinis* (1554) 249 speaks of them thus: "vere et autumnno capitur maxima copia in Hispanica, praesertim ad Herculis columnas." The tunny (*Thynnus thynnus*), albacore and other related forms are commonly called *atunes* in Cuba today. These fish are pelagic and circumtropical, hence they are probably the only ones mentioned in the Journal which the Spaniards knew before they left home. T.H.W.

3. The Duke of Cadiz's tunny fisheries, based at the

fishing village of Conil near Cadiz, were well known. *Niña's* sailors must have been delighted to see such familiar fish; doubtless they joked, as sailors will, that

"they are towing us to the Cadiz girls," who were famous then, as now, for their beauty and their salty wit.
4. See Journal for 14 September, note 2.

SATURDAY, 19 JANUARY

He proceeded this night 56 Roman miles to the N by E and 64 to the NE by N. After sunrise he sailed to the NE with the wind ESE, with fresh wind, and afterwards one point [more] to the N [NE by N], and must have made 84 Roman miles, which are 21 leagues.¹ Saw the sea full of little tunnies; there were boobies, tropic-birds² and frigate-birds.

1. Averaged 7 knots at night; made 6 points on the wind all day, averaging a little less than 6 knots. Nice sailing.
2. See 14 September, note 2.

SUNDAY, 20 JANUARY

Wind dropped this night, but at intervals there were a few squalls,¹ and must have made in all 20 Roman miles to the NE. After sunrise, must have made 11 Roman miles to the SE; later to the NNE 36 Roman miles, which are 9 leagues. Saw countless little tunnies;² the air, he says, very soft and sweet as in Seville during April and May, and "the sea" says he, "many thanks be to God, always very smooth." Frigate-birds and petrels and many other birds appeared.

1. *balcos de viento*, an Italianism; the Spanish word is *racha* (Guillén).
2. He probably took for young tunnies the mackerel-like *Scombridae* which are common in these waters. T.H.W.

MONDAY, 21 JANUARY

Yesterday, after sunset, he sailed to the N by E with wind E by N.¹ He must have made 8 Roman miles an hour up to midnight, which would be 56 Roman miles.² Afterwards he proceeded to the NNE 8 Roman miles an hour; and so in the whole night it would come to 104 Roman miles, which are 26 leagues,³ to the N by E.⁴ After the sun rose, he sailed to the NNE with the same E wind, and at times did NE by N, and would have made 88 Roman miles in 11 hours, which is the length of the day, and which are 21 leagues, knocking off one that he lost because he bore down on the caravel *Pinta* in order to speak her. Found the air very cold and thought, it is said, he would find it more so every day, the more northing he made, and also the nights were very much longer from the narrowing of the sphere. There appeared many boatswain-birds and petrels and other birds, but not so many fishes, because the water was colder. Saw much weed.

1. *leste y nordeste*; but this cannot mean E and NE, as that would have meant sailing 3 points on the wind.
2. This entry proves that he reckoned sunset as at 5 P.M. It was really at 5:50 in that latitude, local civil time.
3. This shows that he reckoned sunrise at 6 A.M. It was

really at 6:36 l.c.t. *Ampolleta* time is running slower every day as the fleet makes easting.

4. *á la quarta del norte, de la parte del nordeste*. This seems to be another way of saying N by E; but the course actually made good would have been N by E $\frac{1}{2}$ E, and as such we have taken it in our calculations.

TUESDAY, 22 JANUARY

Yesterday after sunset he sailed to the NNE with wind E and a little southerly; was making 8 Roman miles an hour until 5 glasses had turned, and 3 more before the watch was set, which were 8 glasses; and so must have gone 72 Roman miles, which are 18 leagues.¹ Afterwards proceeded N by E for 6 glasses, which would be 18 more Roman miles; afterwards, 4 glasses of the second watch to the NE at 6 Roman miles per hour, which are 3 leagues to the NE; afterwards, until sunrise, proceeded to the ENE 11 glasses at 6 leagues [*sic*] per hour,² which are 7 leagues; afterwards to the ENE until 11 A.M., 32 Roman miles; and then the wind dropped flat, and they did no more that day. The Indians went in swimming; saw boatswain-birds and much weed.

1. The scribe slipped badly in transcribing this day's work. Taking the half-hour glass as the constant, I figure that he made only 25 nautical miles (8 leagues) be-

fore the watch changed at 11 P.M. and that the scribe wrote 72 for 32, and 18 for 8.

2. The correct reading must be 9 glasses at 6 Roman miles per hour, which makes about 7 leagues.

WEDNESDAY, 23 JANUARY

This night he found many variations in the wind. Calculating everything, and giving the care that good seamen are accustomed to and should give, it is said that he must have gone that night 84 Roman miles, which are 21 leagues, to the NE by N. He waited several times for the caravel *Pinta*, for she sailed badly close-hauled, because she had little help from the mizzen owing to the mast not being sound; and he says that if her captain Martín Alonso Pinzón had taken as much care to provide a good mast in the Indies, where there were so many and of that sort, as he was greedy in leaving him, thinking to fill up the ship with gold, he would have done well. There appeared many tropic-birds and much weed; the sky all overcast these days; but it hasn't rained and the sea always very smooth as in a river, "to God be given many thanks." After sunrise must have gone free¹ to the NE some part of the day 30 Roman miles, which are 6½ leagues; and afterward for the rest of it proceeded to the ENE 30 Roman miles, which are 6½ leagues.

1. *franco*, "before the wind," with no need of using bowlines (Guillén).

THURSDAY, 24 JANUARY

He must have made this entire night, taking into account the many fluctuations that the wind made, 44 Roman miles, which were 11 leagues, to the NE. From sunrise to sunset, made 14 leagues to the ENE.

FRIDAY, 25 JANUARY

He sailed this night to the ENE for a part of the night (which was 13 glasses), 9½ leagues; afterwards proceeded to the NNE another 6 Roman miles. [After] sunrise and all day, because the wind moderated, he must have made 28 Roman miles, which are 7 leagues to the ENE; the seamen killed a porpoise and a tremendous shark;¹ and he says

that they had good need of them, because they had nothing left to eat but bread and wine and yams of the Indies.²

1. *tonina y un grandísimo tiburón*. For the porpoise, see Journal for 16 November 1492, note 5. According to Cornide, sharks of the Linnaean genus *Squalus* were known to the Spaniards as *tiburones*. At the present time this is the common name in Spain and the Canaries

for the genus *Eulamia*, the requiem sharks, which in many cases are very large, ferocious beasts. Luis Lozano Rey *Fauna Ibericas: Peces* pt. i (1928); T.H.W.

2. See 4 November, note 6.

SATURDAY, 26 JANUARY

This night he proceeded 56 Roman miles, which are 14 leagues, to the E by S. After sunrise he sailed at times to the ESE and at others to the SE. He must have made up to 11 A.M. 40 Roman miles; afterwards came about and then went very close-hauled,¹ and until night proceeded northerly 24 Roman miles, which are 6 leagues.

1. *a la relinga*, "on the bolt-rope." The wind apparently was northeasterly and hauling eastward, so he came about from the port to the starboard tack and fetched a northerly course. The fleet was now in about

the latitude of Cape Canaveral, experiencing variable winds. This was the only occasion on the homeward passage when he headed W of N; for the 9° westerly variation at that point made his true course 351°.

SUNDAY, 27 JANUARY

Yesterday after sunset he proceeded NE and N by E, and must have done 5 Roman miles an hour, which in 13 hours would be 65 Roman miles, which are 16½ leagues; after sunrise he proceeded to the NE 24 Roman miles, which are 6 leagues, until mid-day, and thence until sunset, must have made 3 leagues to the ENE.

MONDAY, 28 JANUARY

All this night he sailed to the ENE; must have made 36 Roman miles which are 9 leagues. Between sunrise and sunset he proceeded to the ENE 20 Roman miles, which are 5 leagues. The air very mild and soft; saw boatswain birds, petrels, and much weed.

TUESDAY, 29 JANUARY

Sailed to the ENE and must have gone in the night, with S and SW [winds], 39 Roman miles, which are 9½ leagues; in the whole day must have gone 8 leagues. The air very mild as in April in Castile; the sea very smooth; fishes that they call *dorados*¹ came aboard.

1. See Journal for 25 September, note 4.

WEDNESDAY, 30 JANUARY

In this entire night he must have made 7 leagues to the ENE; by day ran to the S by E¹ 13½ leagues; saw boatswain birds and much weed and many porpoises.²

1. *sur, quarta al sueste*. We take this to be a scribe's error for N by E, since it seems unlikely that, without noting any change in the wind, Columbus would have

altered the course 110° at sunrise, and at sunset (see 31 January), swung 160° back to N by E.

2. See Journal for 16 November, note 3.

THURSDAY, 31 JANUARY

He sailed this night 30 Roman miles to the N by E, and afterwards to the NE 35 Roman miles, which are 16 leagues. From sunrise to night proceeded 13 ½ leagues to the ENE; saw boatswain birds and petrels.

FRIDAY, 1 FEBRUARY

He proceeded this night 16 ½ leagues to the ENE; by day ran on the same course 29 ¼ leagues; the sea very smooth, thanks be to God.¹

1. This day the Admiral passes the latitude of the Bermudas and catches the westerlies, as his big run proves.

SATURDAY, 2 FEBRUARY

He proceeded this night 40 Roman miles which are 10 leagues to the ENE. By day, with the same wind aft, he ran at 7 Roman miles an hour so that in 11 hours he proceeded 77 Roman miles, which are 19 ¼ leagues. The sea very smooth, thanks be to God, and the air very soft. Saw the sea so covered with weed that if they hadn't seen it [to be weed] they would have feared shoals;¹ saw petrels.

1. They were now in the midst of the Sargasso Sea.

SUNDAY, 3 FEBRUARY

This night with the wind aft and the sea very smooth, thanks be to God, they must have gone 29 leagues. The North Star appeared very high, as on Cape St. Vincent; couldn't take the altitude with the astrolabe or quadrant, because the rolling wouldn't permit it.¹ By day he sailed on his course to the ENE, and must have made 10 Roman miles an hour, and thus in 11 hours 27 leagues.

1. According to our calculations, they were two or three degrees south of the latitude of Cape St. Vincent, which is on 37° N. This remark shows that Columbus had had little if any experience with the nautical astro-

labe, and his primitive quadrant was a difficult instrument to use on shipboard. But his naked-eye sight in connection with the change of weather next day convinced him that he had made sufficient northing.

MONDAY, 4 FEBRUARY

This night he sailed to the E by N; for part of the time made 12 Roman miles an hour and for part 10; and so must have gone 130 Roman miles, which are 32 ½ leagues. The sky was very overcast and rainy, and it was rather cold, because of which it is said that he knew he had not reached the latitude of the Azores;¹ after sunrise he changed his course to the E; made the entire day 77 Roman miles, which are 19 ¼ leagues.

1. This statement seems a *non sequitur*, because the Azores are noted for cold, rainy winter weather, in

comparison with the tropics; but compare the Admiral's opinion on 7 February.

TUESDAY, 5 FEBRUARY

This night he sailed to the E; must have made in the whole of it 54 Roman miles,

which are 14 leagues, less a half. By day ran at 10 Roman miles an hour and so in 11 hours there were 110 Roman miles, which are 27½ leagues. Saw petrels and some little sticks, which was a sign that they were near land.

WEDNESDAY, 6 FEBRUARY

Sailed this night to the E; must have done 11 Roman miles an hour in the 13 hours of the night; must have made 143 Roman miles, which are 35¼ leagues. Saw many birds and petrels. By day ran at 14 Roman miles an hour, and thus proceeded that day 154 Roman miles, which are 38½ leagues, so that between day and night they went 74 leagues, more or less.¹ Vicente Yáñez [found] that today in the morning the island of Flores bore N, and Madeira, E. Roldán said that the island of Fayal or of *Sant Gregorio* bore NE and *Puerto Sancto*, E.² Much weed appeared.

1. This was the best day's run of the entire voyage; an even 200 nautical miles, after reducing it by our overestimate factor of 15 per cent. Any cruising yacht of the *Niña's* length would be proud to make such a run nowadays.

2. *San Gregorio* is probably a mistake of the scribe for *San Giorgio* or *São Jorge*, the Azorean island near

Fayal. The captain of *Niña* and Bartolomé Roldán (an able seaman who was "striking" for pilot), were about 3° off in latitude, and our calculations (see charts in Morison *A.O.S.* I 292 and *American Neptune* I 214) place the actual position about 9° W of the meridian of Flores.

THURSDAY, 7 FEBRUARY

He sailed this night to the E; must have made 10 Roman miles an hour, and so in 13 hours 130 Roman miles, which are 32½ leagues; by day, 8 Roman miles an hour; in 11 hours 88 Roman miles, which are 22 leagues. On this morning the Admiral found himself to the south of the island of Flores 75 leagues, and the pilot Pero Alonso being to the N [in his calculations] had us passing between Terceira and Santa Maria, and to the E was passing to windward of the island of Madeira, 12 leagues to the N of it.¹ The seamen saw weed of another kind from the former, of the sort that there's much of in the islands of the Azores; later, he saw some of the former kind.²

1. Unless Peralonso Niño was so ignorant as to suppose that Santa Maria and Madeira lay on the same parallel, and that São Miguel did not exist, this means that he thought they were passing between the meridians of Terceira (27° 17' W) and of Santa Maria (25° 12' W). If so, he put the fleet about 600 miles too far E and 200 miles too far S. And Columbus's "S of Flores" evidently means S of the latitude of Flores, for on 10 February he thinks he is on the meridian of Flores.

2. Although the two predominant species of *Sargassum* are easily distinguishable, their distribution seems to be fairly uniform throughout the Sargasso Sea. This passage suggests that old, dark-colored gulfweed had been noted by Columbus in the course of some former voyage to the Azores. Nowadays gulfweed rarely reaches the Azores; I spent two weeks among them in 1939 without seeing a bit of it further east than a point 60 miles W of Flores.

FRIDAY, 8 FEBRUARY

He proceeded this night at three Roman miles an hour to the E for a short time, and afterwards made a course to the SE.¹ Proceeded the whole night 12 leagues. Sunrise to noon ran 27 Roman miles; afterwards, until sunset, as many more to make 13 leagues to the SSE.

1. It is evident the wind was heading them, and blew from NNE to E most of the night and day.

SATURDAY, 9 FEBRUARY

A part of this night he must have made 3 leagues to the SSE and afterwards to the S by E; afterwards to the NE until 10 A.M., 5 more leagues; and afterwards until nightfall, made 9 leagues to the E.¹

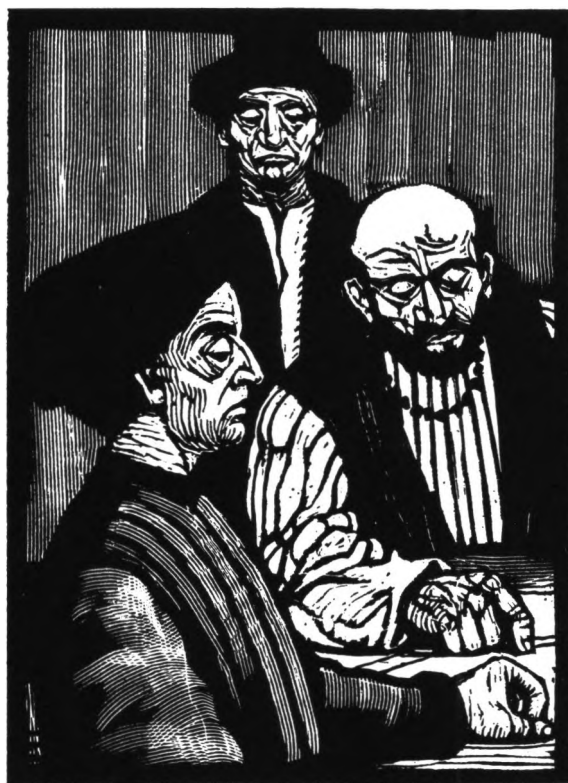
1. Light winds and variable; when headed so that she could do no better than S by E on the port tack,

Niña came about and steered NE, then the wind shifted again so that she could make E.

SUNDAY, 10 FEBRUARY

After sunset he sailed to the E, all night 130 Roman miles which are 32½ leagues; from sunrise to nightfall made 9 Roman miles an hour, and thus in 11 hours made 99 Roman miles which are 24¾ leagues. On the Admiral's caravel Vicente Yáñez and the two pilots Sancho Ruiz and Peralonso Niño, and Roldán, plotted the course and fixed positions; and all, according to their charts, were passing much beyond the islands of the Azores to the eastward; navigating to the N, none of them would have touched the island of Santa Maria, which is the last of all the Azores, but they would have been 5 leagues beyond it and in the region of Madeira and Porto Santo.¹ But the Admiral found himself much off his course, finding himself much more behind² than they. This night the island of Flores lay to the N, and to the E he was heading straight to *Nafe* in Africa,³ and would pass to windward and to northward of Madeira . . .⁴ leagues; thus they were nearer Castile than the Admiral by 150 leagues. He says that when, by virtue of the grace

of God, they sight land, it will be known who reckoned the more accurately. He also says here that he first proceeded 263 leagues beyond the island of Ferro on the outward passage before he saw the first weed, etc.⁵



1. See Admiral McElroy's chart at Morison *A.O.S.* I 293 (one-vol. ed. 223) or *American Neptune* I 214, where we have placed the pilots' guess too far west. Columbus means that from their assumed position, a northerly course would have missed Santa Maria by 5 leagues. Sancho Ruiz de Gama had been pilot of the wrecked flagship. Bartolomé Roldán of Moguer was one of the jail-birds who made good. He liked the sea, followed it for many years, and late in life became a wealthy burgher of Santo Domingo, where he was known as "Roldán the Pilot."

2. *atrás*, i.e., west of them in his reckoning.

3. The longitude of Flores is 31° 15' W, and according to our reckoning he was almost on it, but at about lat. 36°, instead of around 33° N, assuming that he knew the correct latitude of the places mentioned. *Nafe*, a Moorish town on the site of the modern Casablanca, is on lat. 33° 34' N, and Madeira crosses 33° N.

4. Lacuna in the manuscript.

5. See Journal for 16 September 1492, note 2.

MONDAY, 11 FEBRUARY

He proceeded this night on his course [E] at 12 Roman miles an hour, and so for the whole of it reckoned 39 leagues, and the whole day ran 16½ leagues. Saw many birds, hence supposed he was near land.¹

1. He was still about 170 miles from Fayal. Apparently the many deceptions of the first voyage had not

destroyed the Admiral's faith in birds as a sure sign of land.

TUESDAY, 12 FEBRUARY

He sailed to the E at 6 Roman miles an hour this night, and must have made up to daylight 73 Roman miles, which are 18¼ leagues. Here he began to have high seas and tempest, and if the caravel had not been, he says, very staunch and well found,¹ he would have been afraid of being lost. During the day he must have run 11 or 12 leagues, with much toil and peril.²

1. *adereçada*, lit. "dressed," "prepared."

2. "Here begins the tempest" (Las Casas). This was the worst weather the fleet experienced on either pas-

sage. *Niña* was running before it, rolling and pitching and threatening to broach.

WEDNESDAY, 13 FEBRUARY

From sunset to daybreak he labored much with the wind and very high sea and tempest.¹ Lightning flashed thrice to the NNE; he said it was a sign of a great storm, and it would come from that direction or the contrary. Proceeded most of the night under bare poles;² afterwards set a scrap of sail and must have made 52 Roman miles, which are 13 leagues. This day the wind moderated a little, but increased again, and the ocean made up something terrible, and the waves crossed each other, which strained the vessels. He must have gone 55 Roman miles, which are 13¼ leagues.

1. The late Professor Charles F. Brooks, director of the Harvard Meteorological Observatory at Blue Hill, studied Columbus's record of the two tempests of February and March 1493, in the light of the latest meteorological knowledge of that region. The results are published in *Bulletin American Meteorological Society*

for Oct. 1941 (xxii 303-9), and summarized in Morison *A.O.S.* I 410-24, 432-4 (one-vol. ed. chaps. xxiii, xxiv). Professor Brooks found that Columbus was so careful an observer that the course of the two tempests could be plotted as on a modern chart.

2. *á árbol seco*, lit. "with dry tree."

THURSDAY, 14 FEBRUARY

This night the wind increased and the waves were frightful, running counter to one another, and so crossed and embarrassed the ship that she couldn't make headway or get out from between them, and they broke over her. Set the main course¹ very low, merely to escape the waves somewhat; proceeded thus for 3 hours, and would have run 20 Roman miles. Sea and wind increased greatly, and, seeing that the danger was great, he began to scud with the wind aft where it would take him, since there was nothing else to be done. Then the caravel *Pinta*, in which Martín Alonso went, also began to scud before it, and disappeared, although all night the Admiral made flares, and the other replied,

until it appeared that he could do more from the force of the tempest, and because he found himself very far from the Admiral's course.²

The Admiral went this night 54 Roman miles, which are 13 leagues to the NE by E. At sunrise the wind and sea made up more, sea crossing more terribly. He set the main course only, and low, to enable her to rise above the cross-swell, that it might not swamp her. Was going on the ENE course, and afterwards NE by E. Proceeded 6 hours thus, and in them [made] 7½ leagues. He ordered that a pilgrimage should be arranged to go to *Sancta María de Guadalupe*³ and carry a candle of 5 pounds of wax, and that they should all vow that on whomever fell the lot should fulfil the pilgrimage. For this purpose he ordered as many chick-peas⁴ to be brought as were people in the ship, and that one should be marked with a knife, making a cross, and placed in a cap, well shaken. The first who put in his hand was the Admiral, and he drew the chick-pea with the cross, and so the lot fell on him, and henceforth he regarded himself as a pilgrim and bound to go to fulfil the vow. Another time lots were cast to send a pilgrimage to *Santa María de Loreto*, which is in the march of Ancona, territory of the Pope, a shrine where Our Lady has performed and performs many and great miracles, and the lot fell on a seaman of Puerto Santa Maria named Pedro de Villa, and the Admiral promised to give him money for his travelling expenses. He decided that another pilgrim should be sent to watch one night in *Sancta Clara de Moguer*,⁵ and should cause a mass to be said, for which they again used the chick-peas with the crossed one, and the lot fell on the Admiral himself. After that, the Admiral and all the people made a vow that, upon reaching the first land, they would all go in their shirts⁶ in procession to make a prayer in a church that was dedicated to Our Lady. Besides the general or common vows, everyone made his special vow, because nobody expected to escape, holding themselves all for lost, owing to the terrible tempest that they were experiencing. It helped increase the peril that the ship sailed with want of ballast, since the cargo had been lightened, because they had already eaten up the provisions and drunk the water and wine; the which, through eagerness to profit by the fine weather among the islands, the Admiral had not provided, having the intention to order them shipped in the Isle of Women, where he had had the intention to go. The remedy that he found for this necessity was, when they were able, to fill with sea water the pipes which were empty of water and wine; and with this they supplied the need.

Here the Admiral writes⁷ of the causes that made him fear that Our Lord wished him to perish, and of other reasons which gave him hope that God would bring him to safety, for that such news as he was bringing to the Sovereigns, should not perish. It seemed to him that this great desire that he held to bring this so important news, and show that he had told the truth in what he said and professed to reveal, gave him the greatest fear that he would not achieve it, and that every mosquito, it is said, might interrupt and prevent it. He attributed this to his little faith and confidence in Divine Providence; on the other hand he drew confidence from the grace of God in vouchsafing him so great a triumph in discovering what he had discovered; and that God had fulfilled all his wishes, after in Castile, in his preparations, there had occurred many adversities and contrarities; and that as before, so later, he committed his fate and entrusted all his undertaking to God, who had heard him and granted all that he sought. Thus he would believe that He

would give fulfilment to what He had begun, and would deliver him in safety, especially because He had delivered him on the outward passage, when he had greater reason to fear, because of the difficulties with seamen and people whom he carried, who all with one voice were determined to return and to mutiny⁸ against him, making protests; and the eternal God had given him strength and courage against all, and other things of much wonder which God had showed forth towards him and for him on that voyage, beyond those things which Their Highnesses knew from the people of their household.

Thus he says that he ought not to fear the tempest, but his "weakness and anxiety," says he, "would not allow my spirit to be soothed." He says further that the two sons whom he had in Cordova at school caused him great anxiety lest he leave them orphaned of father and mother in a strange land,⁹ and the Sovereigns would not know the services that he had rendered them on that voyage, or the happy news that he was bringing them, so that they would be moved to relieve the boys. For this, and that Their Highnesses might learn how Our Lord had given him victory in all that he desired in the Indies, and learn that there are no tempests whatever in those regions (which he says you can tell from the plants and trees which are planted and growing even within the sea)¹⁰ and in order that, if he were lost in that tempest, the Sovereigns might have news of his voyage, he took a parchment and wrote upon it all that he could of everything that he had found, earnestly requesting whoever might find it to carry it to the Sovereigns. This parchment he enclosed in a waxed cloth, very well secured, and ordered a great wooden barrel to be brought and placed it inside, without anyone knowing what it was, unless they supposed that it was some act of devotion; and so he ordered it to be cast into the sea.¹¹

Afterwards, with showers and squalls the wind changed to W, and he scudded with only the foresail¹² set for 5 hours, with the sea very confused, and must have made 2 ½ leagues to the NE. He had taken in the main course for fear lest a wave carry it away.

1. *papabigo*. He lowered the yard as far as he could without having the foot of the sail torn by water coming on board.

2. That was the last seen of the *Pinta* that voyage. Martín Alonso did not make the Azores, but took her into the port of Bayona in Galicia, about 300 miles north of his home port—a result of his miscalculation of latitude. From Bayona he is said to have tried to beat the Admiral with the news to Ferdinand and Isabella, and that they refused to receive him. He then sailed



Pinta around to Palos de Moguer, arriving on the same day as Columbus in the *Niña*. Already sick, and mortified by his rebuff by the Sovereigns, he refused to face the Admiral, and died shortly after.

3. A famous shrine in Estremadura; Guadeloupe in the West Indies, Guadalupe Hidalgo, Mexico, and many other shrines, have been named after Our Lady of Guadalupe.

4. *garbanzos*. Chick-peas (*Cicer arietinum*), along with beans and lentils, were an important item in ships' stores.

5. A church near Palos, held in great veneration by local seamen. *Niña's* real name was *Santa Clara*.

6. This was customary as a sign of humility; but the performance of it in this instance made trouble, as will shortly appear.

7. The paragraph of the original Journal upon which this is based is reproduced in Ferdinand's *Historie* chap. 37 (Keen trans. 91-2). It adds nothing except a few pious reflections, and again proves the honesty of this abstract by Las Casas, who says in *Historia* chap. 69 (1951 ed. I 313): "All these are his words, of the Admiral, although but few, in his simple and humble style which bears witness to his goodness."

8. This allusion to the incipient mutiny is significant. It is omitted in the abstract of the Journal for the outward passage. Ferdinand tells the story, but some of the "debunkers" have accused him of inventing it.

9. Another proof that Columbus was not a Spaniard. The two sons were Diego, the future Second Admiral,

then 14 to 18 years old, and Ferdinand, who was only 3 or 4 years old. Diego's mother was dead, and Columbus never married the mother of Ferdinand.

10. *A non sequitur*. He is alluding to the mangroves of Cuba and of the bay where Navidad was located; but these grow only on shores sheltered from the sea. Columbus learned on later voyages that there are plenty of *tormentas* in the West Indies, worse than the one he was in the midst of.

11. This whole paragraph also, excepting the parenthesis on the mangroves and the phrase "without father or mother," is found in the first person in direct quotation, in Ferdinand's *Historie* chap. 37 (Keen trans. 92). In 1891 an enterprising London firm brought out a "limited edition" printed in Germany of the "Journal found in a barrel," entitled *My Secrete Log Boke*, printed in imitation handwriting in English (!) on antique paper, the cover liberally encrusted with barnacles and seaweed. It was accompanied by an illiterate letter from a fisherman who claimed to have picked it up (after four centuries' floating about) off the coast of Wales. Nevertheless, this transparent fake found ready sale, and copies are still circulating. A dispatch from Moscow in 1941 announced the "discovery" of Columbus's "Original Journal" in the library of Kargapol.

12. *triquete*, the square foresail, a very proper sail to carry under those circumstances. But to have made only 2½ leagues in 5 hours must be a mistake; 12½ would be more reasonable.

FRIDAY, 15 FEBRUARY

Yesterday, after sunset, the sky began to show clear in the western quarter, showing that the wind intended to blow from that quarter. Laced the bonnet on the mainsail. Sea still very high, but somewhat abating. He proceeded to the ENE at 4 Roman miles an hour, and in 13 hours of the night made 13 leagues. After sunrise they sighted land,¹ appearing ahead to the ENE; some said it was the island of Madeira, others that it was the Rock of Sintra in Portugal, near Lisbon. Presently the wind came ahead from the ENE, and the swell from the W became very high; the caravel must have been 5 leagues distant from the land. The Admiral by his reckoning found himself to be among the Islands of the Azores, and believed that this was one of them; the pilots and seamen found themselves already in the country of Castile.²

1. Ferdinand says that a certain Ruy Garcia of Santoña saw it first.

2. Santa Maria of the Azores it was. Position of this landfall, according to Admiral McElroy's calculations, was lat. 36° 54' N, long. 25° 16' W, Santa Maria bearing ENE about 20 miles distant. It is proof of Columbus's remarkably accurate dead reckoning that the courses he gives in his Journal, with the distances reduced by 15 per cent, over a period of 31 days, bring *Niña* almost exactly to the point where land would

have been sighted. Captain Charles Wellington Furlong USNR has described the island and plotted Columbus's courses to and about it, in *Harper's Magazine* CXXXV (November, 1917), 747-54. I visited Santa Maria and all possible places where Columbus might have anchored, on 28-30 September 1939. Finally, D. Jacinto Monteiro has published a thoroughgoing study of the question, "A passagem de Colombo por Santa Maria" in *Ocidente* LVIII (Lisbon 1960) 212-31, and furnished me with a map of the localities.

SATURDAY, 16 FEBRUARY

All this night went beating to windward to close the land, which was already recognized to be an island. At times he went to the NE, at others to the NNE, until sunrise, when he took the southward tack, to reach the island which already could not be seen because of a great cloudmass; and from the stern he sighted another island that was distant 8 leagues.¹ After sunrise until nightfall he went tacking in order to reach the land, with the heavy wind and the sea that it raised. When they said the *Salve*,² which is at nightfall, some saw a light to leeward, and it seemed to be the island that they had first seen yesterday; and all night he beat to windward, approaching it as near as he could, in the hope that at sunrise they would see some of the islands. This night the Admiral took some rest, for since Wednesday he hadn't slept and couldn't sleep, and he was much crippled in the legs from being always exposed to cold and to water, and from eating little.³

At sunrise⁴ he sailed to the SSW and at night reached the island, and owing to the great cloudmass he couldn't make out what island it was.

1. São Miguel (St. Michael's). It can easily be seen from Santa Maria on clear days, distant about 50 miles. Columbus had the bad luck to encounter a head wind just when he was most eager to make land.

2. The *Salve Regina*; for words and music (provided by Benedict FitzGerald) see Morison *A.O.S.* I 255 (one-vol. ed. 181), or *Liturgical Arts XVI* (1948) 42, where Captain W. A. P. Martin USN traces the origin

and history of this famous canticle.

3. This sentence is quoted in the first person from the Journal in Ferdinand's *Historie* chap. 38 (Keen trans. 93). The Admiral was evidently developing arthritis from exposure.

4. 17 February; there is no heading for that day. *Niña* evidently overtook Santa Maria in the night, and found herself at sunrise to the NE of it.

MONDAY, 18 FEBRUARY

After sunset yesterday he went sailing around the island, to see where he could anchor and hail somebody;¹ anchored with one anchor which he promptly lost;² made sail and stood off-and-on all night. After sunrise he again reached the northern side of the island, and where it seemed [fit] anchored with one anchor and sent the barge ashore, and had speech with the people of the island, and ascertained that it was the island of Santa Maria, one of the Azores, and they indicated the harbor where he should moor the caravel, and the people of the island said that never had they seen such a tempest as there had been these 15 days past, and they wondered how he had escaped; and they gave many thanks to God and showed much joy at the news which they heard, that the Admiral had discovered the Indies.³ The Admiral admits that this navigation of his had been very exact, and that he had laid his route down well (for which should be given many thanks to Our Lord), although he had made it somewhat further on;⁴ but he held for certain that he was in the area of the Azores, and that this was one of them. And he says that he pretended to have gone further than he had in order to confuse the pilots and seamen who pricked off the chart, in order to remain master of that route of the Indies, as in fact he remained, since none of them was certain of his course, hence nobody could be sure of his route to the Indies.

1. *tomar lengua*, lit. "take speech."

2. Sr. Monteiro (*Ocidente* LVIII, 213) believes this

place to have been Baía de Curas, SE of Baía de São Lourenço, as two ancient anchors were found there in

June 1960, and either could have been *Niña's*.

3. "Appears fictitious, this joy that the Portuguese showed," comments Las Casas, who seldom missed a chance to make a crack at Portugal. The place where *Niña* anchored must have been off the village of Anjos on the northwest end of the island; the anchorage is very bad there, so she shifted to a better position behind Frades Point, in a bay open to the N and sur-

rounded by cliffs, so that a landing could only be effected by sending the boat around the point to the village landing place.

4. Reference to our chart in *A.O.S.* I 292 or *American Neptune* I 215 indicates that Columbus's reckoning was not much "further on"; and this doubtless was due to his overestimate of speed.

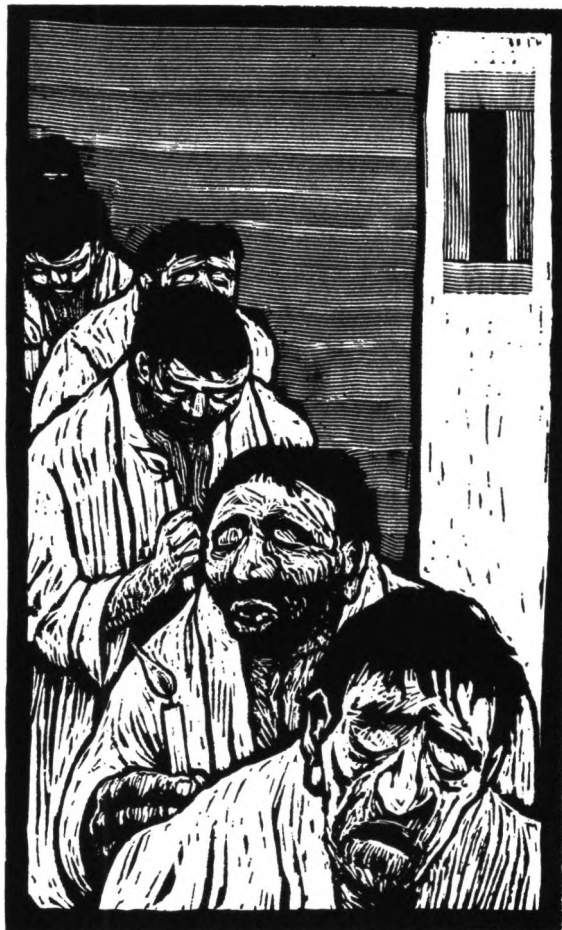
TUESDAY, 19 FEBRUARY

After sunset three men of the island came to the shore and hailed. He sent them the barge, in which they came out, and they brought chickens and fresh bread, and it was Shrovetide,¹ and they brought other things that were sent by the Captain of the Island, who was called *Juan de Castañeda*,² saying that he knew him very well, and that as it was night he didn't come to call, but at daybreak he would come and bring more refreshments, as well as three men of the caravel who remained there, whom he didn't [then] return because of the great pleasure that he had with them, hearing about events of his voyage. The Admiral ordered much courtesy shown to the messengers, ordering that they be given bunks to sleep in that night, because it was evening and the village was far. And since on the previous Thursday when he was in the anguish of the tempest, they made the aforesaid vow and vows that in the first land where there was a shrine of Our Lady they would go in shirts, etc., he decided that half the crew should go in fulfilment to a little shrine like a hermitage which was near the sea, and he would go later with the other half. Seeing that the country was safe, and trusting the offers of the Captain, and the peace that reigned between Portugal and Castile, he asked the three men to go to the village and cause a priest to come to say mass.³ As they, going in their shirts, in fulfilment of their pilgrimage, were in posture of prayer, the whole town, horse and foot, with the Captain, fell upon them and took them all prisoners. Later, the Admiral without suspicion ordered back the barge, in order to get into it and fulfil his pilgrimage with the other people. At about 11 A.M., seeing that they didn't come, he suspected that they were detained or that the barge had been stove, because the whole island is surrounded with very high rocks. This the Admiral couldn't see, because the chapel was behind a point.⁴ Weighing the anchor, he made sail in the direction of the chapel, and saw many horsemen who dismounted and entered the barge with arms, and came to the caravel to arrest the Admiral. The Captain stood up in the barge and asked for safe conduct from the Admiral. He said that he would give it to him; but what strange thing was this, that there were none of his own people in the barge? And the Admiral added that he might come on board the caravel, and do all that he wished. The Admiral tried with fair words to hold him, so as to recover his people, not believing that it would break his word in giving him safe conduct, because he [Castañeira], having offered peace and security, had broken his word. The Captain, since (it is said) he had evil intentions, did not trust himself to enter. Seeing that he wouldn't come on board the caravel, the Admiral asked him to tell him the reason for detaining his peo-

ple, and that he would offend the King of Portugal, and that in the country of the Sovereigns of Castile the Portuguese were received with much courtesy and entered and were safe as in Lisbon, and that the Sovereigns had given him letters of credence to all the Princes, Lords and men of the world, which he would show, if he would come on board; and that he was their Admiral of the Ocean Sea and Viceroy of the Indies which now belonged to Their Highnesses, concerning which he would show the commissions signed with their signatures and sealed with their seals (and he showed them to him at a distance), and that the Sovereigns were in much love and friendship with the King of Portugal, and had ordered him to show all the honor that he could to any ships of Portugal that he might encounter. And, supposing he [the Captain] would not return his [the Admiral's] people, not for that would he leave off going to Castile, since he had enough people to sail to Seville, and he [the Captain] and his people would be well punished for having committed that offense. Then replied the Captain and the rest that here they knew nothing of any King and Queen of Castile, nor of their letters, nor had they fear of them; moreover they would have them know that this was Portugal, somewhat threatening. When the Admiral heard this he was much concerned, and it is said thought that there might have been some breach between one or the other kingdom since his departure, and he could not endure the idea of not being able to answer them properly. Afterward, it is said, that Captain stood up afar off and told the Admiral that he should go to the harbor with the caravel, and that all he did and had done the King his lord had ordered him to do; of which the Admiral took witness of those who were in the caravel; and the Admiral again hailed the Captain and all of them, and gave them his word and promise as a man not to land or leave the caravel until he had carried a hundred Portuguese to Castile and depopulated that whole island. And so he returned to anchor in the harbor where he first lay because wind and weather were very bad for doing anything else.

1. *Carnestolendas*, lit. "carnival time," the day before Ash Wednesday.

2. João da Castanheira, in Portuguese. Sr. Monteiro (*op. cit.* 216-31) regards the unpleasant if humorous incident that follows as fictitious, because it is not mentioned in any Portuguese or Azorean source, and argues that it was invented by Columbus in order to denigrate D. João II and the Portuguese. In any event, Castanheira was not the captain of the island, who was absent, but his deputy, as appears in *Colecção de documentos relativos ao descobrimento . . . do Açores* (M.



Monteiro Velho Arruda, ed., Ponta Delgada, 1932), p. cxxxix. It was a natural enough reaction for him to assume that *Niña* had been poaching on Portuguese territory in Africa, since most ships returning from Africa called in the Azores, but there is no need to assume that D. João II had ordered him to arrest Columbus.

3. Ferdinand says, "and cause the Chaplain, who had the key of that hermitage, to come and say a mass for them." Nossa Senhora do Anjos (Our Lady of the Angels), founded before Columbus's time, in consequence of a vision of the Virgin with angels appear-

ing on a rock off shore, has since been rebuilt, but contains an altar-piece of the Flemish school of the early fifteenth century, which *Niña's* men would have seen if they had entered the chapel. Gaspar Frutuoso, the gossipy historian of the Azores, describes the *ermida*, and states that Anjos was the oldest settlement on the island. *Saudades da Terra* (Ponta Delgada, 1922), liv. iii, 17, 53-54.

4. *Niña* had anchored in Baía da Cré east of Punta Frades, or Ilheu Frades, as the local people call it. This point, 190 feet high, hid the village and chapel of Anjos from the anchorage.

WEDNESDAY, 20 FEBRUARY

He ordered the vessel to be repaired and the pipes to be filled with sea water for ballast, because he was in a very bad harbor, and he feared that his cables would be parted, and so they were; for which [reason] he made sail towards the island of St. Michael, although in none of the Azores is there a good harbor in the weather that they then had, and he had no other recourse but to flee seaward.

THURSDAY, 21 FEBRUARY

Yesterday left that island of Santa Maria for the island of *San Miguel*, to see if he could find a harbor, in order to ride out such bad weather as he had, with high wind and high sea; and he proceeded until nightfall without being able to sight one land or another, owing to the mighty cloud-wrack and thick weather that the wind and sea raised. The Admiral says that he liked it little, because he had only three seamen who knew the sea, and most of those on board knew naught of the sea.¹ He lay-to all this night with a severe tempest and in great peril and toil, and in this Our Lord showed him grace, in that the sea and waves came from one direction only; because if there had been a cross sea as before, he would have been in much greater distress. After the sun rose, he observed that he couldn't sight the island of St. Michael, and decided to return to Santa Maria to see if he could recover his people and the barge and the anchors and cables that he had left there. He says that he stood amazed at such bad weather as he had in those islands and regions, because in the Indies he sailed all that winter without anchoring,² and always had fair weather, and not for a single hour did he see the ocean in such a state that he couldn't sail; and in these [Azorean] islands he had suffered so heavy a tempest, and the same had happened on the route to the Canary Islands; but, having passed them, he always found the air and the sea of great moderation. In conclusion, says the Admiral, sacred theologians and wise philosophers well said that the terrestrial paradise is at the end of the Orient, because it is a most temperate place, and so those lands which he had now discovered "are," says he, "at the end of the Orient."³

1. It is difficult to understand how anyone on board *Niña* failed to pick up enough seamanship to be of assistance.

2. Columbus meant that he was never forced to come to an anchor because of weather conditions. But, as we

have seen, he frequently remained at anchor because of foul weather.

3. This was a favorite notion of Columbus; we shall hear more of it on the Third Voyage.

FRIDAY, 22 FEBRUARY

Yesterday he anchored at the island of Santa Maria at the place or harbor where he had first anchored,¹ and presently came a man to defy him from some rocks that face it, saying that they were not to leave. Presently came the barge with five seamen and two priests and a scribe; they begged safe-conduct, and, it being given by the Admiral, they came on board the caravel; and because it was night, all slept there, and the Admiral showed them what civility he could. In the morning they asked to be shown the authority of the Sovereigns of Castile, that they might verify what authority they had given for that voyage. The Admiral felt that they did this to make some show of not having done wrong, but of having done right, because they had not been able to secure the person of the Admiral, on whom they tried to lay hands, when they came armed with the barge; but they now saw that the game was not turning out so well, and with fear of what the Admiral had said and threatened them, which he intended to do, and believed that he would succeed in it. Finally, to get the people whom they detained, he showed them the general letter of credence from the Sovereigns to all princes and lords, and other documents, and gave them what he had, and they went ashore satisfied, and immediately released all the people, together with the barge, and he learned from them that if they had captured the Admiral they would never have let him go; because the Captain said that the king his master had so commanded.

1. Baia da Cré, east of Punta Frades.

SATURDAY, 23 FEBRUARY

Yesterday the weather began to improve, he weighed anchor, and proceeded to sail around the island to find some good anchorage to take on wood and stone for ballast, and could not come to anchor before the hour of compline.¹

1. Either in the Baia Villa do Porto or the Baia de Praia, on the south shore. Both afford a good landing beach for a boat, and for stone ballast.

SUNDAY, 24 FEBRUARY

Anchored yesterday in the evening to take on wood and stone, and because the sea was very high the boat couldn't go ashore, and at the relieving of the first night watch the wind made up from the W and SW. He ordered the sails hoisted, owing to the great danger there is in these islands in having the wind S while at anchor, and if it blows SW it presently comes S. And seeing that it was fair weather to go to Castile, he gave up taking on wood and stone, and ordered a course to the E, and proceeded until sunrise, which was 6½ hours, at 7 miles per hour, which makes 45½ Roman miles. After sunrise and until sunset, he did 6 Roman miles per hour, which in 11 hours made 66 Roman miles; which, added to the 45½ of the night, made 111½, and for equivalent, 28 leagues.

MONDAY, 25 FEBRUARY

Yesterday, after sunset, he sailed his course to the E at 5 Roman miles an hour; dur-

ing the 13 hours of this night he must have made 65 Roman miles, which are 16¼ leagues. After the sun rose, and until sunset he made 16½ leagues more, with the sea smooth, thanks be to God. There came to the caravel a very big bird which seemed to be an eagle.¹

1. Possibly a Fish-hawk or Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*); but it might have been a Skua Gull (*Megalestris skua*). L.G.

TUESDAY, 26 FEBRUARY

Yesterday after sunset, he sailed on his course to the E, the sea smooth, thanks be to God. The most of the night he must have made 8 Roman miles an hour; went 100 Roman miles, which are 25 leagues. After the sun rose, with little wind, there were showers; proceeded about 8 leagues to the ENE.

WEDNESDAY, 27 FEBRUARY

This night and day he was off his course owing to adverse winds and great swells and sea, and found himself 125 leagues from Cape St. Vincent and 80 from the island of Madeira, and 106 from Santa Maria.¹ It was very painful to have such a tempest when they were already at the doors of home.

1. From Santa Maria to Cape St. Vincent is 777 nautical miles; Columbus evidently believed it to be about 42 miles less. Admiral McElroy did not work out daily positions for this, the penultimate leg of Columbus's voyage, but my rough calculations place *Niña* at the

end of this day at lat. 37° N. long. 17° 30' W, which is about 420 miles from Cape St. Vincent, 257 miles from Santa Maria, and 255 from Madeira. Columbus's idea of the relative positions of these three places was correct.

THURSDAY, 28 FEBRUARY

He proceeded in the same way this night with winds varying from the S and SE, and on one hand and the other, and to the NE and ENE; and in this manner this entire day.

FRIDAY, 1 MARCH

He proceeded this night to the E by N 12 leagues; during the day ran to the E by N 23½ leagues.

SATURDAY, 2 MARCH

He proceeded this night on his course to the E by N, 28 leagues, and by day ran 20 leagues.

SUNDAY, 3 MARCH

After the sun set, he sailed on his course to the E. A squall blew up which split all the sails and he found himself in great peril; but God wished to deliver them. Drew lots, to send a pilgrim, it is said, to *Santa Maria de la Çinta* in Huelva, who should go in his shirt, and the lot fell on the Admiral. Also, they all vowed to fast, the first Saturday

after they arrived, on bread and water.¹ Went 60 Roman miles before the sails were split, afterwards proceeded under bare poles, owing to the great tempest of wind, and the sea that came upon them from two directions. Saw signs of being near land; found themselves very near Lisbon.²

1. The situation must have been indeed serious for the seamen to forego the joys of their first Saturday night ashore. Santa Maria de la Cinta, a short distance from Huelva, was and still is held in veneration by seamen, because the manifestation of Our Lady there had saved people from drowning. The statue before which Columbus prayed in his shirt a few days after reaching port, is still there.

2. Cf. postscript to his Letter on the First Voyage (next item in this book) written at Lisbon, where he says the wind was S and SE. Fernández Duro, protagonist of the Pinzóns, observes that as the wind was S and SE Columbus could perfectly well have made for a Galician port as *Pinta* did, and consequently must have entered Lisbon in order to "sell out" to D. João II, as indeed was charged by the Admiral's enemies at the time (*Pinzón en el Descubrimiento de las Indias*, 116). Columbus himself alludes to this accusation in his

letter of 1498 to the Sovereigns on his Third Voyage (also printed in this book). It is clear from the Journal for 27 February that Columbus was steering for Cape St. Vincent as a guide to Sanlúcar or Huelva (López de Velasco advises vessels returning from the Azores to Sanlúcar to do just that—*Geografía de Las Indias* 1571, p. 60 of 1894 ed.), when the S to SE storm drove him N along the Portuguese coast; that by 3 March he was in the N to NW quadrant of the storm, driving toward the coast, when, having nothing left but one sail, he may well be pardoned for entering "any port in a storm." Mountains of dialectic have been raised on the circumstances of the *Niña* putting into Lisbon; any seaman will agree with the Admiral that he did so, as he himself says, "because he could do nothing else," and that he performed a very neat bit of navigation. Cf. Professor Brooks's study of this tempest (Journal for 13 February, note 1).

MONDAY, 4 MARCH

Last night they experienced so terrible a tempest that they thought they were lost from the seas that boarded them from two directions, and the winds, which seemed to raise the caravel into the air; and water from the sky, and lightning flashes in many directions. It pleased Our Lord to sustain him, and thus it went on until the first watch,¹ when Our Lord showed him the land, the sailors sighting it. And then, in order not to



approach it until he had recognized it, to see if he could pick up some port or roadstead where he could save himself, he set the main course,² having no other resource, and made some headway, although with great peril, keeping out to sea; and so God preserved them until day, which he says was accomplished with infinite toil and terror. At daybreak he recognized the land which was the Rock of Sintra,³ which is next the River of Lisbon, where he decided to enter, because he could do nothing else. So terrible was the storm that they had in the town of *Casca*,⁴ which is at the entrance of the river. The townspeople spent all that morning saying prayers for them; and after he had got in, the people came to see them for wonder at how they had escaped. And so, at the hour of terce,⁵ he came to rest at Rastelo within the River of Lisbon,⁶ where he learned from mariners that never had there been a winter with so great storms, and that 25 ships had been lost in Flanders,⁷ and that other vessels had been lying there 4 months without being able to get out. The Admiral wrote at once to the King of Portugal, who was [living] 9 leagues thence, of how the Sovereigns of Castile had ordered him not to avoid entering the harbors of His Highness to ask for what was necessary, in return for pay; and that the king would give orders to let him proceed with the caravel to the city of Lisbon, because some ruffians, thinking that he carried much gold, were planning to commit some rascality on him, being in an unfrequented harbor; and also that he [D. João] might learn that he came not from Guinea, but from the Indies.⁸

1. At 7:00 P.M.; this being the night of full moon. See discussion in Morison *A.O.S.* I 433-4 (one-vol. ed. 338-9).

2. This must have been a storm squaresail that was not lost when the working sails split.

3. *Roca da Sintra*, the name of the mountainous peninsula that juts out from Portugal just north of the Tagus, the "river of Lisbon"; its extremity is now called Cabo da Roca.

4. Cascaes, a cove and fishing village not far from the mouth of the river, and the first good anchorage within the Tagus.

5. See Introduction to Part I; here it probably means 9 A.M.

6. Rastelo, which will not be found on modern maps, was the outer port of Lisbon, the anchorage just off Belem. The famous Convento dos Jeronymos and the Torre do Belem were built a few years after Columbus's visit.

7. There was a lively trade between Lisbon and the Netherlands.

8. Columbus realized that his great difficulty would be to convince the Portuguese that he had not been poaching on the coast of Guinea, which Spain by treaty had forsworn to visit.

TUESDAY, 5 MARCH

Today the master of the great ship of the King of Portugal, which was also at anchor at Rastelo, and the best equipped with artillery and arms, it is said, of any ship he had seen; her master [he repeats], who was called *Bartolomé Díaz* of Lisbon,¹ came with his armed gig to the caravel, and told the Admiral to enter the gig to come and give an account [of himself] to the king's factors and the captain of the said ship. The Admiral replied that he was Admiral of the Sovereigns of Castile and that he would give no such account to such people; nor would he leave any ship or vessel where he was, unless by compulsion of being unable to resist armed force. The master replied that he should send the master of the caravel. The Admiral said that neither the master nor any other person [should go] unless it were by force, because insofar as he yielded anyone it would be the same as if he went himself; and that it was the custom of the Admirals of the Sov-



ereigns of Castile to die before they yielded themselves or their people. The master piped down, and said that since he was so determined it could be as he wished; but he asked him to show the letters of the Sovereigns of Castile, if he had them. The Admiral was pleased to show them, and immediately he [Dias] returned to the ship, and gave his story to the captain who was called *Alvaro Daman*, who in great state, with a great noise of drums, trumpets and pipes, came aboard the caravel, spoke with the Admiral and offered to do all he commanded.

1. Probably the discoverer of the Cape of Good Hope, whom Columbus had met in 1488. The *patrón*, which nowadays means a skipper of a small vessel, was apparently on this ship the master, next in command to

the captain. The great Bartolomeu Dias never enjoyed great favor, and his next command was one of the ships in the Cabral expedition of 1500; hence he may well have held this subordinate position in 1493.

WEDNESDAY, 6 MARCH

When it was known that the Admiral came from the Indies, so many people came from the city of Lisbon today to see him and the Indians, that it was astonishing, and they were all full of wonder, giving thanks to Our Lord and saying that it was for the great

faith that the Sovereigns of Castile had and their desire to serve God that His Heavenly Majesty had granted them all this.

THURSDAY, 7 MARCH

Today countless people came to the caravel, and many gentlemen, and among them factors of the King, and all gave countless thanks to Our Lord for so great good and increase of Christianity that Our Lord had given to the Sovereigns of Castile, which it is said that they received, because Their Highnesses worked and labored for the increase of the religion of Christ.

FRIDAY, 8 MARCH

Today the Admiral received a letter from the King of Portugal at the hands of *D. Martín de Noroña*,¹ in which he asked him to come to the place where he was, because the weather was not [suitable] for departing with the caravel, and so he did, to disarm suspicion, although he didn't wish to go; and went to sleep at Sacavem. The King gave orders to his factors that everything the Admiral and his people and the caravel stood in need of he would supply without pay, and that all should be done as the Admiral wished.

1. *D. Martinho de Noronha* was an owner of estates near the monastery where the king was staying. He was probably in attendance on *D. João II* when news

of Columbus arrived, and as a nobleman familiar with the region was sent to conduct him to the royal presence.

SATURDAY, 9 MARCH

Today he left Sacavem to go where the King was, which was in the *Valle del Paraíso*, 9 leagues from Lisbon.¹ Because it rained he couldn't arrive before night. The king ordered him to be received very honorably by the principal officers of his household, and the king also received him with much honor and showed him much favor, and bade him be seated, and spoke very fair, offering to command all to be done freely which might be of use to the Sovereigns of Castile and for their service completely, and more than for his own, and showed that he was very pleased in the voyage having ended so favorably and having been accomplished; but that he understood from the treaty that he had with the Sovereigns² that that acquisition belonged to himself. To which the Admiral replied that he had not seen the treaty nor knew anything save that the Sovereigns had ordered him not to go to La Mina nor any part of Guinea, and that so he had ordered it proclaimed in all the harbors of Andalusia, before they departed on the voyage. The King graciously replied that he was sure that there would be no need for arbitrators in this matter; and handed him over as guest to the Prior of Crato, who was the most eminent person there, and from whom the Admiral received many courtesies and favors.³

1. The Monastery of the Vertudes, in the Val do Paraíso. The ruins of the main building, containing the church and the royal apartments, are near the village

of Vertudes, and close by the main line of the railway from Lisbon to Santarem.

2. The treaty of Alcáçovas (1479), in which Spain



recognized exclusive Portuguese rights on the West Coast of Africa and in the Cape Verde Islands, and Portugal recognized Spanish sovereignty in the Canary Islands.

3. The Prior of Crato was a person of great importance; the title was often conferred on left-handed royal relations. The emotional tension on both sides of this interview—for D. João II had twice rejected Co-

lumbus's proposition—is well reflected by the account of it in the *Chronica d'El Rey D. João* by Rui de Pina, who as official chronicler of that reign may well have been present:

“Chapter lxvi

“*Discovery of the Islands of Castile by Columbus*

“In the following year 1493, while the King was at the Val do Paraíso which is above the Monastery of Santa Maria das Vertudes, . . . on 6 March arrived at Rastelo in Lisbon *Christovam Colombo* an Italian who came from the discovery of the islands of Japan and of Antilia which he had done by the command of the sovereigns of Castile, from which land he brought with him the first examples of the people, gold and some other things that were in them; and he was entitled Admiral of them. And the King being informed of this, commanded him to come before him and showed that he derived irritation and distress because he believed that this discovery was made within the seas and boundaries of his Lordship of Guinea, which was prohibited, and because the said Admiral was somewhat elevated above his condition and in telling his tale always exceeded the bounds of truth and made the story of gold, silver, and riches much greater than it was. Especially the King blamed himself for negligence in dismissing him for want of credit and authority in regard to this discovery for which he first came to make request of him. And although the King was urged to have him killed forthwith, since with his death the prosecution of this enterprise by the Sovereigns of Castile would cease with the death of the discoverer; and that this could be done discreetly if he consented and ordered it, for inasmuch as he [Columbus] was discourteous and elated they could fix it so that any one of his shortcomings would seem to be the true cause of his death. But the King, like the God-fearing prince that he was, not only forbade this but on the contrary showed him honor and much kindness and therewith sent him away.” *Collecção de Livros Ineditos de História Portugueza* (J. Correa da Serra ed., Lisbon 1792) II 177-8.

The reported allusion to Antilia, the mythical Island of the Seven Cities, is interesting. The Portuguese were much interested in Antilia, and had sent out several expeditions to locate it, as Columbus doubtless knew. It was generally assumed, both in Portugal and France, that Hispaniola was Antilia; hence the names *Las Antilhas* and *Les Antilles* for the West Indies. See references under 25 September note 1.

SUNDAY, 10 MARCH

Today, after Mass, the King proceeded to tell him that if he had need of anything, straightway it would be given him; and he conversed long with the Admiral about his voyage,¹ and always ordered him to be seated and showed him much honor.

1. Las Casas adds in the *Historia*, chap. 74, "and asked and heard many particulars on the countries, people, gold and pearls, stones and other precious things, of the courses that they had followed, and what had happened on the return, and the most of his voyage, always with a pleasant face, dissembling the grief that he had in his heart." But Columbus would certainly not

have presented D. João with the sailing directions that he denied to his own officers. Las Casas also tells an interesting story of the King testing the Indians whom Columbus brought as "exhibits" by having them make a chart of the Caribbean on a table, with beans (1951 ed. I 324-5).

MONDAY, 11 MARCH

Today he bade farewell to the King, who told him certain things that he [Columbus] should repeat on his behalf to the Sovereigns, showing him always much affection. He departed after dinner, and [the King] sent D. Martín de Noronha with him, and all those gentlemen to accompany him and to show him proper courtesy. Afterwards he came to the monastery of São Antonio near a place called Villafranca where the Queen was,¹ and went to do her reverence and kiss her hands, because she had sent to say that he should not leave before he had seen her. With her were the Duke and the Marquis;² there the Admiral received much courtesy. The Admiral left her at night and went to sleep in Alhandra.

1. The Convent of São Antonio de Castanheira, 15 or 20 miles from Vertudes, where the Queen, Dona Leonor, was staying. I visited it, as well as Vertudes, in 1939; description in *A.O.S.* I 442-3 (1-vol. ed. 347-8).

2. The Queen's brother the Duque de Bejar, who succeeded D. João as D. Manuel I, known as Emmanuel the Fortunate; and D. Pedro de Noronha, created Marquez de Villa Real in 1489.

TUESDAY, 12 MARCH

Today, being ready to leave Alhandra for the caravel, there arrived a squire of the King who offered on his behalf that, if he wished to go to Castile by land he would go with him to see to the lodging and order animals and all that he might want.¹ When the Admiral left him, he ordered him to be given a mule, and another to his pilot, whom he had with him, and it is said that to the pilot he gave a gratification of 20 *espadines*,² as the Admiral understood. He says that all was told so that the Sovereigns might know of it. Arrived on board the caravel at night.

1. Some infer from this offer that the King had changed his mind about putting Columbus to death, and intended to arrange an "attack by brigands" on a land journey to Castile. Columbus did, however, manage to send his letter on the First Voyage to the Sov-

ereigns overland, and, as we have seen, the news that Columbus was in Lisbon reached the Duke of Medina Celi in Cogollado, near Madrid, before 19 March.

2. A Portuguese coin; 20 were about equivalent to 50 gold dollars.

WEDNESDAY, 13 MARCH

Today at 8 A.M. with an immense¹ tide and the wind NNW, he weighed anchors and made sail for *Sevilla*.²

1. *ingente*. De Lollis, Markham and Guillén state that this means a flood tide, and Jane that it means "at ebb"; but what it does mean is that the ebb current was strong.

No seaman would attempt to get under way in the Tagus with a NNW wind and flood tide.

2. Probably a copyist's error for *Saltes*.

THURSDAY, 14 MARCH

Yesterday after sunset he shaped his course to the S, and before sunrise found himself off Cape St. Vincent, which is in Portugal. Afterwards he sailed to the E to go to Saltes, and proceeded all day with light wind, until now he is off *Farón*.¹

1. Faro, southernmost harbor of Portugal, about 52 miles east of Cape St. Vincent.

FRIDAY, 15 MARCH

Yesterday after sunset he sailed on his course until daylight with a light wind, and at sunrise found himself off Saltes, and at midday with a flood tide he entered by the bar of Saltes within the harbor whence he had departed on 3 August the preceding year; and so he says that now he ends this writing; except he says that he proposed to go to Barcelona by sea, in which city he had news that Their Highnesses were, and thus to give them the story of his entire voyage that Our Lord had permitted him to perform, and it pleased Him to enlighten him about it. For sure besides the fact that he knew and believed firmly and strongly without scruple that His Divine Majesty brings all good things to pass, and that all is good save sin, and that nothing can be imagined or thought without His consent, "Of this voyage I observe," says the Admiral, "that it has miraculously been shown, as may be understood by this writing, by the many signal miracles that He has shown on the voyage, and for me, who for so great a time was in the court of Your Highnesses with the opposition and against the opinion of so many high personages of your household, who were all against me, alleging this undertaking to be folly, which I hope in Our Lord will be to the greater glory of Christianity, which to some slight extent already has happened."

*These are the final words of the Admiral Don Christoval Colón concerning his First Voyage to the Indies and the discovery thereof, and certainly he was quite right and spoke like a very prudent man and almost as a prophet, although carnal men have not appreciated the benefits spiritual and temporal that God offered to Spain; but Spain by her ambition and cupidity was not worthy to enjoy the spiritual ones—save for some servants of God.*¹

THANKS BE TO GOD.

1. This final paragraph, by Las Casas, was written at a time when he was trying to protect the Indians from the cupidity and cruelty of the conquistadors.

Columbus's Letter to the Sovereigns on His First Voyage, 15 February - 4 March 1493

THIS LETTER IS THE FIRST AND RAREST OF ALL PRINTED AMERICANA. It tells not only what the Admiral himself thought, but the most important things that he wished the Sovereigns to know. It boils down from the Journal enthusiastic descriptions of the scenery, the flora, the abundance of gold, and accounts of the natives. He insists that his discoveries lie in Asia, and that the capital of the "Great Khan" was not far away.

Columbus composed this letter on board caravel *Niña*, on his homeward passage, during a spell of good weather prior to 10 February 1493, and dated it from off Santa Maria in the Azores on the 15th. The *nema* or postscript was written on 4 March from off Rastelo near Lisbon, shortly after *Niña* anchored there; and the Admiral lost no time in forwarding it to the court.

The Letter is not actually addressed to the Sovereigns, but, as the postscript indicates, to Luís de Santangel, the Queen's Keeper of the Privy Purse, who had befriended Columbus, "enclosed in another for Their Highnesses." This last, which has disappeared, was probably only a covering letter announcing his arrival, begging Their Highnesses to read the enclosure, and to command him to come to court and give a personal account of the voyage. In any event, it was this Letter to Santangel which was given to the printer. The first edition (which we have translated), four pages in folio, using black-letter or Gothic type, and many type abbreviations, was printed by Pedro Posa at Barcelona toward the end of March or the beginning of April, 1493. This *editio princeps* remained hidden to bibliographers and historians for almost four centuries. Henry Harrisse, in his *Bibliotheca Americana Vetustissima* (1866) did indeed express the opinion that there was such a first edition in Castilian, "and that it was not irretrievably lost."

In 1889 the Librairie Maisonneuve of Paris found a copy in Spain. This was acquired by the house of Quaritch in London, which sold it to the Lenox Library, subsequently incorporated in the New York Public Library. Quaritch published the first facsimile of the Letter in 1891. Seventy years have elapsed; yet the most thorough searches by bibliographers, historians and librarians have failed to find another copy.

Evidence of the great interest that this Letter aroused is the fact that no fewer than sixteen more editions of it, all but one in translation, were published before 1500. It was translated into Latin by Leander de Cosco and printed in Rome as *De Insulis inuentis Epistola Cristoferi Colom (cui eras nostra multum dabat)*, in May, 1493. In the same year appeared two other Roman editions of this translation, another was printed in Antwerp, another in Basel, and three in Paris. Giuliano Dato translated it into Italian verse as *Storia della inuentione delle nuoue insule de Chanaria indiane*. The first edition of this version was printed at Rome on 15 June 1493; there were two Florentine editions of it that year, and two more in 1495. A German translation was published at Strassburg in 1497; and the same year appeared the second Spanish edition, in quarto, published at Valladolid. All these incunabula are extremely rare; some exist in one copy only. There are innumerable later editions. Several of the incunabula are illustrated with wood-blocks of ships and scenes taken from earlier books; but four of them, the Italian printed at Rome in 1493, one Florentine edition of 1493 and both of 1495, contain new woodcuts which are the first attempts to depict the Landing of Columbus. It is curious that almost all these editions name or depict King Ferdinand as Columbus's patron and initiator; none give any credit to the Queen.

Dr. Carlos Sanz of Madrid, the most eminent living bibliographer of early *Americana*, has published facsimiles of all seventeen editions under the general title of *La Unidad Geográfica del 12 de octubre de 1492* (Madrid 1956). He has also published the definitive *Bibliografía General de la Carta de Colón* (305 pp., Madrid, 1956),¹ which sums up his conclusions in earlier publications such as *La Carta de Colón . . . su Actualidad*, *Boletín de la Real Academia de Historia* CXXXIX 473-96, and separately (Madrid, 1956), and "La Carta de Colón" *Anunciando la Llegada a las Indias* (Madrid, 1957). His *El gran secreto de la Carta de Colón (Crítica histórica y Otras adiciones a la Biblioteca Americana Vetustissima* Madrid, 1959) discusses in detail the typographical and other problems of the Letter.²

De Lollis's text in the *Raccolta* is a synthetic one made up from the Latin and Spanish editions. Most of the English translations are really translations of the Latin translation. There are, to my knowledge, only two from the original Spanish prior to my own: (1) Quaritch's, issued when he published the Spanish text in 1891; (2) Cecil Jane's, in his *Select Documents* I 2-19, a translation "disfigured by numerous blunders," to use the phrase employed by Jane for translations other than his own.

Dr. Sanz did me the honor to reprint the translation which follows (originally made for my *Christopher Columbus, Mariner*, 1955, 203-13) as *A New and Fresh English Translation of the Letter of Columbus announcing the Discovery of America* (Madrid, 1959). It is also printed as an appendix to his *El gran secreto*. Both editions include a facsimile of the unique copy of the first edition.

1. Earlier bibliographies of the Letter are HARRISSE's, above mentioned; and WILBERFORCE EAMES's in *Bulletin of the New York Public Library* XXVIII (1924) 595-99, also published separately as *Two Important Gifts to the . . . Library by Mr. George F. Baker Jr.* Most of these works include a facsimile of the first edition; the best, however, was issued by Carlos Sanz *La Carta de Colón anunciando el Descubrimiento del Nuevo Mundo* (Madrid 1956).

2. Other good facsimiles are of (1) the first illustrated Latin edition, with texts of other editions, printed at Rome in 1493, as *The Letter of Columbus on the Discovery of America* with introduction by Wilberforce EAMES (New York 1892); (2) a second edition (1893) with the same title but omitting the other Latin texts; (3) facsimile of the first Latin edition—the copy in the William L. Clements Library—with English translation by Frank E. Robbins (Ann Arbor 1952).



Sir, forasmuch as I know that you will take pleasure in the great triumph with which Our Lord has crowned my voyage, I write this to you, from which you will learn how, in twenty¹ days I reached the Indies with the fleet which the most illustrious King and Queen, our lords, gave to me. And there I found very many islands filled with people without number, and of them all have I taken possession for Their Highnesses, by proclamation and with the royal standard displayed, and nobody objected. To the first island which I found I gave the name *Sant Salvador*, in recognition of His Heavenly Majesty, who marvelously hath given all this; the Indians call it *Guahani*. To the second I gave the name *Isla de Santa María de Concepción*; to the third, *Ferrandina*; to the fourth, *La Isla Bella*;² to the fifth, *La Isla Juana*; and so to each one I gave a new name.

When I reached Juana, I followed its coast to the westward, and I found it to be so long that I thought it must be the mainland, the province of Catayo.³ And since I found neither towns nor cities along the coast, but only small villages, with the people of which I could not have speech because they all fled forthwith, I went forward on the same course, thinking that I should not fail to find great cities and towns. And, at the end of many leagues, seeing that there was no change

and that the coast was bearing me northwards, which was contrary to my desire since winter was already beginning and I proposed to go thence to the south, and as moreover the wind was favorable, I determined not to wait for a change of weather and backtracked to a certain harbor already noted,⁴ and thence I sent two men upcountry to learn if there were a king or great cities. They traveled for three days and found an infinite number of small villages and people without number, but nothing of importance; hence they returned.

I understood sufficiently from other Indians, whom I had already taken, that continually⁵ this land was an island, and so I followed its coast eastward 107 leagues up to where it ended. And from that cape I saw toward the east another island, distant 18 leagues from the former, to which I at once gave the name *La Española*. And I went there and followed its northern part, as I had in the case of Juana, to the eastward for 178 great leagues in a straight line. As Juana, so all the others are very fertile⁶ to an excessive degree, and this one especially. In it there are many harbors on the sea coast, beyond comparison with others which I know in Christendom, and numerous rivers, good and large, which is marvelous. Its lands are lofty and in it there are many sierras and very high mountains, to which the island *Centrefrei*⁷ is not com-

parable. All are most beautiful, of a thousand shapes, and all accessible, and filled with trees of a thousand kinds and tall, and they seem to touch the sky; and I am told that they never lose their foliage, which I can believe, for I saw them as green and beautiful as they are in Spain in May, and some of them were flowering, some with fruit, and some in another condition, according to their quality. And there were singing the nightingale and other little birds of a thousand kinds in the month of November, there where I went. There are palm trees of six or eight kinds, which are a wonder to behold because of their beautiful variety, and so are the other trees and fruits and plants; therein are marvelous pine groves, and extensive meadow country; and there is honey, and there are many kinds of birds and a great variety of fruits. Upcountry there are many mines of metals, and the population is innumerable. *La Española* is marvelous, the sierras and the mountains and the plains and the meadows and the lands are so beautiful and rich for planting and sowing, and for livestock of every sort, and for building towns and villages. The harbors of the sea here are such as you could not believe it without seeing them; and so the rivers, many and great, and good streams, the most of which bear gold. And the trees and fruits and plants have great differences from those of La Juana; in this [island] there are many spices and great mines of gold and of other metals.

The people of this island and of all the other islands which I have found and seen, or have not seen, all go naked, men and women, as their mothers bore them, except that some women cover one place only with the leaf of a plant or with a net of cotton which they make for that pur-

pose. They have no iron or steel or weapons, nor are they capable of using them, although they are well-built people of handsome stature, because they are wondrously timid. They have no other arms than arms of canes, [cut] when they are in seed time, to the ends of which they fix a sharp little stick; and they dare not make use of these, for oftentimes it has happened that I have sent ashore two or three men to some town to have speech, and people without number have come out to them, and as soon as they saw them coming, they fled; even a father would not stay for his son; and this not because wrong has been done to anyone; on the contrary, at every point where I have been and have been able to have speech, I have given them of all that I had, such as cloth and many other things, without receiving anything for it; but they are like that, timid beyond cure. It is true that after they have been reassured and have lost this fear, they are so artless and so free with all they possess, that no one would believe it without having seen it. Of anything they have, if you ask them for it, they never say no; rather they invite the person to share it, and show as much love as if they were giving their hearts; and whether the thing be of value or of small price, at once they are content with whatever little thing of whatever kind may be given to them. I forbade that they should be given things so worthless as pieces of broken crockery and broken glass, and lace points, although when they were able to get them, they thought they had the best jewel in the world; thus it was learned that a sailor for a lace point received gold to the weight of two and a half *castellanos*, and others much more for other things which were worth much less; yea, for new

blancas,⁸ for them they would give all that they had, although it might be two or three castellanos' weight of gold or an arroba or two of spun cotton; they even took pieces of the broken hoops of the wine casks and, like animals, gave what they had, so that it seemed to me to be wrong and I forbade it, and I gave them a thousand good, pleasing things which I had brought, in order that they might be fond of us, and furthermore might become Christians and be inclined to the love and service of Their Highnesses and of the whole Castilian nation, and try to help us and to give us of the things which they have in abundance and which are necessary to us. And they know neither sect nor idolatry, with the exception that all believe that the source of all power and goodness is in the sky, and they believe very firmly that I, with these ships and people, came from the sky, and in this belief they everywhere received me, after they had overcome their fear. And this does not result from their being ignorant (for they are of a very keen intelligence and men who navigate all those seas, so that it is wondrous the good account they give of everything), but because they have never seen people clothed or ships like ours.

And as soon as I arrived in the Indies, in the first island which I found, I took by force some of them in order that they might learn [Castilian] and give me information of what they had in those parts; it so worked out that they soon understood us, and we them, either by speech or signs, and they have been very serviceable. I still have them with me, and they are still of the opinion that I come from the sky, in spite of all the intercourse which they have had with me, and they

were the first to announce this wherever I went, and the others went running from house to house and to the neighboring towns with loud cries of, "Come! Come! See the people from the sky!" They all came, men and women alike, as soon as they had confidence in us, so that not one, big or little, remained behind, and all brought something to eat and drink, which they gave with marvelous love. In all the islands they have very many *canoas* like rowing *fustes*, some bigger and some smaller, and some are bigger than a *fusta* of eighteen benches. They are not so beamy, because they are made of a single log, but a *fusta* could not keep up with them by rowing, since they make incredible speed, and in these they navigate all those islands, which are innumerable, and carry their merchandise. Some of these canoes I have seen with 70 and 80 men on board, each with his oar.

In all these islands, I saw no great diversity in the appearance of the people or in their manners and language, but they all understand one another, which is a very singular thing, on account of which I hope that Their Highnesses will determine upon their conversion to our holy faith, towards which they are much inclined.

I have already said how I went 107 leagues in a straight line from west to east along the coast of the island Juana, and as a result of that voyage I can say that this island is larger than England and Scotland together; for, beyond these 107 leagues, there remain to the westward two provinces where I have not been, one of which they call Avan,⁹ and there the people are born with tails. Those provinces cannot have a length of less than 50 or 60 leagues, as I could understand from those Indians whom I retain and who know all the is-

lands. The other, *Española*, in circuit is greater than all Spain, from *Colonya* by the coast to *Fuenterauia* in Vizcaya, since I went along one side 188 great leagues in a straight line from west to east.¹⁰ It is a desirable land and, once seen, is never to be relinquished; and in it, although of all I have taken possession for their Highnesses and all are more richly supplied than I know or could tell, I hold them all for their Highnesses, which they may dispose of as absolutely as of the realms of Castile. In this *Española*, in the most convenient place and in the best district for the gold mines and for all trade both with this continent and with that over there belong to the Grand Khan, where there will be great trade and profit, I have taken possession of a large town to which I gave the name *La Villa de Navidad*, and in it I have built a fort and defenses, which already, at this moment, will be all complete, and I have left in it enough people for such a purpose, with arms and artillery and provisions for more than a year, and a fusta, and a master of the sea in all [maritime] arts to build others; and great friendship with the king of that land, to such an extent that he took pride in calling me and treating me as brother; and even if he were to change his mind and offer insult to these people, neither he nor his people know the use of arms and they go naked, as I have already said, and are the most timid people in the world, so that merely the people whom I have left there could destroy all that land; and the island is without danger for their persons, if they know how to behave themselves.

In all these islands, it appears, all the men are content with one woman, but to their *Maioral*, or king, they give up to twenty. It appears to me that the women

work more than the men. I have been unable to learn whether they hold private property, but it appeared true to me that all took a share in anything that one had, especially in victuals.

In these islands I have so far found no human monstrosities, as many expected, on the contrary, among all these people good looks are esteemed;¹¹ nor are they Negroes, as in Guinea, but with flowing hair, and they are not born where there is excessive force in the solar rays; it is true that the sun there has great strength, although it is distant from the Equator 26 degrees.¹² In these islands, where there are high mountains, the cold this winter was severe, but they endure it through habit and with the help of food which they eat with many and excessively hot spices. Thus I have neither found monsters nor had report of any, except in an island¹³ which is the second at the entrance to the Indies, which is inhabited by a people who are regarded in all the islands as very ferocious and who eat human flesh; they have many canoes with which they range all the islands of India and pillage and take as much as they can; they are no more malformed than the others, except that they have the custom of wearing their hair long like women, and they use bows and arrows of the same stems of cane with a little piece of wood at the tip for want of iron, which they have not. They are ferocious toward these other people, who are exceedingly great cowards, but I make no more account of them than of the rest. These are those who have intercourse with the women of *Matremomio*,¹⁴ which is the first island met on the way from Spain to the Indies, in which there is not one man. These women use no feminine exercises, but bows and

arrows of cane, like the abovesaid; and they arm and cover themselves with plates of copper, of which they have plenty. In another island which they assure me is larger than *Española*, the people have no hair. In this there is countless gold, and from it and from the other islands I bring with me *Indios*¹⁵ as evidence.

In conclusion, to speak only of that which has been accomplished on this voyage, which was so hasty, Their Highnesses can see that I shall give them as much gold as they want if Their Highnesses will render me a little help; besides spice and cotton, as much as Their Highnesses shall command; and gum mastic, as much as they shall order shipped, and which, up to now, has been found only in Greece, in the island of Chios, and the Seignory¹⁶ sell it for what it pleases; and aloe wood, as much as they shall order shipped, and slaves, as many as they shall order, who will be idolaters.¹⁷ And I believe that I have found rhubarb and cinnamon, and I shall find a thousand other things of value, which the people whom I have left there will have discovered, for I tarried nowhere, provided the wind allowed me to sail, except in the town of Navidad, where I stayed [to have it] secured and well seated. And the truth is I should have done much more if the vessels had served me as the occasion required.¹⁸

This is enough. And the Eternal God, Our Lord, Who gives to all those who walk in His way victory over things which appear impossible; and this was notably one. For, although men have talked or have written of these lands, all was conjecture, without getting a look at it, but amounted only to this; that those who heard for the most part listened and judged it more a fable than that there was

anything in it, however, small.¹⁹

So, since our Redeemer has given this triumph to our most illustrious King and Queen, and to their renowned realms, in so great a matter, for this all Christendom ought to feel joyful and make great celebrations and give solemn thanks to the Holy Trinity with many solemn prayers for the great exaltation which it will have, in the turning of so many peoples to our holy faith, and afterwards for material benefits, since not only Spain but all Christians will hence have refreshment and profit. This is exactly what has been done, though in brief.

Done on board the caravel off the Canary Islands,²⁰ on the fifteenth of February, year 1493.

At your service.

THE ADMIRAL.

Additional Note,²¹ Which Came within the Letter.

After having written this, and being in the Sea of Castile, there rose up on me so great a wind south and southwest,²² that I was obliged to ease the ships.²³ But I ran hither today into this port of Lisbon, which was the greatest wonder in the world, and whence I decided to write to their Highnesses. In all the Indies I have always found weather as in May; I went thither in 33 days and would have returned in 28 but for these tempests which detained me 23 days, beating about in this sea. Here all the seafarers say that never has there been so bad a winter or so many losses of ships.

Done the fourteenth²⁴ day of March.

This letter *Colom* sent to the Keeper of the Privy Purse²⁵ about the islands discovered in the Indies. Contained in another for their Highnesses.

1. *Veinte*. Probably a misprint for *treinta*, or xxxiii. The actual time, as the postscript states, was thirty-three days.
2. Misprint for Isabela, the name he gave to Crooked Island.
3. I.e., a province of China.
4. Puerto Gibara.
5. *continuamente*. Not clear whether he meant that the Indians told him continually that Cuba was an island, or that it was one continual island.
6. *fortissimas*. Probably a printer's error for *fertilissimas*, and 178 is a misprint for 188 leagues, as stated later in the Letter.
7. Misprint for Tenerife.
8. A copper coin worth half a maravedi, about a third of a cent.
9. *Auau* in the original Spanish edition, *Avan* in the 1497 Spanish edition, *Anan* in the Latin translation. Columbus meant *Avan*, the Arawak word for a Cuban region from which *Havana* is derived. Tailed men was one of the most popular yarns of Sir John Mandeville. Columbus and his men frequently inquired about such creatures and were "yessed" by the Indians, who probably thought they were talking about monkeys, not Cubans.
10. I.e., from Collioure, a port in the Gulf of Lyons that then belonged to Aragon, around the entire Spanish Peninsula to Fuenterrabia, the frontier town on the Bay of Biscay. Like his other estimates of land distances, this was greatly exaggerated.
11. *Mas antes es toda gente de muy lindo acatamiento*. The meaning is somewhat obscure; the Latin translator of the Letter thought that Columbus meant that the people were reverential.
12. *Veinte e seis*, a radical revision downward of the Admiral's two inaccurate calculations that the north coast of Cuba was in lat. 42° N and that of Hispaniola 34° N. Actually 21° and 20° are correct.
13. The Latin edition names this island *Charis*, i.e., *Caire*, the Carib name for Dominica. Note that the Admiral's captive Indians had given him the position of this island and that he steered for it on his Second Voyage.
14. Thus in both Spanish editions, *Mateunin* in the Latin, *Matinino* in the Journal for 15 January 1493. The French named it Martinique.
15. The first appearance in print of this name that Columbus gave to the natives of America.
16. The government of Genoa. Columbus as a young man had made a voyage or two to Chios.
17. I.e., the slave trade will be legitimate if not in Christians.
18. An oblique reference to *Pinta*, or to the loss of *Santa Maria*.
19. He probably had in mind *The Book of Ser Marco Polo*, which most of the learned in Europe regarded as fabulous.
20. So in both Spanish editions; doubtless a misprint, as *Niña* was already off Santa Maria of the Azores on the fifteenth, and Columbus knew perfectly well that he had been there before he sent the letter off. The Latin editions omit this line. See Señor Sanz's discussion in *La Carta de Colón* (folio, 1956) 25-8.
21. *Anima* (modern *nema*) a paper wrapped around a letter after its conclusion, and to which the seal is affixed.
22. *Sueste*, a misprint for *sudoeste*, as may be seen from the Journal.
23. Plural in both Spanish editions.
24. *Quatorze*. A misprint for *quatro*, for *Niña* entered the Tagus on the 4th.
25. *El Escribano de Ración*, Luis de Santangel, Columbus's friend. The Latin editions name the recipient Gabriel (or Rafael) Sanxis, meaning Gabriel Sánchez, Treasurer of Aragon. It is probable that Columbus addressed another copy of the letter to him.



The Pinzón Version of the Discovery

IN 1513 THE CROWN OF CASTILE INITIATED JUDICIAL PROCESS AGAINST THE HEIRS OF COLUMBUS in the hope of procuring evidence to prove that the Pinzón family of Palos were the real initiators of the great discovery; that without their aid Columbus would never have set sail, and that on the outward passage the Admiral lost heart and proposed to turn back, Martín Alonso and his brothers being the ones who urged him to go on. Mariners who had been on the first and subsequent voyages were rounded up and presented with leading questions, to which, in general, they replied as the Crown wanted. The heirs of Columbus, especially Doña María de Toledo, widow of D. Diego and mother of D. Luís the third Admiral, countered by *ex parte* inquiries of their own. The suit dragged along until 1536, hearings being held at Seville and other places in Spain, and at Santo Domingo and other places in the New World. These resulted in a mass of very interesting but conflicting testimony, including incidents not elsewhere recorded. Here I have translated some of the more credible and respectable witnesses for the Pinzóns; and, be it noted, the cry *Adelante! adelante!*, which, translated as "Sail on! sail on!" became the theme of Joaquin Miller's famous poem on Columbus, was said, if by anyone, by Martín Alonso Pinzón. But other witnesses, summoned by the heirs of Columbus, denied this and asserted that it was the Pinzón brothers who wanted to turn back.

The original Pleitos de Colón, as these judicial documents are called, are in the Archives of the Indies. Some were published, very inaccurately, by Navarrete in 1825; others, even less accurately, by Cesáreo Fernández Duro in *Memorias de la Real Academia de Historia X* (1885), and more extensively in the volumes entitled *Pleitos de Colón* in the *Colección de Documentos Inéditos relativos al Descubrimiento*, 2nd series, vols. VII and VIII (Madrid 1892-94).

Fernández Duro's texts are among the most abominably inaccurate that I have ever


encountered. Miss Alice Gould corrected a copy of the volumes above from the original mss. in the Archives of the Indies; and during the Harvard Columbus Expedition in 1939 Lieutenant McElroy copied all her corrections, so that they can be transferred to other copies of the printed volumes. From these, Dr. Anastos established new texts, and I have made the translations. Since 1941 the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress has acquired microfilms of the complete Pleitos, including many that have never been printed in any form.

A new, comprehensive and accurate printed text of all the Pleitos, with accurate translations, is the great crying need of Columbian historiography.

See further Morison *A.O.S.* I 177-83, 286-90; one-vol. ed. 135-41, 215-20.

a. *TESTIMONY OF FRANCISCO GARCÍA VALLEJOS*

At the inquest of 1514-15, two leading questions were as follows:



No. 14. Whether you know that in the said voyage the said Martín Alonso was the principal person as captain of one of his two ships, and his brothers of the other two, and that they ran from the island of Ferro westward 800 leagues, and that during this time, 200 leagues before the said Admiral sighted land, and knew not where to go and thought he would find nothing, he went on board the vessel of Martín Alonso and said what did he think they should do, since already 200 leagues they had gone beyond what he expected and already

should have reached land?

No. 15. Whether you know that the said Martín Alonso said "*Adelante, adelante* [Onward! Onward!], this is a fleet and mission of such high princes as the Sovereigns our Lords of Spain, and up to today not the least thing sighted, and it pleaseth not God that we should see the least thing; but if you, sir, wish to turn back I am determined to go on until land is found or never return to Spain"; and that because of his efforts and counsel they went forward?

The replies to these questions by Francisco García Vallejos, mariner of Moguer, follow:

"To the 14th question, he saith had it not been for Martín Alonso Pinzón and his relatives and friends the said Admiral would have been unable to discover nor could he have done aught without him; but with his friendship, and the desire he had to serve Their Highnesses, he asked his brother and this witness and other people who went with the said Admiral to discover and that the said Martín Alonso

so provided that without him the Admiral would not have gone to discover on the said voyage; questioned how he knows this, he said because he saw it and was there and was with the said Pinzón and his brother, in their company.

"To the 15th question he saith that he knoweth the contents of the said question, that they departed from the town of Palos and called at Gomera and thence

shaped their course for the said voyage from Ferro and followed the course west 800 leagues; and when they were 200 leagues more or less from land, following the said voyage, the said Admiral Don Christopher spoke with all the captains and with the said Martín Alonso and said 'What shall we do?' which happened on the 6th day of the month of October of the year '93 [*sic*], and said 'Captain, what shall we do? my people complain to me, what think you, gentlemen, we should do?' and up spoke Vicente Yáñez, 'Sir, let us continue up to 2000 leagues, and if there we

find naught let us turn and back-track'; and then replied Martín Alonso Pinzón, who went as senior captain, 'Come, sir, we have hardly left the town of Palos and your honor is already discouraged; onward, sir, that God give us victory that we may discover land, that in no wise doth God wish that shamefully we turn back'; then replied the said Admiral Don Christopher Columbus 'Good luck to us!' and thus owing to the said Martín Alonso Pinzón they went forward, and that this he knoweth."

b. TESTIMONY OF GARCÍA FERNÁNDEZ AND JUAN DOMINGUEZ

At the same inquest of 1514-15, García Fernández (or Hernández), steward of *Pinta*, answered Question 15 as follows:¹

"He saith that that which he knew was that the said Martín Alonso went as captain of one of his vessels which was called the *Pinta* in which this witness sailed as steward, and that a brother of the said Martín Alonso was master of the ship which was called the *Pinta* and that the other brother who was called Vicente Yáñez was master of the ship which was called the *Niña* and that all three vessels ran from the island of Ferro in the SW 400 leagues more or less and that the said Martín Alonso came to the Admiral and said to him, 'Sir, let us run SW by W,' and that then saith the said Admiral that he congratulated him; and that always the said Admiral consoled them, speaking firmly to the said Martín Alonso and to all those in his company [who declared] that never would they sight land, and that

they altered the course to the SW and that on it they found a land which was called Guanahani and that the first person who saw the said island was the people who went in the said ship *Pinta* in which this witness was, and that the said Martín Alonso ordered lombards to be fired as a signal of joy; the which order to fire being executed, the said Admiral, who was astern of the said ship *Pinta*, came up; and as they saw the said land, the said Martín Alonso shouted to the said Admiral Columbus that he should approach, and that, approaching, saith the said Admiral, 'Sir, Martín Alonso, you have found land!' and that then saith the said Martín Alonso, 'Sir, my reward is not lost!' and that then saith the same, 'I give you 5,000 maravedis as a bonus!'"² and that this witness knoweth it because he saw it."

At the inquest at Seville on 22 December 1535, one Juan Dominguez testified as follows:³

"That at the time that the fleet returned from making the discovery, this witness heard from his nephew, who was called Juan Quintero, who had gone on the said voyage, that, when encompassed by the sea, and having already spent much time at sea and not having found land, this Don Christopher Columbus had said that he would turn back, that he had already lost confidence in finding land, and that the said Martín Alonso Pinzón had said, '*Adelante, adelante*, I don't hold with turning back without sighting land,' and that then they had prosecuted the voyage, and two or three days after they had found land; and then saith the said Juan Quintero to this witness, that the said Martín

Alonso Pinzón had seen some birds which were looking for food in the sea, and had said, 'These birds breed on land and to land they go to sleep,' and that he knew the accuracy with which birds flew at sunset; and whilst they were sailing W, the said Martín Alonso had said that they should change course to SW by W, and that they had [thus] found land; and, said the same Juan Quintero, that it was through the skill of Martín Alonso Pinzón that they had found land, and that if they had believed Columbus they would have back-tracked; and that the same say publicly all those who went in the same fleet . . ."

1. *Pleitos* II 160.

2. *aguinaldo*, a New Year's gift.

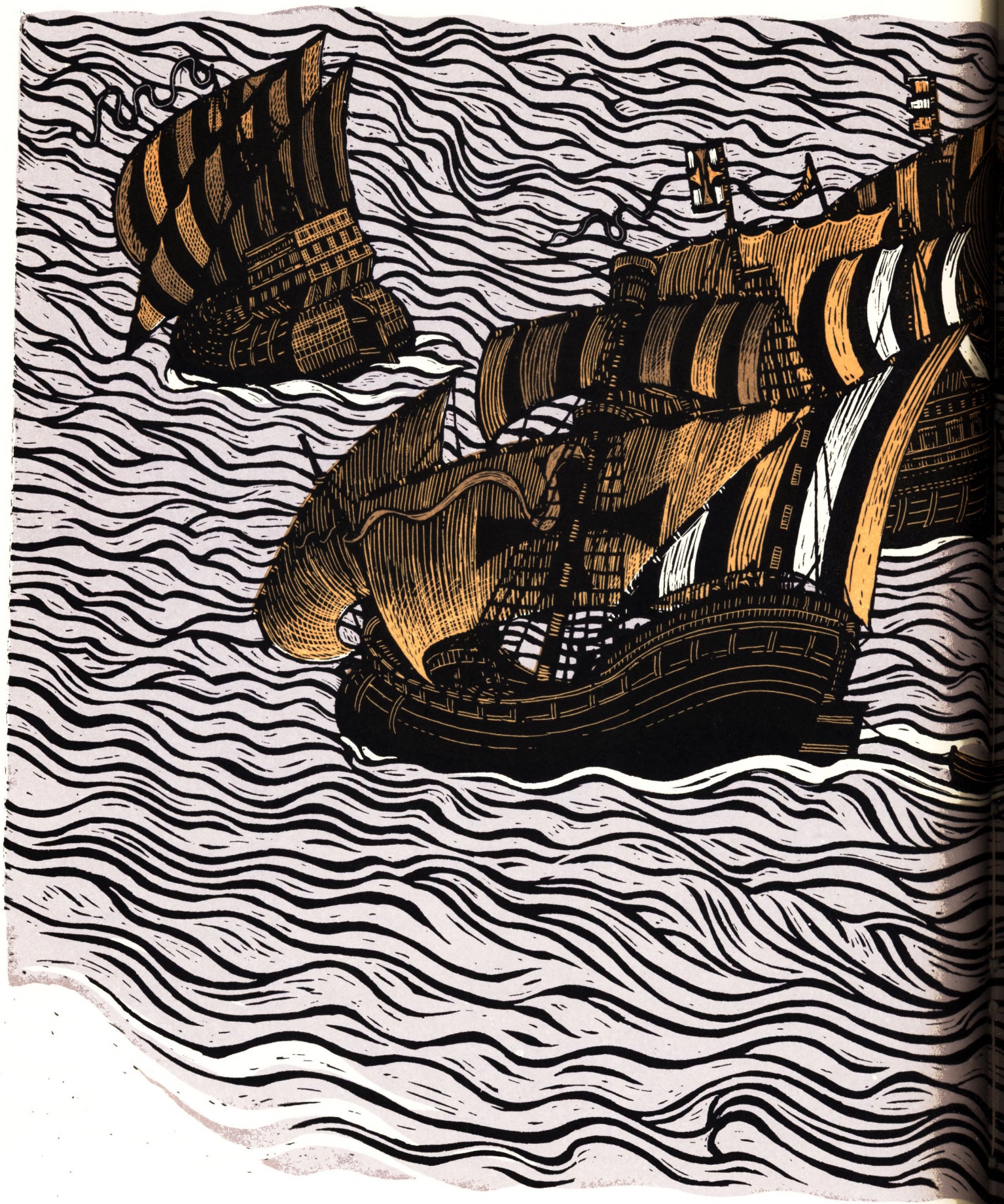
3. From my corrected 1885 text of Fernández Duro,

who wrongly (p. 259) stated this witness to be Fernando Martín Gutiérrez. The Juan Quintero whose testimony his uncle relates was quartermaster of *Pinta*.

PART III

The Second Voyage of Discovery

1493-1496





Introduction

FOR THE SECOND VOYAGE, NO JOURNAL OF COLUMBUS OR ABSTRACT HAS SURVIVED, BUT SOURCES ARE RELATIVELY ABUNDANT. Those translated here are:—(1) Columbus's Memorial to the Sovereigns of April 1493, giving his ideas about this voyage; (2) their instructions to him of 29 May 1493; (3) the Letter, dated 28 October 1495, of Michele de Cuneo, who came out in the Fleet and accompanied Columbus on his exploration of Cuba; (4) Nicolo Syllacio's Latin tract dated 13 December 1494, based on letters from Guillermo Coma, an Aragonese who came out in the Fleet; (5) Ferdinand Columbus's account of the homeward passage of 1496, in his *Historie*.

Other sources not included, as less important and readily available elsewhere, are:—

(1) Andrés Bernáldez *Historia de los Reyes Católicos* chaps. 123–31; a chronicle by the curate of Los Palacios, with whom Columbus stayed after his return from this voyage, and for whom he provided data. Written before 1500, first published in 1856.¹

(2) The Letter of Dr. Diego Alvares Chanca, surgeon of the Fleet, to the city council of Seville, dated 1494, a detailed account of the outward passage only.²

(3) Peter Martyr d'Anghiera, *De Orbe Novo Decades*, the first formal history of the New World, which dribbled into print at intervals between 1504 and 1550. His account of the Second Voyage, however, contains little not told by Cuneo or Syllacio.³

(4) Letters of Italians resident in Spain telling what they had picked up about this Voyage, in *Raccolta* III i 166–68, and Henry Harrisse *Christophe Colomb* (Paris 1884) II 69–78.

(5) The so-called Sneyd Codex or Thacher Manuscript in the Library of Congress, an account compiled by Angelo Trivigiano or Trevisan, a Venetian, for his pirated *Libretto de Tutta la Nauigatione* (1504) but not published therein; this relates an alleged

secret voyage by Columbus with five vessels to the Venezuelan coast and around Cuba in 1494, a voyage which most historians, including myself, regard as fictitious (see *A.O.S.* III 289-90).⁴

(6) The Torres Memorandum of 30 January 1494, Columbus's official report on the colonization of Hispaniola. He tells what went wrong in the settlement, and lists the things and people urgently needed; every paragraph is endorsed by the Sovereigns with the remark "He did well," or stating what they propose to do about it. Text in *Raccolta* I i 270-83, and, with a good translation, in Jane I 74-113.

(7) The World Map of Juan de la Cosa, dated 1500, by a participant in this Voyage.⁵

(8) The so-called Bologna Map of Hispaniola of 1516, now in the University Library of Bologna, but earlier used in Peter Martyr's *Decades* (1511).⁶

For narratives of the Second Voyage see Morison *A.O.S.* II 49-218 (389-502 of the one-vol. ed.) and *The Second Voyage of Columbus, from Cadiz to Hispaniola* (Oxford 1939).

1. Text in the *Raccolta* I i 235-65, reprinted with a good English translation in Cecil Jane *Select Documents* I 114-67. Bernáldez is handled rather roughly by Filiberto Ramírez Corría in *Reconstrucción Crítica del Segundo Viaje Cubano de Colón-La ficción Colombina del Cura de los Palacios* (Havana 1955).

2. Best translation, with Spanish text, is in Jane *Select Documents* I 20-73.

3. See Morison *A.O.S.* I 71, 75, and an extended account by Henry S. Wagner "Peter Martyr and his Works" *Proceedings American Antiquarian Society* LVI (Oct. 1946) 239-88. Trevisan printed the first Decade in his *Libretto* (see below, note 4), a very rare tract of which there is a copy in the John Carter Brown Library, Providence. This is reproduced in facsimile with translation in Thacher II 439-512. The first Decade appeared legitimately at Seville in 1511. An English translation of the entire work by Francis A. MacNutt is entitled *De Orbe Novo* (2 vols. 1912). Richard Eden "Englysshed" the parts covering Columbus's voyages as *The Decades of the Newe Worlde or West India* (London, 1555); this is reprinted, with the original quaint spelling and punctuation, in Edward Arber (ed.) *The First Three English Books on America* (Birmingham, 1885).

4. Translation first published by William J. Wilson as *A Narrative of the Discovery of Venezuela (1494?)*, 22 pp. (Washington 1940), and in *Geographical Review* XXXI (April, 1941) 283-99. Its authenticity is defended by Dr. Wilson, and impugned by Prof. Charles E. Nowell, in *Hispanic American Historical Review* XXII (1942) 193-210. Readers uninitiated to collecting may ask "What is a Codex?" My answer is,

"A manuscript after it gets into the hands of Maggs, Quaritch, or H. P. Kraus, and is priced in five figures."

5. Reproduced—very faintly but with good description—by E. D. Fite & Archibald Freeman *A Book of Old Maps* (Cambridge 1924) 11-12; in black-and-white full size lithograph in E. F. Jomard *Monuments de la Géographie* (Paris 1866); reduced, in colors, in the sumptuous publication *Mapas Españoles de América, Siglos XV-XVII* (Madrid 1951), with description by Julio Guillén. The portions that bear on the Second Voyage, in which Juan de la Cosa sailed, are reproduced in Morison *A.O.S.* I 80, 142, discussed *ibid.* I 79, and by Leonardo Olschki "The Columbian Nomenclature of the Lesser Antilles" *Geographical Review* XXXIII (1943) 394-414. Discussions of La Cosa and his map are George E. Nunn *The Mappemonde of Juan de la Cosa, A Critical Investigation of its Date and The La Cosa Map and the Cabot Voyages* (Jenkintown, Pa., 1934, 1946); Filiberto Ramírez Corría *Hallazgos en el Mapa de Juan de la Cosa* (Havana 1956) and J. L. Montalvo Guenard *El Supuesto Mapamundi de Juan de la Cosa* (Ponce, P.R., 1935). Sr. Guillén, who is in a position to make the most intense study of this map, believes that 1500 is the *incipit*; that it was finished in 1503 or 1504.

6. Reproduced in colors with a description by Carlo Frati, as *El Mapa mas Antigo de la Isla de Santo Domingo (1516) y Pedro Martyr de Angheria* (Florence, Olschki, n.d.); in outline in S. E. Morison "The Route of Columbus along the North Coast of Haiti, and the Site of Navidad" *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, New Series* XXXI, part IV (December 1940) 262.

Columbus's Memorial to the Sovereigns on Colonial Policy, April 1493

EVEN BEFORE HE LEFT SEVILLE FOR BARCELONA TO BE RECEIVED BY THE SOVEREIGNS, Columbus was invited by them to express his views on what should be done about his discoveries. In the following letter, preserved in the National Archives at Madrid, he does this. His views are significant not only as the beginning of Spanish, and indeed European, colonial policy in the New World, but as to the kind of colony Columbus himself wanted. It will be observed that he still has the trading-factory concept with which he had earlier been familiar at Chios and at São Jorge da Mina. The Spanish empire, like the Genoese and the Portuguese, is to be a trading empire; Hispaniola a string of trading posts at which a strictly regulated barter trade will be conducted with the natives for gold; and the one Spanish seaport from which American trade may be conducted—the “staple town” to use the contemporary English term—will be Cadiz. Columbus's Torres Memorandum indicates that within two months, experience had changed his views. See S. E. Morison “The Earliest Colonial Policy toward America: that of Columbus” in *Bulletin* of the Pan American Union LXXVI no. 10 (Oct. 1942) 543-55.

Facsimile of ms., with bad text and worse translation, in Thacher III 98-113. Text in *Raccolta* I i 136-8. This translation is by Dr. Milton Anastos.

[Seville, c. 9 April 1493]¹

 Highest and Most
Mighty Lords:

Pursuant to the command of Your Highnesses, I will report on my ideas for

the Settlement and Government of the Island of Hispaniola and the other islands, both discovered and to be discovered, but ready to yield to better judgment.

Firstly, with respect to the island of Hispaniola, [I recommend] that as many as 2,000 colonists who wish to do so should

go out, so that the country may be made more secure and so that it may be more expeditiously won and managed, and to facilitate trade and traffic with the neighboring islands.

Also, that three or four towns be built on the said island, located in the most suitable places, and that the colonists who may go there be distributed among the said places and towns.

Also, so the island may be settled more speedily and more advantageously, that none be authorized to gather gold thereon, save those who take up residence and build houses in the place in which they happen to be; thus they may live close together and in greater security.

Also, that each town and village have its own magistrate or magistrates² and notary, according to the custom and practice of Castile.

Also, that there be a church and abbots or friars to administer the sacraments, perform divine worship, and to convert the Indians.

Also, that none of the colonists be permitted to go and gather gold save with the license of the governor or magistrate of the place in which he resides, and that he first swear to return to the place of departure and report faithfully all the gold he may have gathered or secured and to return once a month or once a week, according as may be required of him, to give an account and to disclose the amount of the said gold, and that this be recorded by the notary of the town in the presence of the magistrate, and also, if it seem desirable, of a friar or priest designated for this purpose.

Also, that all the gold so procured be immediately melted and marked by whatever device each town shall designate, and

that it be weighed and that the share belonging to Your Highnesses be given and handed over to the magistrate of each place, and that it be recorded by the said clerk and by the priest or friar, so that the transaction may not be confined to one person and the truth may not be concealed.

Also, that all the gold not bearing the seal of the said towns which may be found in the possession of any who here once registered in conformance with the aforementioned order, be confiscated, one half to the informer and one half to Your Highnesses.

Also, that of all the gold which may be found, one per cent be reserved for the erection of churches and their furniture and for the support of the priests or friars attached to them, and that, if it seem advisable to give something to the magistrates and notaries in compensation for their services and to ensure the faithful performance of their duties; this sum be transmitted to the governor and treasurer sent out by Your Highnesses.

Also, with regard to the division of the gold and the part Your Highnesses are to obtain, this, in my opinion, should be referred to the said governor and treasurer, for the sum will be more or less according to the quantity of gold found, and, if it seem advisable, for one year Your Highnesses shall have one half and the gatherers the other, since the matter of the division can be determined more satisfactorily at a later time.

Also, that if the said magistrates and notaries are themselves guilty of, or consent to, a fraud, they shall be punished, and so shall the colonists who do not record the full total of the gold that they secure.

Also, that a treasurer be posted in the said island to receive all the gold belonging to Your Highnesses, and he shall have a notary to make a record of it, and the magistrates and notaries of the various towns shall each obtain a receipt for what they pay over to the said treasurer.

Also, since, owing to the greed for gold, everyone will prefer to seek it rather than engage in other necessary occupations, it seems to me that during a part of the year hunting for gold should be prohibited, so that there may be on the said island an opportunity for performing other tasks of importance to it.

Also, regarding the discovery of new lands, I think permission should be granted to all who wish to go, and some better terms should be made in the matter of the twenty per cent, by a generous modification so that many may be disposed to go.

I will now set forth my views on the departure of vessels to the said island of Hispaniola and the regulations which should be observed. They are as follows:—The said vessels should not discharge, except at one or two ports designated for this purpose and should there manifest the total cargo carried and discharged, and when they are about to leave, they should do so from the same ports, and they should make a full record of what they have loaded so that nothing may be concealed.

Also, with respect to the gold which may be carried from the islands to Castile; all that may be loaded, both the share of Your Highnesses and what belongs to all others, should all be placed in a chest, in charge of two men, each having a key, one of which should be held by the master [of the ship] and the other by someone



named by the governor and treasurer; and that the record of all the gold placed in the said chest should be made public, so that each may have what belongs to him; and that gold found outside of the said chest in any manner whatsoever, much or little, shall be confiscated, to the end that this business be managed honorably and in the interest of Your Highnesses.

Also, that all vessels sailing from the said island should proceed at once to Cadiz to unload, and that no one should leave or enter the said vessels until the person or persons selected for this purpose by Your Highnesses in the said city board the said vessels. To them the masters shall declare what they are carrying and shall give proof of what they loaded, so that it may be seen and determined whether the said vessels are carrying anything which was concealed and not declared at the time of loading.

Also, that in the presence of the magistrate of the said city of Cadiz, and of whoever may be selected for this purpose by Your Highnesses, the said chest containing the gold shall be opened, and each shall be given what is his.

May Your Highnesses mention me in your prayers. I constantly pray to Our Lord God for the lives of Your Highnesses and for the increase of your dominions.³

.S.
 .S.A.S.
 X n y
 : Xpo FERENS/

1. Las Casas in *Historia* chap. 77 (1951 ed. I 331) says it was written before he left Seville, i.e., on 8, 9, or 10 April.

2. *alcalde*; the chief magistrate of a town, partly mayor and partly judge.


3. In the entail of Columbus's property he describes thus the peculiar signature reproduced here: "An X" (by which he probably meant a Greek Chi) "with an S over it and an M with a Roman A over it and over that an S, and then a Greek Y" (by which he probably meant a capital Upsilon) "with an S over it, preserving the relation of the lines and points." My own belief is that the initial letters stand for *Servus Sum Altissimi Salvatoris*, *Χριστοῦ Μαρίας* 'Υιοῦ. "Servant am I of the most High Saviour, Christ the Son of Mary." The last line is a Greco-Latin form of his Christian name, emphasizing his rôle as the bearer of Christianity to lands that never knew Christ.

Instructions of the Sovereigns to Columbus for His Second Voyage to the Indies

29 May 1493

THESE WERE ISSUED SHORTLY BEFORE COLUMBUS LEFT THE COURT AT BARCELONA to return to Seville and personally oversee preparations. The Sovereigns adopt in principle Columbus's suggestions and give definite orders as to what he shall do; in a sense this is the first set of laws promulgated by a European sovereign for an American colony. Even in the English colonies the home government maintained down to the American Revolution that Royal Instructions to governors had the force of law.

Ms. in Archives of the Indies, Seville; photo in Library of Congress; printed text in Navarrete II 66-72. This translation is by Dr. Milton Anastos.

 Instructions of the King and Queen, our Lords, for Don Christopher Columbus, Their Highnesses' Admiral of the Islands and Mainland, discovered and to be discovered in the Ocean Sea in the region of the Indies, and Their Viceroy and Governor of the same; and also Captain General of this Fleet which Their Highnesses now send to the said Islands and Mainland;

On the procedures which are to be followed on this voyage which he is now making by command of Their Highnesses, and also on his departure and on the fleet which is to bear him, and on his

course, and after his arrival there, these are, God willing, as follows:

1. Firstly, it hath pleased God, Our Lord, in His abundant mercy to reveal the said Islands and Mainland to the King and Queen, our Lords, by the diligence of the said Don Christopher Columbus, their Admiral, Viceroy and Governor thereof, who hath reported it to Their Highnesses that he knew the people he found residing therein to be very ripe to be converted to our Holy Catholic Faith, since they have neither dogma nor doctrine; wherefore it hath pleased and greatly pleaseth Their Highnesses (since in all

matters it is meet that their principal concern be for the service of God, Our Lord, and the enhancement of our Holy Catholic Faith); wherefore, desiring the augmentation and increase of our Holy Catholic Faith, Their Highnesses charge and direct the said Admiral, Viceroy and Governor that by all ways and means he strive and endeavor to win over the inhabitants of the said Islands and Mainland to be converted to our Holy Catholic Faith; and to aid him in this work Their Highnesses are sending thither the learned father, Fray Buil,¹ together with other *Religiosos* whom the said Admiral is to take with him, and these through the effort and exertion of the Indians who have come to Spain, [the Admiral] is to see that they be carefully taught the principles of Our Holy Faith, for they² must already know and understand much of our language; and he shall provide for their instruction as best he can; and that this object may the better be attained, the Admiral shall, after the safe arrival of his fleet there, force and compel all those who sail therein as well as all others who are to go out from here later on, that they treat the said Indians very well and lovingly and abstain from doing them any injury, arranging that both peoples hold much conversation and intimacy, each serving the others to the best of their ability. Moreover, the said Admiral shall graciously present them with things from the merchandise of Their Highnesses which he is carrying for barter, and honor them much;³ and if some person or persons should maltreat the said Indians in any manner whatsoever, the said Admiral, as Viceroy and Governor of Their Highnesses, shall punish them severely by virtue of the authority vested in him by

Their Majesties for this purpose; and since spiritual matters cannot long endure without the temporal, the said Admiral and Governor in other matters shall abide by the following orders:

2. First, he shall seek out the best caravels that may be found in Andalusia, and the mariners and pilots thereof shall be the most expert and most dependable of their craft; and since the commission issued to the Admiral and Don Juan de Fonseca for creating this fleet provides them with authority to take whatever vessels they wish for that purpose, they shall select at their will those which the Admiral considers most suitable.

3. All the people who are to embark in the vessels, if it be possible, shall be persons known and trusty, and they must all present themselves before the said Admiral of the Isles, as Captain-General of the said fleet, before the said Don Juan de Fonseca, and before Juan de Soria, whom the Royal Auditors send there as their deputy in this fleet.⁴ The said appearance must be made before him as deputy of the Royal Auditors, and he shall record it in his book, and the paymaster shall pay them the wages they are to receive according to the lists and warrants signed by the said Admiral, and Don Juan de Fonseca, and the said Juan de Soria, and in no other manner.

4. All contracts that may be made with whatever captains, mariners, petty officers⁵ and other persons who may be in the said fleet, and also all purchases that may be made of vessels or provisions, munitions, arms, merchandise and all other things whatsoever for the said fleet and the vessels to be chartered, are to be done by the said Admiral and Don Juan de Fonseca or by the persons to whom they may dele-

gate this function, and in the presence of the said Juan de Soria, as deputy of the said Royal Auditors so that he may make a record thereof, and also in the presence of another scrivener if the said Admiral wishes to have his own. This provision shall apply for the purchases to be made in the places where they may be; but purchases made elsewhere shall be made by the persons sent by the said Admiral and Don Juan de Fonseca for this purpose, and in the presence of a notary public; and he who has charge of payments for this fleet shall pay the *maravedis* for all the above mentioned which he reckons from the lists and warrants signed by the said Admiral, and Don Juan de Fonseca, and the said Juan de Soria, as auditor.

5. The said arms, provisions, munitions, merchandise and all other things which may be purchased are to be delivered to the persons whom the said Admiral shall name, and of whom the said Juan de Soria shall have charge, and he shall keep books and account thereof, one to take to Their Highnesses and another to send to the Auditor, who is to establish himself in the islands under the authority of the said Royal Auditors.

6. In good time before the said fleet is to depart, all the captains, pilots, mariners, soldiers of horse and foot, officers and other persons who are to sail with it, shall register all that they take with them before the said Admiral and Don Juan de Fonseca, or before the persons they may designate, and before the said Juan de Soria as deputy-auditor, so that there may be a record of the persons who are going and of the rank and job of everyone, and all must and shall take an oath and pledge of fealty to the King and Queen, our Lords, swearing that they will serve them



faithfully on this voyage, both on the outward passage, after reaching the islands and mainland, and on the way back—they will, as true and faithful vassals and subjects of Their Highnesses, guard the service of Their Highnesses and promote the welfare of their realms in word, deed and counsel on every occasion that presents itself. They [bind themselves] to advance the service of Their Highnesses wherever they can and to oppose contrary tendencies with all their strength; and, if they see an opportunity to enhance Their Highnesses' interests they shall so inform them or they shall notify the said Admiral and Captain-General, so that he may take appropriate action; similarly, in all things whatsoever they shall render obedience to the said Admiral as the Ad-

miral of Their Highnesses on the Sea and Viceroy and Governor of Their Highnesses on land, that they may all conform with him, as aforesaid, and none may do the contrary; all the which Their Highnesses by these presents direct that all these provisions be carried out and complied with, under the penalties provided for those who violate pledges of fealty of this character.

7. Likewise: Their Highnesses command that no person or persons among those who are to sail with the said fleet, of whatever rank or station they may be, carry or be permitted to carry, with the said fleet, or on other vessels, any merchandise for barter on the said islands and mainland, for none save Their Highnesses are to engage in barter, as shall be hereinafter provided.

8. When they in good time reach the Islands and Mainland where they are to disembark, the Admiral, as Their Highnesses' Viceroy and Governor of the said Islands and Mainland, shall order all the captains, and people and vessels to render an account and declaration of the persons, vessels, arms, munitions, provision and other things which they may have along; and since no person or persons are permitted to take any merchandise for use in barter for gold or other things on the said Islands and Mainland, except by command of Their Highnesses, as has been said, whatever they should have in addition to what they had declared at the time of the departure from Castile, according to the record in the book which is to be carried by the official who is to be the deputy of the Royal Auditors, who is to reside on the said Islands, shall be forfeited, and shall be confiscated by the said Admiral and Viceroy, or by his deputy, and shall be deliv-

ered to the person who is to be custodian there for Their Highnesses of the merchandise sent by Their Highnesses, in the presence of the aforementioned deputy of the Auditors, so that he may take charge of it.

9. Item: All barter is to be carried on by the Admiral or the person he may designate in his place and by the Treasurer of Their Highnesses, who is to be there, and by no other person. And this is to be done in the presence of the said deputy of the said Royal Auditors, or before the officer he may appoint for this purpose, so that the transaction may thus be supervised for them by him, and that he may enter it in the record-book he is to keep of the said bartering; and since trade may be carried on in various places, and where it is not possible for the Treasurer to go, let him send another in his place along with the person designated by the Admiral, and in the presence of the said deputy of the Auditors or his proxy, and in no other way.

10. After the arrival of the said Admiral, Viceroy and Governor, he shall, by virtue of the authority vested in him by Their Highnesses, appoint Magistrates and Justices of the Peace⁶ in the Islands and Land occupied by him and his people, and on whatever other Islands there may be people who are to go with the said Admiral and his Fleet, to hear whatever pleadings there may be, whether civil or criminal, as the other Viceroys and Governors wherever Their Highnesses have power; and the said Viceroy and Governor shall hear, and take cognizance of, appeals or common pleas, as he may deem best, as do the other Viceroys and Governors of Their Highnesses.

11. Item: If it prove necessary to

appoint Judges, Jurats and other Officials for the government of the people or of any other community which may be set up, the said Admiral, Viceroy and Governor shall name three persons for each office, as hath been agreed by Their Highnesses,⁷ and Their Highnesses shall designate one for each office, and thus by provision of Their Highnesses they shall be provided; but, since the said officials cannot be provided in this way on this voyage, the said Admiral, Viceroy and Governor shall then appoint them in the name of Their Highnesses.

12. Item: That whenever anyone is appointed Justice, the herald shall announce: "This is the Justice appointed by order of the King and Queen our Lords."

13. Item: All the commissions, orders and letters patent to be issued by the said Admiral, Viceroy and Governor be issued as in the name of Don Fernando and Doña Isabel, King and Queen, etc. and signed by the said Don Christopher Columbus, as Viceroy, and superscribed and signed by his scrivener according to the form followed by the other scribes of the other Viceroyalties in signing documents, and sealed on the back with the seal of Their Highnesses, as is the practice of the other Viceroys appointed by Their Highnesses in their Kingdoms.

14. Item: Immediately upon arrival, God willing, the said Admiral and Viceroy shall provide for the erection of a customs house for the storage of all the merchandise of Their Highnesses, including the merchandise to be sent hence, and those to be collected there for shipment hither. At the time the said merchandise is to be unloaded, it shall be deposited in the said house in the presence of the persons the said Admiral and Viceroy shall designate

for this purpose, and in the presence of the said deputy of the Royal Auditors who is to be there, and in the presence of another officer to be appointed by the said Admiral in his own behalf, so that two books may be kept, in which everything is to be written, and these are to be kept by the Treasurer whom Their Highnesses send thither so that the barter may be carried on as above prescribed. If any part of what was delivered here be lacking, he shall be paid for it at once.

15. Item: Whatever the said Admiral and Viceroy thinks should be performed by all the people over there, they are bound to do it and present themselves before him or before the persons he may name for this purpose, and before the deputy of the said Royal Auditors, who is to reside there; and when wages are to be paid to the said people, they shall be paid according to the above-mentioned declaration, and according to the lists and records of the said Admiral and Viceroy, and the said Auditor, and in no other way.

16. Item: If the said Admiral, after reaching the Islands, believes it would be well to send some vessels and people to certain parts to discover what has not hitherto been discovered, or for the sake of barter, or to send them home or to any other region, all the captains and mariners whom he may so command are required to carry out and fulfil his orders, under the penalties he may inflict upon them; and by these presents Their Highnesses hereby confer authority on the said Admiral, Viceroy and Governor to sentence the persons and dispose of the property of the guilty persons.

17. Likewise: As there is to be a customs house in Cadiz for the loading and unloading of all merchandise, arms, muni-

tions, supplies and other things which are to be taken along, either for the fleet on the way over or for delivery to the said Islands and Mainland, or to be imported thence, all these are to be loaded and unloaded at the said house and in no other place whatsoever. This customs house is to be in the keeping of the person whom Their Highnesses shall designate. The said Juan de Soria, being the deputy of the said Royal Auditors, shall record everything that is to be loaded and unloaded there. If the said Admiral should desire to appoint another official there to make a similar record, he may do so.

18. Likewise: It is Their Highnesses' pleasure that the said Admiral should have one eighth part of whatever may be acquired from whatever gold and other things there may be in the said Islands and Mainland (for the said Admiral is to pay one eighth of the cost of the merchandise to be used in barter), after first deducting ten per cent, which the Admiral is to have

1. Fray Bernardo Boil, or Buil, a Catalan from Montserrat, who devoted most of his efforts to intriguing against Columbus and converted no Indians.
2. Several Indians, including a very intelligent fellow who had been baptized Diego Colón, accompanied the Admiral on the Second Voyage as interpreters.
3. *los honre mucho*; meaning, to treat them with due civility, not as an inferior race. Sad to compare the Sovereigns' good intentions toward the Indians with what actually happened.
4. Juan de Fonseca, Archdeacon of Seville, later Bishop of Burgos and of Palencia, a nephew of the Archbishop of Seville. Las Casas, who had a row with

as his share, as it is provided in the Capitulations which Their Highnesses have covenanted with the said Admiral.

We the King and Queen, by these presents direct you, Don Christopher Columbus, our Admiral and Viceroy and Governor of the Islands and Mainland which have been discovered by Our Command in the Ocean Sea in the region of the Indies, and Our Captain-General of Our Fleet which we have ordered for that [region], that you ponder the above-written instructions and comply with, and fulfil, all the terms therein contained, and take care not to violate or infringe the spirit or the letter thereof, or consent to the violation thereof in any matter whatsoever.

Done in the City of Barcelona on the 29th day of May A.D. 1493.

I THE KING.

I THE QUEEN.

By command of the King and Queen,
Fernand Alvares.

- him later over the treatment of Indians, declares that Fonseca was incompetent as fitter-out of a fleet; but Columbus in his old age regarded him as a friend. Juan de Soria, otherwise unknown to fame, was the Treasury's watchdog for this voyage and over the colony.
5. *oficiales*. This term then included petty officers such as carpenters, caulkers, coopers, painters, and tailors, who were not directly concerned with navigation. Morison *A.O.S.* I 189 (one-vol. ed. 147).
 6. *alcaldes y alguaciles*. For *alcalde* see p. 202, n. 2; *alguaciles* were minor judicial officers.
 7. A reference to the Capitulations—see above, Part I, 4a.

Michele de Cuneo's Letter on the Second Voyage, 28 October 1495

MICHELE DE CUNEO BELONGED TO A NOBLE FAMILY OF SAVONA, ON THE LIGURIAN LITTORAL a few miles west of Genoa. His father, Corrado de Cuneo, in 1474 had sold to Domenico Colombo, father of the Admiral, a country house near Savona; and it is probable that he and Christopher were boyhood friends. His language shows him to have been a cultured though not a scholarly writer, with the point of view of an Italian gentleman of the Renaissance, savoring life and adventure, full of scientific curiosity.

Cuneo accompanied the Second Voyage as a gentleman volunteer. There were at least four other Genoese in the fleet; perhaps Cuneo was instrumental in bringing them to Cadiz. He took part in the first exploring expedition under Hojeda to the interior of Hispaniola, and with Columbus made the voyage of discovery to Cuba and Jamaica of April-September 1494. Returning to Savona in 1495, he addressed this letter to a friend and fellow-citizen, Hieronymo Annari, who had asked him for information about the New World. His language is literary Italian, but contains a number of Genoese dialectal expressions.

The original letter has disappeared. The existing manuscript, a copy made about 1511 by one Jacopo Rossetto, belongs to the Library of the University of Bologna, whose librarian, Olindo Guerrini, first gave it to the world in 1885. Its authenticity was then challenged because of inconsistencies in style; but it has passed the scrutiny of the paleographer Carlo Malagola, Director of the Archives of Bologna, of Henry HARRISSE, and of Cesare de LOLLIS, who printed it in full in his *Raccolta Colombiana* III ii 95-107. De Lollis's text is the one used for this translation, which Miss Luisa Nordio, then Assistant Professor of Italian at Vassar College, made for me in 1940, and which is, I believe, the first complete one to be published.

Michele de Cuneo was a jolly dog and good raconteur, in contrast to Columbus


and the rather solemn Spaniards who wrote on the early voyages. He didn't care whether or not this was the Orient, or whether its discovery had been foretold in the Sacred Scriptures, so long as he had a good time, which obviously he did. Although his narrative is somewhat confused, it is valuable for personal touches, incidents that nobody else related, and a lively account of fauna, flora and native manners and customs.

This letter is of special interest in relation to the discovery of the Virgin Islands, Jamaica, and Puerto Rico. The unsolved question of where Columbus first landed in Puerto Rico is thoroughly discussed in Aurelio Tío *Nuevas Fuentes para la Historia de Puerto Rico* (Universidad Interamericana de Puerto Rico, 1961) pp. 121-53.

Subheadings have been supplied by the editor.

Savona, 15 October 1495
To the noble Lord Hieronymo Annari

My noble honored lord:

 I have received yours of the 26th ult., to which I sent a brief reply, thinking that within a few days I

would have been with you. But, since now this cannot be, I have decided to satisfy your request concerning the subject about which you wrote me. Should I, perhaps, not write as full a report as you wish, please excuse me; since, as I told you in my previous letter, all my papers are still in Nice.

CONCERNING THE NEW THINGS OF THE ISLANDS OF THE WESTERN
OCEAN DISCOVERED BY DON CRISTOFORO COLUMBO OF GENOA

a. From Cadiz to Hispaniola

In the name of Jesus and of His Glorious Mother Mary, from whom all blessings proceed.

On 25 September 1493, we departed Cadiz with 17 sail, in perfect order in every respect; to wit, 15 square-rigged and two lateeners, and on 2 October we made the Grand Canary. On the following night we sailed and on the 5th of the same month we made Gomera, one of the Canary Islands. If I should tell you what we did in that place with salvos, lombard shots and fireworks, it would take too long. This we did because of the Lady of that place, with whom our Lord Admiral in other times had fallen in love.¹ In that place we took on fresh supplies of all that we needed. On 10 October we sailed

on our direct course, but, because of contrary weather, we remained for 3 days near the Canary Islands. On 13 October, being a Sunday, in the morning we left the island of Ferro, the last of the Canary Islands and our course was W by S. On 26 October, the vigil of SS. Simon and Jude, at about 4:00 P.M., the fortune of the sea began to strike us in such a way that you would not believe it. We thought our days had come to an end. It lasted all that night and until day in such a manner that one ship could not see the other; in the end it pleased God that we should find each other, and on 3 November, a Sunday, we saw land, that is to say, five unknown islands. The first our Lord Admiral called *Sancta Dominica* because of

the Sunday on which it had been discovered; the second *Sancta Maria la Gallante* for love of the ship in which he sailed, which was called *Maria la Gallante*.² The two islands were not too big; however the Lord Admiral charted them. If I well remember, from the island of Ferro to the island of Santa Maria la Gallante it took us 22 days, but I believe that with good wind one could cross over easily in 16 days.

In the said island Santa Maria la Gallante we took on water and wood; the which is not inhabited although full of trees and flat. The same day we sailed thence and we came to a big island which is inhabited by Caribs,³ who as soon as they saw us, instantly ran to the mountains. We landed on this island and stayed there for about six days; and the reason for our staying was that eleven of our men formed themselves into a company for purposes of robbery and went into the wilderness five or six miles, so that when they wished to return they did not know how to find their way, and this in spite of the fact that they were all seamen and looked for the sun, which they could not well see because of the thick and dense forest. The Lord Admiral, seeing that those men were not coming and could not be found, sent 200 men divided into four squads, with trumpets, horns and lanterns, yet for all this they could not find them, and there were times when we were more in doubt about the 200 than for the first ones. But it pleased God that the 200 came back very tired and hungry. We thought that the eleven had been eaten by the aforesaid Caribs, who are accustomed to do that. However, at the end of five or six days, the said eleven, as it pleased God, even with little hope to find us, started



THE CARIBBEE ISLES
as shown on Juan de la Cosa's World Map
of 1500

a fire on top of a rock; and we, seeing the fire, thought they were there and sent them the boat, and in this way they were retrieved. Had it not been for an old woman who by signs showed us the way, they would have been lost, because on the following day we meant to make sail for our voyage.

In that island we took twelve very beautiful and very fat women from 15 to 16 years old, together with two boys of the same age. These had the genital organ cut to the belly; and this we thought had been done in order to prevent them from meddling with their wives or maybe to fatten them up and later eat them. These

boys and girls had been taken by the above mentioned Caribs; and we sent them to Spain to the King, as a sample. To that island the Admiral gave the name of *Santa Maria de Gadalupe*.⁴

From this island of Guadaloupe, which belongs to the Caribs, we set sail on 10 November and on the 13th of the same month we came to another island of Caribs very beautiful and fertile, and we arrived at a very beautiful harbor.⁵ As soon as the Caribs saw us they ran away to the mountains like those of the other island and they emptied their houses, into which we went and took whatever pleased us. In these few days we found many islands where we did not go ashore. A few times we anchored, that is, for the night; and when we did not anchor we kept the ship hove-to, and this in order not to make any headway and for fear of running afoul of the said islands, to which, because they were close one to the other the Lord Admiral gave the name of Eleven Thousand Virgins;⁶ and to the one previously mentioned, Santa Cruz.

One of those days while we were lying at anchor we saw coming from a cape a canoe, that is to say a boat, which is how they call it in their language, going along with oars so that it looked like a well-manned *bergantino*,⁷ on which there were three or four Carib men with two Carib women and two Indian slaves, of whom (that is the way the Caribs treat their other neighbors in those other islands), they had recently cut the genital organ to the belly, so that they were still sore; and we having the flagship's boat ashore, when we saw that canoe coming, quickly jumped into the boat and gave chase to that canoe. While we were approaching her the Caribs began shooting at us with

their bows in such manner that, had it not been for the shields, half of us would have been wounded. But I must tell you that to one of the seamen who had a shield in his hand came an arrow, which went through the shield and penetrated his chest three inches, so that he died in a few days. We captured that canoe with all the men, and one Carib was wounded by a spear in such a way that we thought he was dead, and cast him for dead into the sea, but instantly saw him swim. In so doing we caught him and with the grapple hauled him over the bulwarks of the ship where we cut his head with an axe. The other Caribs, together with those slaves, we later sent to Spain. While I was in the boat I captured a very beautiful Carib woman, whom the said Lord Admiral gave to me, and with whom, having taken her into my cabin, she being naked according to their custom, I conceived desire to take pleasure. I wanted to put my desire into execution but she did not want it and treated me with her finger nails in such a manner that I wished I had never begun. But seeing that, (to tell you the end of it all), I took a rope and thrashed her well, for which she raised such unheard of screams that you would not have believed your ears. Finally we came to an agreement in such manner that I can tell you that she seemed to have been brought up in a school of harlots. To that cape of that island the Admiral gave the name Cape of the Arrow because of the one who had died of the arrow.

On 14 November we set sail from that island with very bad weather. On the 18th we made a very beautiful and very large island inhabited by Indians, which they call, in their language, *Boriquen*, which the Admiral called *San Juan Bau-*



tista.⁸ During our five days' sailing we saw both to starboard and to port many islands, all of which the Lord Admiral caused to be distinctly entered on the chart. And for your own information, in that island we took on provisions, and on the 21st made sail and on the 25th in the name of God made the island of Hispaniola, previously discovered by the Lord Admiral, where we anchored in an excellent harbor called *Monte Christi*.⁹ In these few days we had again very bad weather and saw about ten islands. We estimated that course from the island of Dominica to Monte Cristi to be 300 leagues. In this navigation of ours several times we could not follow a direct course because depth [of water] was wanting.

On 27 November we sailed to go to *Monte Santo* where on his previous voyage the Admiral had left 38 men, and on that very night we came to the very place.¹⁰ On the 28th we went ashore where we found all our above-mentioned men dead and still lying there on the ground without eyes, which we thought to have

been eaten; because, as soon as they [the Indians] have beheaded anyone, immediately they scoop out the eyes and eat them. It could have been from 15 to 20 days that they were dead. We met the lord of that place called Guacanagarí who, with tears running down his breast (and so all his men), told us that the lord of the mountains called Caonabó had come with 3,000 men, and he to spite him had killed them together with some of his own people and robbed them. We could find nothing of all that the Lord Admiral had left; and, hearing this, we believed what they told us. We stayed 10 days in the neighborhood, and on 8 December left that place because it was unhealthy on account of the marshes which are there,¹¹ and we went to another location still in the island, in an excellent harbor where we landed; and there we built 200 houses which are small like our hunting cabins and roofed with thatch.¹²

When we had built the above-mentioned settlement for our residence, the inhabitants of the island, as far from us as one or two leagues, came to see us as if we

had been their brothers, saying that we were men of God come from Heaven, and they stood there full of wonder to contemplate us, and brought us some of their things to eat, and we presented them with our stuff; wherefore they behaved like brothers. And here finished the goal and

1. *tincto d'amore*, lit. "impregnated with love." The lady was Doña Beatriz de Peraza, ruler of Gomera. For this "affair," for which Cuneo is the only authority, see Morison *A.O.S.* I 212-15 (one-vol. ed. 164-5).

2. Dominica and Mariegalante. Columbus's flagship on this voyage was a big carrack named *Santa Maria*, to which the sailors added *la Galante* because she was a gallant ship. For this part of the voyage see Morison *A.O.S.* II 63-99 or *C. C. Mariner* 95-102; but my identification of the smaller islands has been revised by Leonardo Olschki "The Antillean Nomenclature of Columbus's Second Voyage" *The Geographical Review* XXXIII no. 3 (1943) 397-414.

3. *Camballi*, which in the ms. means either Carib Indians or Cannibals, the latter word being derived from the former.

4. Guadeloupe, named by Columbus after the famous shrine in Spain, which he had visited between voyages.

5. Salt River, St. Croix.

6. *le XI milia vergine*, the Virgin Islands, named by Columbus after St. Ursula and the 11,000 Virgin Martyrs of Cologne. See Morison *A.O.S.* II 86-8.

7. This word, *bergantín* in Spanish, meant a small, fast sailing vessel provided with a bank of oars, used for coastal work. It was somewhat heavier and more seaworthy than the *fusta*, to which both Columbus and

end of our voyage.

Later I shall tell of another voyage which afterwards I took with the Lord Admiral when he decided to search for mainland; but now I shall tell something else. First of the search for gold in the island Hispaniola.

Cuneo compared the bigger Indian dugouts. A *bergantín* had nothing in common with a modern brigantine. This skirmish took place at Salt River, St. Croix.

8. Puerto Rico. The city on the north side, founded by Ponce de León in 1509, was named *San Juan de Puerto Rico*, and the last two words eventually became the name of the island. The fleet called either at Añasco Bay or Mayagüez Bay. See Morison *A.O.S.* II 89-90, 99 (one-vol. ed. 421-2), José G. Ginorio *El Descubrimiento de Puerto Rico* (1936), and Aurelio Tió (p. 210).

9. See Columbus's Journal for 4 January 1493, note 5.

10. The fortress of Navidad; see Journal for 25-27 December 1492. *Cabo Santo* was the name that Columbus gave to Cape Haitien.

11. The mangrove swamps in Caracol Bay.

12. Isabela on the north coast, the first European settlement in the New World intended to be permanent. The fleet arrived there on 2 January 1494. See Francisco Domínguez y Company *La Isabela, primera ciudad fundada por Colón en América* (Habana 1947) and Morison *A.O.S.* II 96 101-2, and index (one-vol. ed. 430, 494-5). Found unsatisfactory in several respects, such as poor harbor and distance from a supply of fresh water, Isabela, after an ambitious beginning, was abandoned as capital in favor of Santo Domingo, and soon became a ghost city.

b. How We Explored the Cibao¹

After we had rested for several days in our settlement it seemed to the Lord Admiral that it was time to put into execution his desire to search for gold, which was the main reason he had started on so great a voyage full of so many dangers, as we shall see more completely in the end. Therefore the Lord Admiral sent two captains with about 40 men, well armed, and with two Indians who were acquainted with that island to a place called *Cibao*, in which he had found that according to Ptolemy there must be plenty of gold in the rivers. These, on their way,

crossed a great river wider and more swift than that of Seville and all the time they found many settlements of those Indians, who always made them good cheer. And being more or less near that place of *Cibao*, and the weather being terrible, and having to cross another very wild river, being afraid of the outcome, we turned back to the nearest settlement to talk with them, and they told us that, positively, in that place of *Cibao* there really was gold in large quantities; and they presented our captains with a certain amount of gold which included 3 big pieces, viz. one worth

9 *castellanos*, another of 15 *castellanos* and the last of 12, which included a piece of rock. This gold they brought to the Lord Admiral telling him all that we have related above, as seen or heard. With this he and all of us made merry, not caring any longer about any sort of spicery but only of this blessed gold. Because of this, the Lord Admiral wrote to the King that he was hoping to be able shortly to give him as much gold as the iron mines of Biscay gave him iron. What happened afterward is as follows.

In the month of February, after the 12 caravels sent by the Lord Admiral had departed for Spain,² 500 of our men went together with the said Lord Admiral to that place of Cibao, not too well fitted out with clothes; and on that trip, between going, staying, and returning, we spent 29 days with terrible weather, bad food and worse drink; nevertheless, out of covetousness of that gold, we all kept strong and lusty. We crossed going and coming two very rapid rivers, as I have mentioned above, swimming; and those who did not know how to swim had two Indians who carried them swimming; the same, out of friendship and for a few trifles that we gave them, carried across on top of their heads our clothes, arms and everything else there was to be carried. We went to that place called Cibao and shortly we built a fort of wood in the name of St. Thomas, unconquerable by those Indians.³ This fort is distant from our settlement 27 leagues or thereabouts. Several times we fished in those rivers, but never

was found by anyone a single grain of gold. For this reason we were very displeased with the local Indians, who all told us that the gold was within the power of King Caonabó, who was about 2 leagues distant from our above-mentioned fort. While we were staying in our fort many Indians came to see us from as far as 10 leagues as if we were marvels, bringing to us some of the gold they had, and they exchanged it with us so that we collected gold to the value of about 2,000 *castellanos*, among which there were some nuggets which weighed 24 *castellanos* and also of other substance as *tiber*.⁴ None of us went to find the said King Caonabó because of the scarcity of clothes. That King, they say, could command 50,000 men. Besides the above dealings for a value of 2,000 *castellanos*, there was also exchanged in secret against the rules and our own agreement to a value of about 1,000 *castellanos*. As you know, the devil makes you do wrong and then lets your wrong be discovered; moreover, as long as Spain is Spain, traitors will never be wanting. One gave the other away, so that almost all were exposed, and whoever was found guilty was well whipped; some had their ears slit and some the nose, very pitiful to see.

1. This expedition into the interior, led by Alonso de Hojeda, left Isabela early in January, 1494. See Morison *A.O.S.* II 102-4 (one-vol. ed. 430-3), with chart.

2. The fleet commanded by Antonio de Torres, on 2 February 1494.

3. For map, see Morison *A.O.S.* II 109 (one-vol. ed. 438).

4. I am unable to guess what Cuneo meant by this.

*c. Fauna and Flora*¹

Now, to answer in detail to all the things you have asked me, I will say some-

thing about the fruits which grow commonly in all those islands. In them there

are some huge trees which measure around the trunk from 25 to 35 *palmos*, which give a fruit to our taste fit only for pigs.²

There are also innumerable cotton trees as big as fig trees.³ Again there are trees of the same size which give a fruit like the apricot, which is full of small seeds like the seeds of the fig, red as scarlet, which the inhabitants eat but to us it is none too good. Again there is another tree like the last one which makes a similar fruit, but the seeds inside are black, and they eat them, too, and it has the same taste. Of those fruits some are red and some are black in color.⁴ There are also trees, which make a fruit as big as our citrus but it is not good to eat because it is very bitter and it has a rind like a squash, and they make out of it drinking vessels like cups, and vases to hold water; for anything else they are no good.⁵ There are also some like artichoke plants but four times as tall, which give a fruit in the shape of a pine cone, twice as big, which fruit is excellent and it can be cut with a knife like a turnip and it seems to be very wholesome.⁶

Furthermore there are very big and tall trees which give a fruit which resembles in shape all sorts of things, which has inside from one to three stones as big as eggs; this fruit is excellent to eat and it is immediately digested and it tastes like a peach and even better.⁷ More, there are very big and tall trees which give real myrobolans; when they are ripe they are excellent and quickly digested.⁸ One can also find a tree all covered with thorns like a porcupine, which gives a fruit like an egg full of wool of a brownish color. This wool can be picked only with canes and is very short like the nap of broadcloth.⁹

Furthermore, there are in those is-

lands trees which give a fruit like pomegranate but not so big, which if you set on fire burns like a torch and gives an excellent light. This tree, if you split it, that is to say, make a cut into it, gives an excellent turpentine with which we cured some of our wounded ones.¹⁰ But the Indians when wounded do not take any remedy and die fistulated.

There are also trees which when cut give milk of which they make something like wax and we have tried it out.¹¹ There are also trees which have the bark like cinnamon but it is not any way as good as that which comes from Alexandria. In those Islands there are also bushes like rose bushes which make a fruit as long as cinnamon full of small grains as biting as pepper; those Caribs and the Indians eat that fruit as we eat apples.¹²

There grows also in those islands a grassy bush as high as *esparto* which they comb and treat and spin and they make of it nets to fish and they can make it as thick or fine as they please and it is a very strong and beautiful thread.¹³ To those nets, in place of lead, they attach stones and, in place of corks, they attach light woods.

Those islands also produce many roots like turnips, very big and in many shapes, absolutely white of which they make bread in the following way: they shred those turnips on certain stones which look like cheese graters as we do with cheese; then they put on the fire a very large stone on top of which they place that grated root and they shape it in the form of a cake and use it as bread and it keeps good for 15 or 20 days, which bread several times was very handy for us. This root is their main food, they eat it raw and cooked.¹⁴

Those islands also produce innumerable purslane, but they are not as good as ours.¹⁵ There are also in those islands some not too big trees which give a fruit like . . .¹⁶ which also they eat, but for us it is not too good. Has the flavor of acorns.

In those islands there are again huge palm trees, innumerable and very big. The white of it is good to eat; they give a great number of dates but they never ripen and they are good only for pigs.¹⁷ There are also trees that make a fruit which is nine inches around and is as flat as a pancake. It has the skin of a chestnut, it is full inside like an egg; has the flavor of acorns and is excellent food for pigs.

There are also trees which give a fruit like horse-beans but smaller than that fruit, which has a very hard rind and is of the color of metal and the meat is white, good only for pigs.¹⁸ In those islands they sow a fruit which makes a plant like that of chick-peas and it is in the shape and flavor of figs.

For your own information we brought with us from Spain all sorts of seeds, all of which we sowed and tried those which would do well and those that could not. Those which do well are the following: spring melon and cucumber, squashes, radishes; the others, like onions, lettuce and other salad plants and scallions do very ill and grow very small, save parsley which grows very well. Wheat, chickpeas and beans in ten days at the most grow nine inches; then all at once they wilt and dry; although the soil is very black and good they have not yet found the way nor the time to sow; the reason is that nobody wants to live in those countries.¹⁹

Now, to go on with your request, I shall tell of the quadrupeds which live on



land, of which very few are found, and they are the following: dogs which do not bark, rabbits of three kinds, some as big as hares, some like ours and some much smaller than ours.²⁰ For this reason that very few animals can be found in those islands, the Lord Admiral brought from Spain the ones most needed; and we found that pigs, chickens, dogs and cats reproduce there in a superlative manner, especially the pigs because of the huge abundance of the aforesaid fruits. Cattle, horses, sheep and goats do as with us.

To continue, we shall now tell of the birds.

First, going from the island of Ferro to the island of Guadaloupe, for six days almost constantly we saw in the air many hawks²¹ flying across. We also saw an infinite number of swallows,²² and that is why we thought we were near either to an island or a continent.

There are in all the islands, as well as of the Caribs as of the Indians, where I

have been, innumerable parrots of three kinds, viz., green all over and not very big, green spotted with red and not too big, and as big as chickens, spotted with green, red and black. Of the last I have eaten several times, their flesh tastes like that of the starling. There are also wild pigeons, some of them white-crested, which are delicious to eat. There are also innumerable swallows and sparrows and some little birds of the forest.

I have now to speak about fish, in which those islands are most abundant. There are octopi, crayfish, seals, mussels,

clams, shrimps, tunny, codfish and dolphins and some other sea-pigs unknown to us.²³ Others are long, big and huge, weighing from 25 to 50 *libre*, excellent and somewhat like sturgeon. Still other fish are of unusual shapes, very good. There is a kind of fish very much like a sea-urchin.²⁴ Also an infinite number of dogfish²⁵ which are very good to eat. Also innumerable and very big turtles, weighing from 2 to 15 *cantara*, excellent to eat. Also there is there another kind of fish like a hornpout,²⁶ which does not taste good to us but the Indians eat it.

1. For a contemporary description of Antillean fauna and flora, Oviedo's *Historia General y Natural de las Indias* (1535) is incomparable.

2. The Royal Palm, whose bud is excellent eating, and whose nuts are still used in the West Indies to feed swine. There is still a saying in Cuba, "One palm will keep twenty pigs."

3. See Columbus's Journal for 4 November 1492, note 8.

4. These are probably the papaya, the guava (*Psidium guajava* or *Clusia* sp.), and some of the native "fruits" mentioned in Columbus's Journal for 21 December 1492, p. 128. H.U.B.

5. The calabash tree, *Crescentia cujete*, subject of Tom Moore's famous poem.

6. The pineapple. This, and a similar description in Dr. Chanca's letter, are the first mentions in literature of this excellent fruit.

7. The mammee apple(?)

8. Myrobolans are a small, sour fruit that was imported dried from the Orient, and used largely for industrial purposes, such as tanning. The tree that Cuneo saw was probably the *Hubo* or Hog-plum.

9. The Seiba or Silk-cotton tree, *Ceiba occidentalis*, whose fibre is not spinnable.

10. "I cannot figure any fruit corresponding to the description. Some trees or shrubs do give turpentine, but they are pine trees, and I cannot see why the author does not mention them by their name. The *avogado* tree gives an abundant resin; but I do not believe the fruit would 'burn like a torch.'" Brother Alain.

11. Undoubtedly *Castilloa* rubber trees (*Castilla elastica*), according to Professor Purseglove.

12. *Capsicum frutescens*, s.l., a very hot pepper.

13. Either cotton or sisal (*Agave sisalana*).

14. The manioc, from which the natives made cassava bread; cf. Journal for 26 December 1492, note 1. Several specimens of the graters have been unearthed

in Cuba and Hispaniola, and the earthenware griddles on which the cakes were cooked are fairly common. The art of preparing cassava to eat has descended to the West Indian Negroes.

15. *Portulaca oleracea*. See Columbus's Journal for 28 October 1492, note 5.

16. *como uno costo de melegha*. What he meant is uncertain.

17. Royal palms again; see note 2.

18. *sono di colore de arcella, e lo gariglio e bianco*. Either this or the acorn-tasting fruit mentioned in the preceding paragraph, was *Entada gigas* L. (*E. scandens* Benth.) a lofty woody climber related to the mimosa, bearing pods that look like flattened horse-chestnuts. These of such specific gravity that they float for great distances. We picked one up at Man of War Cay, Bahamas, where they are not native, and Dr. Bensaude gave me one that had floated ashore in the Azores.

19. Striking testimony to the spirit of the first European colony in America.

20. For the barkless dogs, see Columbus's Journal for 17 and 18 October 1492. There are no native rabbits in the Antilles; Cuneo must mean the *butia*, for which see Journal for 17 November 1492, note 4.

21. *falconi*. Obviously not hawks; probably skua gulls.

22. *rondole*, meaning petrels, often called sea-swallows today.

23. *polpi, aragoste, vituli marini, muzari, lovaci, gambari, toni, bacharali et delfini, et alcuni altri a nuy inusitati porcini*. It is anyone's guess what American species he means by these and other words for fishes, some of which are obsolete in Italian. See the discussion of fishes encountered by Columbus in his Journal for 7 December 1492, notes 14 and 15.

24. *ricio*.

25. *pesci cani*. A *cantaro* was a measure of weight, about 150 pounds.

26. *bagio*.

d. The Indians

As I have told about the nature and variety of the brute beasts, it now remains to tell something about the people. I must then say that people of both sexes are of an olive complexion like those of the Canaries. They have flat heads and the face tattooed; of short stature; as a rule they have very little beard and very well shaped legs and are thick of skin. The women have their breasts quite round and firm and well shaped. These, as a rule, when they have given birth, immediately carry their infants to the water to wash them and to wash themselves, nor does child-bearing give them folds on the belly, but it always stays well stretched, and so the breasts. They all go naked, but it is true that the women, when they have had knowledge of man, cover themselves in front either with the leaf of a tree, with a cotton clout, or panties¹ of the same cotton.

They eat all sort of wild and poisonous beasts such as reptiles of 15 to 20 pounds each; and when they meet the biggest ones they are devoured by them; and whenever they wish to eat those reptiles they roast them between two pieces of wood. When we were left without food, we ate some and there are some which are very good and their flesh very white.² They also eat dogs, which are not too good. Likewise they eat snakes, lizards and spiders which are as big as chickens.³ They eat some poisonous insects⁴ which breed in the swamps and weigh from a pound to a pound and a half. Likewise for bread they eat some of those big roots which are like our turnips, as I have said above, and their drink is water.

The Caribs and those Indians, al-

though they are innumerable and inhabit an extensive territory, are scattered in distant groups one from the other. Nevertheless all have one language and all live alike, in appearance like one nation of their own, save that the Caribs are more ferocious and more astute men than those Indians.⁵ The Caribs whenever they catch these Indians eat them as we would eat kids and they say that a boy's flesh tastes better than that of a woman. Of this human flesh they are very greedy, so that to eat of that flesh they stay out of their country for six, eight and even ten years before they repatriate; and they stay so long, whenever they go, that they depopulate the islands. And should they not do that, those Indians would multiply in such a way that they would cover the earth. That happens because as soon as they are of procreating age they procreate, respecting only their sisters; all the rest are common. We wished to hear from those Caribs how they catch the Indians, and they told us that during the night they hide themselves and when day comes they surround their houses and catch them.

Those Caribs and Indians shave their hair and their beard and so the women, and they shave with canes and the hair from the nose they uproot with their fingers. Their knives are stones which cut like real knives, and they make the handles, and with these they cut and work their boats called canoes, which are trees hollowed out with those knives, and in which they navigate from island to island; but they do not use sails, only oars which look like those paddles we use to beat hemp. When those Caribs hunt the said Indians their weapons are very big clubs

with a knob on top carved like the head of a man or of some other animal.⁶ They also carry very big bows like the English bows. The bowstrings are made of that above-mentioned grass, the arrows of canes, the shaft of very strong wood, made in the shape of a column, inside which they force that cane [point] and bind closely; and the feathers are taken from parrots' wings. With these arrows they do great destruction. Also, instead of iron they use fish bones.

We went to the temple of those Caribs, in which we found two wooden statues, arranged so that they look like a *Pietà*. We were told that whenever someone's father is sick, the son goes to the temple and tells the idol that his father is ill and that the idol says whether he should live or not; and he stays there until the idol answers yes or no. If he says no, the son goes home, cuts his father's head and then cooks it; I don't believe they eat it but truly when it is white they place it in the above-mentioned temple; and this they do only to the lords. That idol is called *Seyti*. They take a man whom they have proclaimed holy and who is dressed in a cloak of white cotton. This holy man never speaks, and in their fashion they treat him very tenderly; and they say that in the morning he places himself in the middle of the temple and the first woman who enters it has intercourse with him; and then all the other women go to kiss her as if she was a most worthy object because that holy man has condescended to do business with her.

The said Caribs and Indians, apart from that idol, do not worship anything else nor do they sacrifice in any way to that idol, nor do they know God or devil; they live like proper beasts. They eat

when they are hungry, use coition openly whenever they feel like it, and apart from brothers and sisters, all others are common. They are not jealous, and, in my opinion, they are cold-blooded people, not too lustful, which may come from the fact that they eat poorly. According to what we have seen in all the islands where we have been, both the Indians and the Caribs are largely sodomites, not knowing (I believe) whether they are acting right or wrong. We have judged that this accursed vice may have come to the Indians from those Caribs; because these, as I said before, are wilder men and when conquering and eating those Indians, for spite they may also have committed that extreme offence, which proceeding thence may have been transmitted from one to the other.

The Caribs and Indians, in our opinion, live a short time; we have not seen a man who in our judgment would have been past 50 years of age. They sleep mostly on the ground like beasts. Their lords, whom they call cacique,⁷ all sleep over cotton sheets. These lords they honor extremely and respect. When they are together to eat, no one would dare to eat if that cacique had not eaten first. The women do all the work. Men only mind fishing and eating. There are plenty of mosquitoes in those countries which are extremely annoying, and that is why the Indians anoint their bodies with those fruits which are red or black in color, and which are an antidote to their annoyance; but we could not find better remedy than stay in the water.

1. *brachi*.

2. The iguanas are not man-eaters, however big; they are eaten as a delicacy in the West Indies today.

3. The scorpion or tarantula.

4. *gritte*; possibly an error for *grille*, crickets; but what could he have meant by a pound-weight cricket? Even Cuban cockroaches are not that big.

5. Cuneo and Syllacio consistently distinguish between Caribs and Arawaks or Tainos, whom alone they call Indians; but Cuneo's facts about these two races are

rather mixed up. His opportunities to observe Caribs were few.

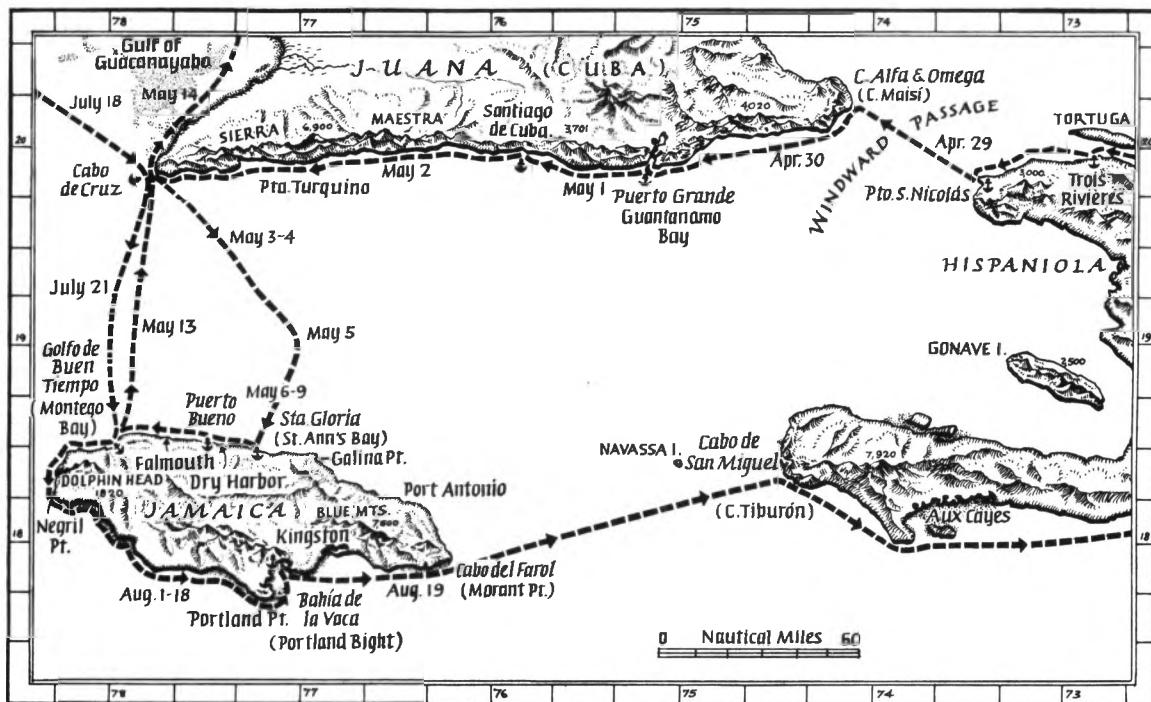
6. Cf. Columbus's remarks on the Ciguayo clubs, in his Journal for 13 January 1493, and note 6.

7. *caci*; it is strange that Cuneo does not mention hammocks, in which, says Las Casas, all Indians slept.

*e. Our Voyage along the South Coast of Cuba and
Discovery of Jamaica*

As it now seems to me that I have satisfied your requests, for my own satisfaction I will tell you of the voyage on which I went with the Lord Admiral to go and find other islands and mainland. You must learn how on 25 April we sailed from our settlement with three caravels, one of about 60 tons,¹ the other two were very small,² and with us we had, between good and bad, 98 men.³ Ranging the coast of Hispaniola for about 70 leagues we found on the northern side a most beauti-

ful island which may be about 50 leagues in circumference. The Lord Admiral called it Tortuga,⁴ and this because we found there a big turtle. We went sailing westward along the coast of that island and at about 30 leagues we found land which we thought to be mainland.⁵ Therefore the Lord Admiral called a council to discuss which way we should turn, and everybody agreed that it was better to keep to the southward because should there be anything good it would



Columbus's Course around Southeastern Cuba and Jamaica

rather be to the southward than to the northward.⁶ And in the name of God we sailed along the coast, sometimes sailing W, sometimes WSW and sometimes SSW, depending on the depth. When we had sailed about 60 leagues we found a most appropriate harbor,⁷ in which there were five very big canoes all full of every sort of big fish, as above.

Ashore in this harbor there were sleeping on the sand Indians who, when they heard the noise of our lombards fled to the mountains. Then we sent our *torcimanno* or interpreter to notify them that we were good friends; and they very soon were with us. When we went ashore we found from 15 to 20 *cantara* of cooked fish and from 50 to 60 reptiles also cooked which were as big as kids.⁸ We found also from 36 to 38 live reptiles tied with ropes like monkeys. We had speech with them and asked them what was the reason they cooked so much fish. They answered: to preserve them, otherwise it would not be possible, since they wanted to send it to their houses which were five, six or ten leagues distant. To them we gave some of our truck and we asked them if in those regions there was any gold. They answered no, but it was true that there was plenty of it in an island called *Lamahich*⁹ which lay to the SSE. We asked them if they ever went to that island; they answered no because whoever went there would never come back since he would be drowned either going or returning. We asked also if it was very far; they answered five suns, that is, five days. In this harbor there are six very big rivers full of fish which they cook roasted on a spear. They split a piece of wood and put the fish in it and place it over two stones and then light a fire underneath.¹⁰

We sailed along the coast to go to that island of Jamaica where they had told us the blessed gold was, and we crossed with very bad weather under bare poles to that island, which we thought to be distant from that land some 150 miles. We went to an excellent and well populated harbor of that island.¹¹ As soon as we had anchored, immediately there came around us about 60 canoes. Seeing this, we fired 10 to 12 blank shots with our lombards, hearing which they all fled ashore, and when we wished to land they threw stones at us; wherefore the boats had to come back to the ships. We then equipped the boats with shields, crossbows and lombards and went toward the shore; and again they did the same to us. Then we, with those crossbows, immediately killed 16 or 18 of them, and with the lombards five or six. This happened past vespers or thereabouts; later we returned to the caravels. The following day we returned to fight, but those men with their arms crossed, as it were, begged for mercy and they brought us of all they had, viz., bread of the sort described in large quantities, fish, roots and gourds full of water. They also brought us some of their arms. We then landed and presented them with some of our truck, among it hawk's bells which they liked more than anything else and which immediately they attached to their ears and to their noses. Ears and nose, that is the septum, they all, men and women, have pierced for that purpose. We asked them about the gold. They answered they did not know it, nor had they ever seen it.

We stayed in that harbor to repair the ships four good days.¹² During that time some 60,000 people came from the mountains, merely to look at us, all naked,

speaking the same tongue and saying that we were people of the other world. We made sail and went along the coast of that island some 70 leagues,¹³ all the time finding the same trees and all the other things as in the other islands.

We went back toward the mainland,¹⁴ along which we coasted. When we had sailed about 200 leagues we found an archipelago of white sea in which there were innumerable islands, and in which there is very little depth, that is from 12 to 25 *palmi* at the most far from land; near the land there are no more than 12, 13 and 15 *palmi*.¹⁵ The reason why the sea is white is that the bottom is of chalk.¹⁶ These islands are partly inhabited and partly not. In them the population, in our opinion, is somewhat darker than in the other islands. Most of their food is fish; they drink sea water,¹⁷ not having any spring water because those islands are very low and flat without mountains and they also are distant from the mainland; that is why the water in those places is brackish. The same they do in another archipelago of which I shall speak further.

When we had sailed in that white sea for 18 or 20 days, and not found anything worth while, we pointed toward the high sea to get out of those shallow waters and we found the usual deeps. Sailing for about six days, always in sight of those islands, we found the shore of the mainland, coasting along which we came upon a very beautiful and excellent harbor,¹⁸ where we found that recently a fire had been made. We thought it must have been by the fishermen. We refreshed ourselves, which was very much needed, since we had been 12 days with one cup of water and only some of that bread made with those turnips¹⁹ mentioned above. While it

lasted the bread cask had been nailed down to save the bread which was scarce, since, shortly before, because of the storms about 15 *cantara* had become wet, and we threw it into the sea. There were times that, when the bread was distributed, there were only 8 ounces a day for each man, and had it not been for the large quantity of fish, we might have been in a very tough spot.

After we had taken on the said provisions, we resumed our route and sailing along the coast WSW because the Lord Admiral thought this was the mainland; and turning the prow to the north along a gulf we judged this to be an island.²⁰ We returned to the WSW sailing for about 60 leagues we saw land. Seeing it we thought it must be mainland. Then sailing NW in order to find Cathay according to the opinion of the Lord Admiral we found that this was a gulf.²¹ Seeing it, we turned around and went back on our course, sailing always along the coast sometimes to starboard and sometimes to port and found another white archipelago like the first one. We kept coasting and the shore was always inhabited and we could not find anything new but only the usual things and likewise throughout the aforesaid archipelago, in which, as in the other, we found in the sea innumerable fish of those which we have mentioned above and very big conchs²² as large as a calf's head which have meat as big as a man's arm; you can see them on the bottom like rocks. There were also crayfish without end; we took boatloads of these conchs and cooked them in sea water, and they were excellent eating.

We found also in that white sea oysters big and plenty, one *palmo* in width and 4 *palmi* long, and from half a *palmo* to



CUBA AND JAMAICA
on Juan de la Cosa's Map

one and a half *palmi* thick. When we saw them we thought that truly we were all very rich and we collected maybe five or six boatloads which we opened but we couldn't find a single pearl; yet they were very good eating.

We stayed in those archipelagos for 37 days sailing along the coast. And we would have gone further on our course but for depth which was wanting. Therefore, taking everything into consideration, we thought wiser to turn about and go back in that first archipelago. And God knows we had to endure heavy labor to get out of it. We turned seaward and left the first archipelago to the northwestward and entered the open sea and sailed for about 15 days without ever finding

land of any sort. Seeing this we all began to grumble, saying that we were going to be drowned and that the food would fail us. When the Lord Admiral heard this he ordered the course toward land and we came upon the above mentioned island of Jamaica, which the Lord Admiral called Sant Iago, in which we stayed for about 17 days and where we took provisions.²³

Then we turned toward Hispaniola, which we judged to be distant from this about 40 leagues. This island of Jamaica we almost completely circumnavigated, and we could not find in it a single thing better than in the others. Sailing toward Hispaniola I was the first to sight land. Therefore the Lord Admiral in that very place ordered us ashore at a cape where there was an excellent harbor and he called it *el cavo de San Michele Saonese*, out of respect for me, and this he wrote down in his book.²⁴ Sailing always along the coast we found mountainous shores and good harbors and several times we landed, and everywhere we found innumerable people of the usual sort. And thus ranging the coast toward our settlement we found not too far from a cape a very beautiful island which also I was the first to sight, the which was some 25 leagues in circumference, and again out of love for me, the Lord Admiral called it *La Bella Saonese*. He gave it to me as a present; and I took possession of it according to the appropriate modes and forms, as the Lord Admiral was doing of the other islands in the name of His Majesty the King, that is by virtue of a document signed by a notary public. On the above mentioned island I uprooted grass and cut trees and planted the cross and also the gallows, and in the name of God

I baptized it with the name *La Bella Sao-nese*.²⁵ And well it is called beautiful for in it there are 37 villages with at least 30,000 souls; and all this too the Lord Admiral noted down in his book.

On the last of September in God's name we made in safety, Isabela, our settlement, where we found all our people, who were very fearful for us, thinking we had all perished. Moreover many of them were sick and short of food. And when the Lord Admiral saw this he sent through the island perhaps 500 men for provisions. But after a few days it pleased

God that four caravels should arrive from Spain full of provisions, and of this our party took much comfort.²⁶

In this voyaging of ours, sailing up and down, we almost circumnavigated the entire island of Hispaniola and the other one of Jamaica; when we estimate Hispaniola to be 600 leagues around and Jamaica 700 Roman miles, and this is for your own information. And after we had left the island Hispaniola our empirical navigation in search of new islands and terra firma was always westward, or W by S.

1. The veteran *Niña* or *Santa Clara*. This is the only direct statement we have on the tonnage of any of Columbus's original fleet. See Morison *A.O.S.* I 150-4; and, for the Cuba-Jamaica voyage, II 117-62 (one-vol. ed. 445-68).

2. These were named *San Juan* and *Cardera*.

3. XCVIII, probably a scribe's error for LVIII. The names of only 54 men are given in a document in Navarrete *Viages* II 143, which cannot be far from the truth, as it assigns 25 to *Niña*, more than she carried on the First Voyage.

4. Tortuga was discovered on the First Voyage and so named because it looked like a turtle.

5. Cape Maisi, the eastern extremity of Cuba, about 65 miles from the western point of Tortuga.

6. A reflection of the geographical doctrine attributed to Aristotle and noted by Columbus whenever he found it mentioned in Pierre d'Ailly's *Imago Mundi*, that the countries which were richest in gold lay below the equator.

7. Guantanamo Bay, where the United States Naval Station is located.

8. Iguanas, which were being collected, as Andrés Bernaldez explains, for a feast to be given by the local cacique to a visiting potentate.

9. Jamaica.

10. This was also a common method of cooking fish among the Algonkin Indians of North America.

11. St. Ann's Bay, which Columbus named *Santa Gloria*. But most of the following events related by Cuneo occurred in the next harbor.

12. Bernaldez and Ferdinand agree that this four days' stay took place in Dry Harbor, which Columbus named Rio Bueno.

13. The fleet only sailed about 45 miles along the north coast of Jamaica, from St. Ann's to Montego Bay, on this visit. All Cuneo's distances are wildly inaccurate.

14. Cuba.

15. The *palmo* was about 9 inches.

16. I have observed the same phenomenon, and Michele's explanation is correct. But he has confused the Gulf of Batabanó, which the fleet visited later, with the Jardín de la Reina, the archipelago that stretches west and north from Cape Cruz. It is the former that has the milky-white sea. See Morison *A.O.S.* II 135 (one-vol. ed. 460).

17. Hardly! But in the Gulf of Cochinos there are subterranean springs which boil up fresh water near the land; Cuneo probably observed Indians drinking from them.

18. The fleet probably passed out to sea by the Boca Grande, and then entered one of the harbors such as the Rio San Juan at the foot of the Sierra de Trinidad.

19. *rape*, meaning the cassava.

20. Probably the Gulf of Cochinos; before the end of it was sighted some of the company might have suggested that it was a passage.

21. Gulf of Batabanó. It was near its western entrance, around Cabo Francés, that the fleet made furthest west, and Columbus on 12 June had almost everyone sign a statement that Cuba was not an island. Next day the homeward passage began.

22. *corneti marini*—"sea trumpets."

23. The fleet sailed outside Laberinto de Doze Leguas to Cape Cruz in 10 days (8-18 July), not 15 as Cuneo says. It was after obtaining provisions from the Indians at Cape Cruz, on 18-19 July, that they sailed to Montego Bay, Jamaica, and then around the south coast of that island.

24. The Spaniards shortly renamed it *Tiburón* (shark), which it still is.

25. Still called Saona. John Cabot made similar presents of islands in 1497 to a Burgundian and to a Genoese barber in his ship's company.

26. This was a fleet of four supply ships, commanded by Antonio de Torres, which brought out the Admiral's brother Bartholomew. On one of them Cuneo sailed for home.

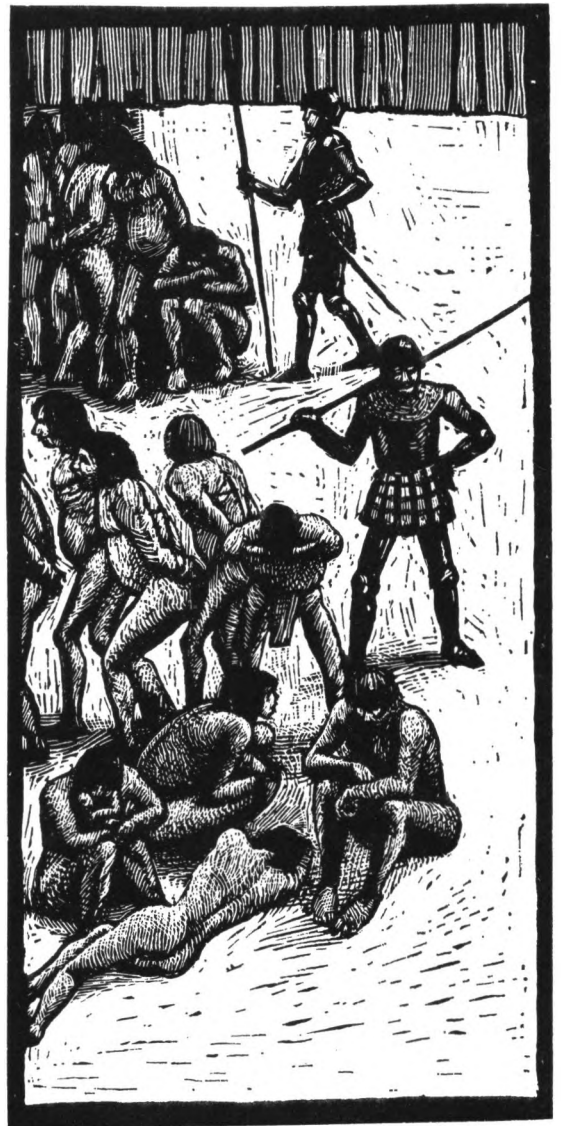
f. How we Captured Many Indians, and Returned to Spain with some of them

When our caravels in which I wished to go home had to leave for Spain, we gathered together in our settlement 1600 people male and female of those Indians, of whom, among the best males and females, we embarked on our caravels on 17 February 1495, 550 souls. Of the rest who were left the announcement went around that whoever wanted them could take as many as he pleased; and this was done. And when everybody had been supplied there were some 400 of them left to whom permission was granted to go wherever they wanted. Among them there were many women who had infants at the breast. They, in order the better to escape us, since they were afraid we would turn to catch them again, left their infants anywhere on the ground and started to flee like desperate people; and some fled so far that they were removed from our settlement of Isabela 7 or 8 days beyond mountains and across huge rivers; wherefore from now on scarcely any will be had. Among these people who were taken was one of their kings with two chiefs, who it was decided should be killed with arrows on the following day, so they were tied up; but in the night they knew so well how to gnaw one another's ropes with their teeth, that they were freed from their bonds and escaped.¹

Of this capture and embarkation of people aboard the caravels news reached King Guacanagarí near our settlement. He sent an ambassador to King Caonabó who was his superior, to inform him of that thing, and who ordered him to go in person and learn the reason the Lord Admiral had ordered it done. But that King

Guacanagarí, doubtful for his own person, did not go to him but sent two of his most wise and eloquent men to the Lord Admiral to learn about the matter. However, the Lord Admiral sent to tell him that he himself should come, since he could better explain everything to him.

Meanwhile I departed for Spain with those caravels.² Sailing with terrible and



contrary winds we had to turn back thrice so that we spent a month among those islands. Wherefore, seeing the few provisions that we had, we turned north and proceeded in that direction for about 600 Roman miles; and when it pleased God the winds turned favorable to our sails and we passed from the island of Boriquen³ to the island of Madeira in 23 days. But when we reached the waters around Spain about 200 of those Indians died, I believe because of the unaccustomed air, colder than theirs. We cast them into the sea. The first land we saw was Cape Spartel and very soon after we reached Cadiz, in which place we disembarked all the slaves, half of whom were sick. For your information they are not working people and they very much fear cold, nor have they long life.

As for Master Bartolomew, brother of the Lord Admiral, your friend, about whom you have eagerly asked information, I must say that he was made by the Lord Admiral *adelantado* of those countries. This adelantado had to depart with two caravels and one *fusta*, which had been built in the island of Hispaniola during the whole month of April, and had to go discovering toward the north.⁴ If in that direction no more will be found than we had found in the above related [voyage], I am much afraid that he will have to abandon everything.⁵ While I was in Seville, His Majesty the King issued an announcement that whoever wanted to go to those islands, if he gave him the fifth of everything he could get, he would be free to go. And this is an indication that he does not expect much.⁶ We are somewhat sure that when the above mentioned Master Bartolomew will have sailed northward 500 leagues, he will

find land; but he will also find greater storms and fouler winds than we ourselves have found. The Lord Admiral says that he will find Cathay; and on this subject he had a long discussion with an abbot of Lucena, a very learned and wealthy man, who had only come to these regions for his own pleasure to see something new. He is a good astronomer and cosmographer; and [the Admiral] arguing about the aforesaid coast along which we had sailed for 550 leagues, that because of its extent it must be terra firma, he (that is, the Abbot), said no, that it was only a very big island. In which judgment, considering the character of our navigation, most of us others concurred.⁷ And for this reason the Lord Admiral did not wish to let him come with us to Spain, lest if he should be asked his opinion by His Majesty the King he should through his answer have caused the King to abandon the enterprise. And he will keep him there until the return of the Lord Adelentado, who will relate what he will have found.

But there is one thing that I wish you to know, that, in my humble opinion, since Genoa was Genoa, no other man has been born so magnanimous and so keen in practical navigation as the above-mentioned Lord Admiral; for, when navigating, only by looking at a cloud or by night at a star, he knew what was going to happen and whether there would be foul weather; he himself both conned and steered at the helm; and when the storm had passed over, he hoisted sail while the others were sleeping.⁸ Also, before we made the big Island he spoke these words: "Gentlemen, I wish to bring us to a place whence departed one of the three Magi who came to adore Christ, the which place is called Saba." When once we made

that place and asked the name of the place it was answered us that it was called *Sobo*. Then the Lord Admiral said that it was the same word, but that they could not pronounce it correctly. In that place we took two men of whom one was a cacique, that is, king, who presented us with many things; and when he wished to return ashore, the said Lord Admiral would not let him, saying that he wished to make use of him to discover land, and that then he would give him leave. Then the said king,

1. Cuneo's account of this slave-catching episode is the most detailed that we have. Cf. Morison *A.O.S.* II 168-9, 178 (one-vol. ed. 485-8). The shipment of Indians to Spain put the issue of slavery squarely before the Sovereigns, but they endeavored to pass the buck to the Church.

2. The four caravels under Torres.

3. Puerto Rico. This was a fast eastward passage from land to land, but much time had been wasted beating among the islands. The Spaniards soon learned to follow the homeward course that Columbus took in 1493: to sail northward, close-hauled on the starboard tack, until they reached the zone of westerlies. Bermuda was stocked with swine as a place of call on the homeward passage from "The Indies" to Spain.

4. Nothing is found in any other source about this projected expedition of Bartholomew Columbus. It was probably being planned when Michele sailed, but given up on account of Indian troubles brought on by the slave-catching.

5. As no gold had been found outside Hispaniola, and there only in limited quantities, nor anything else in the way of precious metals or gems; and as it became evident that no real Indies had been reached, there arose a feeling in Spain that Columbus's great enterprise was a costly failure. Cuneo evidently picked up gossip to that effect in Cadiz. Columbus was in constant

pointing to Heaven with his finger, replied that God was in Heaven and passing judgment on every man; and he demanded justice before Him at that time.⁹ In our opinion he was a very shrewd man.

Nothing more occurs to me for this [letter], except that I am at the service of your lordship.

Finished at Savona on the 28th day of the said month [October, 1495].

Your MICHAEL DE CUNEO

fear lest the islands be evacuated, or the Christians there abandoned to their fate, as later happened to Raleigh's colony in Virginia.

6. The royal command alluded to here must have been a *real provisión* of 10 April 1495, opening the Indies to all Spanish subjects. In this decree the Sovereigns reserved to themselves two-thirds of all gold mined.

7. Thus, in spite of the famous testimonial, subscribed to by almost everyone (Cuneo a noted exception) in the *Niña*, *San Juan* and *Cardera*, on 12 June 1494, that Cuba was continental, most of the officers did not really believe it. The document is printed in Navarrete II 143-49. The Abbot of Lucena, a town in Andalusia, has not been identified.

8. This tribute to Columbus as a man and a navigator deserves to be better known, especially by armchair admirals who like to argue that "Columbus was no sailor."

9. This incident is not related by any surviving account on the Second Voyage, and is impossible to localize. It may however be another version of an incident told by Bernáldez, that off southern Jamaica a cacique came on board *Niña* with his family and suite, asking to be taken to Spain to meet the Sovereigns; and that Columbus, realizing the effect of the voyage and the cold, declined to do so and honorably sent them ashore. Morison *A.O.S.* II 154-6 (one-vol. ed. 474-6).

Syllacio's Letter to the Duke of Milan


13 December 1494

NICOLÒ SYLLACIO, A SICILIAN WHO WAS LECTURING ON PHILOSOPHY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF PAVIA, had a friend on the Second Voyage, Guillermo Coma of Aragon, who wrote letters to him about it. Syllacio, more enterprising than Cuneo's correspondent, translated these into Latin and printed them at Pavia late in 1494 or early in 1495, in a 20-page pamphlet, dedicated to the reigning Duke of Milan. It is the earliest imprint on the New World after Columbus's own Letter. The text is in black-letter, without title page, but the *incipit* is a rubricated *Ad sapientissimum Ludovicum Mariam Sforzam*, by which the tract is generally called. Only four copies of it are known to exist: in the Biblioteca Trivulziana, Milan; the Biblioteca Real, Madrid; the Royal Danish Library, Copenhagen; and the New York Public Library.

The probable object of this publication was diplomatic. Lodovico Maria Sforza, Duke of Milan, known to contemporaries as *Il Moro* because of his dark complexion, patronized learning; and, although not otherwise known to have been interested in voyages of discovery, was looking for a Spanish alliance to protect him from Charles VIII of France. Judging from the fulsome compliments to Ferdinand and Isabella in this Letter, he hoped that the publication of this tract would further his diplomatic designs.

Leo S. Olschki published at Florence in 1900 a facsimile of the Milanese copy, and from this Dr. Anastos established the Latin text and made this translation. There is a good text by De Lollis in *Raccolta* III ii 83-94, and another facsimile with poor text and translation of the whole document in Thacher II 223-62.

The sub-headings have been supplied by this editor.

 To the very learned Ludovico Maria Sforza of Angleria, seventh Duke of Milan, concerning the Islands recently Discovered in the Southern

and Indian Seas under the auspices of the Most Invincible Sovereigns of the Spains; the Preface of Nicolò Syllacio of Sicily, Doctor of Arts and Medicine and Professor of Philosophy at Pavia.

*a. Concerning the Islands Recently Discovered
in the South and Indian Seas¹*

This information I have just received from Guillermo Coma, a nobleman of Spain, in the form of letters written in his native tongue, when I was staying with Giovanni Antonio Birreta, a citizen of the highest repute in your city of Pavia. I immediately translated it into Latin, in the rather straightforward style of Lucian. . . .

Given at Pavia, 13 December 1494.

Columbus,² commander of the royal fleet, and whom the Spanish call Admiral, en route under the auspices of the Sovereigns to explore the lands of the Orient, boarded his vessels with a picked company of men in the noble city of Cadiz in Andalusia. This is a celebrated port situated outside the Straits of Gibraltar in the region where the Atlantic Ocean swirls into the Mediterranean Sea.

He departed 25 September A.D. 1493, with a fair wind which had just begun to blow from the right direction. A number of vessels, large and small, lay ready there, many of them being very light ships called Cantabrian barks, whose timbers were fastened by wooden pins so as not to diminish their speed by the use of iron.³ There were also a great many caravels, for these are smaller ships but sturdy enough to withstand mighty and violent navigation. In addition, there were ships fitted out for perlustrating the islands of the Indies.

Already the holy rites customary among seamen were celebrated, the parting embraces were exchanged, the ships were decked out with flags, while streamers wound about the rigging and the colors of the sovereigns adorned the stern of every ship. The musicians, play-

ing the flute and the lyre, dumbfounded the very nereids, sea-nymphs and sirens with their mellifluous strains. The shores rang with the blare of trumpets and the blast of horns, and the bottom of the sea re-echoed to the roar of cannon. Likewise, with similar ardor and enthusiasm, long Venetian ships bound for the English Channel in search of trade, happening by chance to have put into port, followed the example of the Spanish fleet in celebrating nautical rites and offering prayers according to custom in behalf of the vessels setting sail for the Indies.

At dawn on the following day, as Aurora shone forth auspiciously with her glowing garments, they headed for the Canaries under a gentle wind from the west, with five large vessels and 12 caravels which had made trial of the Indian Ocean the previous year.⁴ The Canary Islands, as is well known, were discovered some years ago by mariners bound for the Atlantic. Here, on 7 October, the fog lifted and Lanzarote and Forteventura, which the Latins fittingly call Good Fortune, were sighted in the midst of the ocean. It is a fertile land, easy to cultivate and devoid of drawbacks except that traders are repelled by the harmful activity of the crows which infest the island. So great is the loss which arises on this account that there is a strict law directed against the ravages of the crows, requiring every colonist without exception to deliver 100 crows each year to the magistrate by way of service to the state. Violators of this ordinance are compelled to pay a fine.

They then proceeded to the Grand

Canary which Gaius Pliny asserts owes its name to the great size of its dogs. They tarried there for a day after their arrival and made large purchases of stores deemed necessary for the fleet. A large supply of sugar, which is found in considerable quantities in the Canaries, was stowed away in the ships. For the sugar which once came from Arabia and India is collected like gum in reeds and is white and brittle; doctors usually call it Indian salt. Colonies had been sent out to the Canaries under the auspices of the Spanish crown. Whatever was necessary to add luster to the province was diligently provided. For it had a hospitable bishop, a venerable church, and a congregation of Minorites of notable piety, who owned a building of some elegance. Moreover, there are merchants who carry their wares to many points, skilled workmen of almost all types, and a considerable population.

I think these islands lie to the SW, as Juba has said in his work on the extent of southern waters; but though they are called "Fortunate," they harbor vast hordes of rabbits, which devour the grain and seedlings far and wide. Marcus Varro says they once undermined a town in Spain and would have destroyed the Balearic Islands had not aid come from the Roman people. They do so much damage to the green corn that the annual harvests scarcely yield sufficient grain, when these pests wax strong and cannot be driven off. And yet seven men, whose work is arranged regionally, in districts, do nothing each day but hunt [down these pests] with the purpose of killing a thousand a week.

On the following day, with the course set for Gomera, which is governed by Bobadilla the huntress,⁵ a woman of



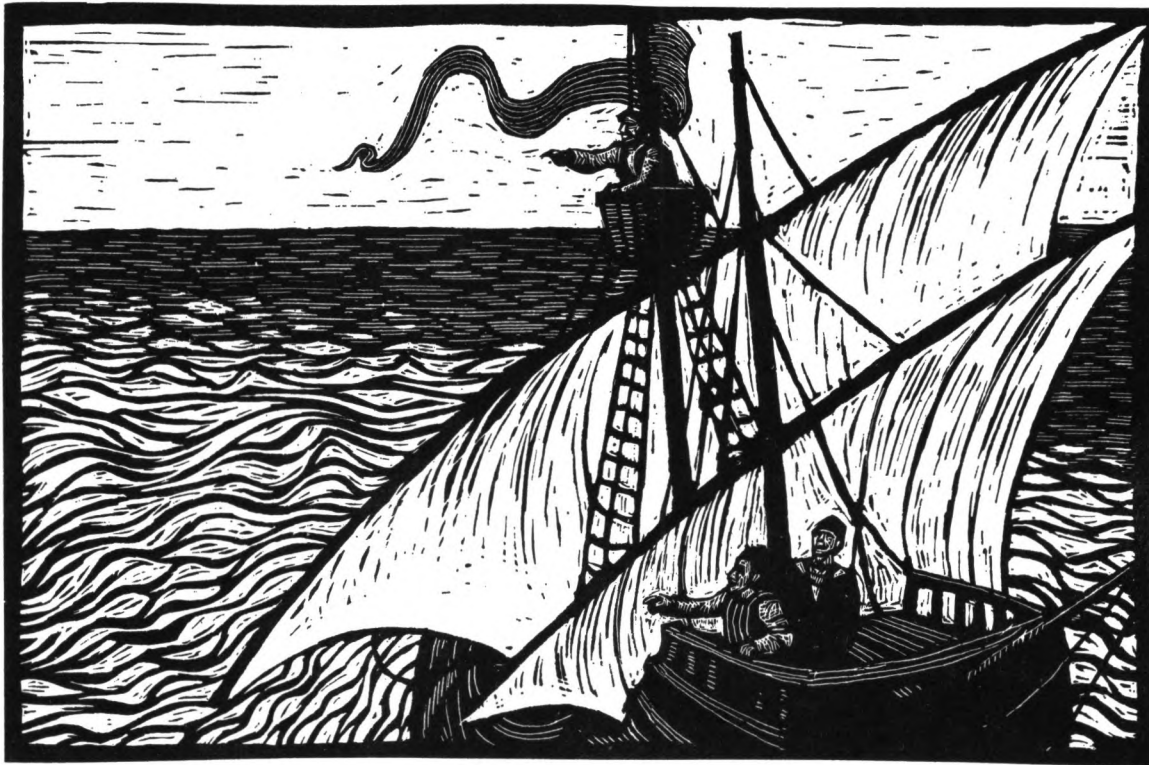
rare distinction, they passed by Tenerife, which glories in the rule of seven princes. This island is in the possession of unconquered Canarians, who have no laws or clothing, a courageous people who are as strong as they are brave. Therefore they have not yet felt the Spanish yoke. Tenerife is dominated by a lofty mountain which rises above the clouds and surmounts this murky atmosphere of ours. It is the highest in the world, people say, and one half the distance (100 miles) from Grand Canary to Gomera. Other Canarians live in the midst of the Libyan desert, in the wilds stretching from Mt. Atlas over barren wastes of black sand full of serpents and elephants. They are called Canarians because they eat the same kind of food that dogs do and divide the entrails of wild beasts. Others dwell in Ethiopia, in the city of Cynopolis, the city of

the dogs, in which Anubis is worshiped and sacred food is set out for the dogs.

They tarried almost six days in Gomera, to stock up on food and water. Soon the west wind⁶ rose, as they had hoped, and they made sail for the Indies on the course which had been planned. So it was that they reached the shores of Ferro on the 13th day of October, with a favorable breeze and a calm sea. In this place a phenomenon [was observed] that cannot fail to arouse interest whether witnessed or described. The island lacks water; it has no springs, rivers or streams. It would not then be inappropriate to conjecture with reasonable certainty that this is the *Ombrion* mentioned by Gaius Pliny in the sixth book of his *Natural History*. A large laurel tree, thick with leaves, which never lose their verdure, spreads its branches on top a high point on the island. It is bathed in the morning dew, and the water falls off the tree in drops and collects in a pool at the foot of the dew-covered tree. There is no water except what comes from the tree. But you will not be surprised by this or think it unworthy of belief since Bonavista, which is close to Ferro, lacks several foodstuffs; it produces only live-stock in abundance, and bears no rice, millet or wheat, so that the diet is necessarily restricted to meat. The same food is given to beasts of burden, chickens, and other fowl; they usually eat it raw, while it is still steeped in its own blood.

On the 25th of October, during their voyage through southern waters, a great storm arose; the waves rolled high, darkness prevailed everywhere, and black night covered the sea, except where the lightning flashed and the thunder re-echoed. There is nothing more perilous or more terrifying than a shipwreck under

these circumstances. The sea and the sky raged in fury, as the rain poured down and the clouds descended in torrents. The yards snapped, the sails were torn to shreds, and the ropes parted. The planks creaked and the gangways were awash, while some [ships] found themselves hanging on the crest of the wave and others saw the waters spread apart and lay bare the floor of the sea in that trough between the waves.⁷ Each man put his highest qualities of physical strength and mental courage to the test, and poured out all his energy. It was a difficult task to steer the ships, to handle the rigging, and avoid collisions of the ships, which could hardly be seen, separated as they were by monstrous waves, like whirlpools the size of a mountain. Finally, in response to their unceasing prayers, and their pious and tearful entreaties, a god appeared. For whether it was the offspring of Leda, the twin-brothers who came to the aid of ships, as the Greeks have it, or whether fiery humors were released which dissolved the thick cloud of the furious storm, as men of science maintain, or whether, as I think, to put it in more Christian terms, it was a certain St. Elmo, who hearkens to the cries of sailors and is gracious toward victims of shipwreck, two lighted candles flashed out in the dark night from the flagship's mastheads.⁸ Straightway, the storm began to abate, the sea to temper its wrath, and the waves their violence; the sea became smooth and flat like marble. On the following day, when the clouds were scattered and the sun came up, they burned with longing for the sight of land and desired ardently to reach the shore, being men rescued from the depths of the sea and the monsters of the deep and free to live again.



Lookouts with the best vision engaged in a contest of long-range observation, announced from the masthead of the flagship that land was sighted. Now they call out that they see the peaks of the mountains, now the green of the forests, and suddenly seven islands hitherto unknown loomed into sight.⁹ All hands had recovered, but mindful of the ship-wreck, they paid homage to the gods and celebrated the proper rites in due form. For hardly any knew what land this was or to what part of the ocean they had come. The Admiral himself had no doubts.¹⁰ The severity and number of their misfortunes were increased by the total exhaustion of their supply of water; it had all been consumed, as was well known, partly because of the length of the voyage and partly because of the generous rations dispensed by the Admiral.

Being informed about these parts and not unacquainted with these regions, he knew their relative positions and the geographical location of these seven islands. So he consoled his men and promised them a new land and peaceful shores within three days at the most, saying he would show them glassy fountains and shining streams. He therefore distributed almost all the water to the men, in large quantities and more capacious vessels [than usual] like Moses encouraging the thirsty Jewish people in the desert. His comrades were not deceived in their hopes, and the admiral was esteemed more highly on that account by all hands.

These islands are inhabited by *Cannibilli*, a wild, unconquered race which feeds on human flesh. I would be right to call them *anthropophagi*. They wage unceasing wars against gentle and timid In-

dians to supply flesh; this is their booty and is what they hunt. They ravage, despoil, and terrorize the Indians ruthlessly, devouring the unwarlike, but abstaining

1. Syllacio's own heading. I have omitted most of his Introduction, which is mostly a piling on of compliments to the Duke and the Sovereigns.

2. The earliest appearance in print of what became the standard Latin and English form of the discoverer's name. In the 1493 Latin translation of his Letter he is called *Christoforus Colom*.

3. Down to the 17th century ships were fastened with trunnels—wooden pins—but to save money, not weight.

4. We know the names of three of the larger ships (*Santa Maria la Galante*, *Colina*, and *La Gallega*), and of the three caravels which took Columbus and Cuneo to Cuba; but *Niña* was the only vessel of this fleet which had been to the "Indian Ocean" (the Caribbean) before.

from their own people and sparing the *Canaballi*, as I will point out more clearly below.

5. *venatricis*, a printer's error for *Beatricis*, i.e., Beatriz de Peraza de Bobadilla. See Cuneo's Letter.

6. *zyphyris*; but he probably means a light, not a west wind.

7. Some waves! The ocean was at least 500 fathoms deep where this storm took place.

8. The familiar and beautiful phenomenon still known as St. Elmo's fire; the "corposant" of Elizabethan narratives and *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*.

9. *Dominica*, *Deseada*, *Mariegalante*, *Guadeloupe*, and the three *Saintes*.

10. He never had. This outward passage, the course for which he must have inferred from what the Indians told him and the crude charts they made, took the fleet to the very spot in the Antilles recommended in sailing directions today for entering the Caribbean.

*b. How they Sailed among the Islands of the Caribs, with
a Lively Description of those Man-eating Savages*

The first of these islands, lying a little to the south, is notable for the beauty of its mountains and the charm of its verdure. A thick growth of trees extends to the water's edge, as in the Tempe of Thesaly. They named this one *Dominica*, to commemorate the day on which they say it was discovered. Leaving this behind, they went on to *Marivolante*,¹ for since it had been next to *Dominica* they gave it the name of the commander's ship. Then with appropriate ceremony it was marked by the Saviour's cross and claimed for the Sovereigns of Spain.

Having left here before dawn with renewed strength and vigor, they came upon a third island, 40 Roman miles from *Mariegalante* and far superior in beauty. It held the seamen close in its spell, with its wide and lovely plains and the indescribable beauty of its mountains. It makes a beautiful sight which must be described.

A broad river descends from a moun-

tain peak, and is the source of a host of streams and swirling torrents which flow into the sea. Those who beheld this wonderful sight from the ships wondered at first whether it was the glistening of close-packed snows or the broad highway of an old road, but the opinion of those who argued that it was a huge river finally prevailed.² This was soon confirmed by the scouts, who had gone out with a detachment of troops to survey the island. For they reported that there was evidently a vast spring issuing from some lofty eminence in 18 fairly large rivers, like the multiple arms of some giant, and that the whole island obtained its water in this way. The island is therefore covered with foliage and trees, and is decked with plants of many hues; it is neither nig-gardly nor unbountiful but is fertile and accessible throughout. The most notable fruit of the island is called *asses*.³ They are very similar to smooth turnips except that

they grow somewhat larger, like pumpkins. It should be noted also that they have a variety of tastes. When eaten raw, as in salads, they taste like parsnips; when roasted, like chestnuts. When cooked with pork, you would think you were eating squash. You will never eat anything more delicious or with more appetite than *asses* soaked in the milk of almonds. It is a dish which lends itself to all the culinary arts and the requirements of gourmets. It has such a pleasing variety of uses and is so gratifying to the palate that you would think it was the manna of the Jews, i.e., the Syrian dew. Moreover, since they are not injurious to the stomach or to the digestive system, they are prescribed for the sick and the diseased with good results, on the advice of the doctors on the royal payroll who came out with the expedition. Seeds have been sent to Spain, so that our world might not lack this beneficial plant and its great variety of gustatory sensations.

Moreover, there is a prolific kind of grain, as large as the lupine and round as chick-pea, from which a flour of a very fine texture is produced. It is ground like wheat and makes bread of admirable flavor.⁴ Many humble folk chew the grains. There are numerous shrubs and fragrant pears in abundance, the branches of the trees are weighted down by sylvan fruits, amid shady forests and sacred groves. The young crops never suffer damage nor are they ever threatened by tares, vetch, and unfruitful wild oats. Only the harmless purslane springs up in the plowed fields. There are numerous cotton trees covered with fine wool from which by fine craftsmanship they make garments resembling those woven out of silk.

Their houses were built of thick

reeds interlaced in the form of canopies; we were moved to admiration by their elegance. The beams were so ingeniously constructed and the timbers were fashioned so perfectly as to excite both wonder and envy. They do not work the wood with iron or with steel, which they lack, but with sharply-pointed stones fitted with a wooden handle. In this way they fell trees, cleave wood and split mighty trunks more than three ells in girth. They are a savage race and capable of the greatest endurance; we mentioned them shortly before as fighting the unwarlike Indians.

Peter Margarita, a Spaniard whose word cannot be impugned, went out to the Orient with the Admiral,⁵ attracted by the prospect of visiting the new lands. He says that with his own eyes he saw here a large number of Indians fixed on spits and roasted over hot coals to tickle the debauched palates of these people, while many bodies lay in heaps, minus heads and limbs. The cannibals do not deny this but openly affirm that they eat human flesh. The bow that they use in battle is exceptionally strong, and they shoot arrows the size of a walking stick, tipped with sharp bone barbs to keep the arrow from being easily withdrawn from a wound. These bones are said to be parts of shin bones taken from the human bodies they have devoured, so that nothing might go to waste. They are skilful bowmen and hit what they aim at with their arrows.

Let no one disbelieve this. We have read that the *Nisitae*, a people who inhabit the coasts of Ethiopia, and the *Nisicastes* live in these regions; these names signify men with three and four eyes, not because they really have them but because they discharge their arrows with extraordinary accuracy.

The Caribs are of more than average height; they go naked and have big bellies. They paddle in boats, both large and small, which they call *canoas*; the smaller ones, of which they have a great many, are hollowed out of a single log. These Virgil called *Lintres*; others call them *Monoxolas*.⁶ The larger ones are made of boards fastened together and are eighty feet long; they stand five palms above the water and the same number of palms in breadth.⁷ Instead of oars they use broad paddles like bakers' peels, but somewhat shorter. In this manner they sail to the neighboring islands, making their way by paddling to people who differ greatly in manners and character. Sometimes they go greater distances, even as far as a thousand miles, in search of plunder. They customarily castrate their infant captives and boy slaves and fatten them like capons. The thin and the emaciated are carefully nurtured, like wethers. Soon, when plump and fat, they are devoured all the more avidly. They hand over the female captives as slaves to their womenfolk, or make use of them to satisfy their lust. Children borne by the captured women are eaten like the captives. Thus the fabulous story about Saturn, who the poets say was sated by eating his own sons, is translated from fiction into fact. Being intelligent, sharp-witted and shrewd, they could easily be led to adopt our laws and our manner of life, when they realize that our manners are more mild and our way of life more civilized than theirs.⁸ It is hoped therefore that they will in a short time abandon their savage character as a result both of instruction from us and an occasional threat that, unless they abstain from human flesh, they will be reduced to bondage and carried in chains to Spain. Rabbits, snakes, and large

lizards⁹ occur here as well as great packs of barkless dogs, which never go mad. When they have no human flesh, the cannibals eat these dogs, split along the spine and roasted on one side. There are birds of many kinds and a great host of parrots.

The Caribs who, we have said, dwell on these seven islands, have very similar customs; they resemble each other in their fondness for plunder and in their cruelty to the Indians. Moreover, the population is large, and the islands abound in fragrant trees, unknown to the inhabitants and scarcely recognized by those of our men who had not traversed the interior of the country and who had not yet penetrated to the mountainous areas. When the men took possession of these islands for the Sovereigns they auspiciously named the most fertile one *Sancta Maria Gadalupa*, whose cult is widespread in Andalusia.

They stayed there a week, and during that time many fugitives and captive women fled from the cannibals to the ships. Being kindly received and generously plied with food they thought the gods had come to their aid and when the Spaniards urged them to return to the Caribs, they clung to the masts, holding fast with locked legs and begged to remain. Their eyes streaming with tears, they implored us not to force them back into the hands of the Caribs, like sheep to the slaughter. Very few Caribs were taken prisoner, for they are speedy and resourceful; and from their impregnable natural citadels they made sport of our attacks.

1. Mariegalante.

2. The Carbet river in Guadeloupe. When clouds hang low on the mountain La Soufrière, the water appears to fall from the clouds.

3. I.e., *ajes*, yams or sweet potatoes. See Journal for 4 November 1492, note 6.

4. *Zea mays*, maize, probably a round-seeded variety like popcorn. H.U.B.
 5. Mosén Pedro Margarit; see Morison *A.O.S.* II 112-14 (one-vol. ed. 441-3, 483-4), for an account of this hidalgo.
 6. Syllacio's classical allusions are indeed obscure; no such words occur in Virgil, or even in Latin.
 7. Not true; even the biggest Carib and Arawak canoes were dugouts. If the present practice of fastening a plank to the edge of a dugout to make a gunwale was

done by the Indians, it might have given Coma the impression that the boat was built of plank.

8. This, the original "American Way of Life," was replaced by that of the Spaniards, who ended by exterminating almost the entire native population of the Caribbee Islands. In the Windward Islands some Carib settlements held out until well into the 18th century, and there is still a small reservation of them in Dominica.

9. hutías and iguanas.

*c. How they had an Encounter with the Cannibals
at Santa Cruz*

Off to the east over 180 isles of the Indies were descried, spread over the Indian Sea, extending to the left towards the Arabian Gulf.¹ On the unquestioned authority of Gaius Pliny and others I should be inclined to the view that these are the Arabian Islands of peaceful manners, gentleness and docility. The islands explored on the voyage last year are exposed to Carib invasions. One or two Caribs can often rout a whole company of Indians. The Indians are so much in awe of the Caribs that they tremble before them even if they are securely tied.

Leaving Guadeloupe at daybreak on 10 November, our ships were borne towards Navidad, with a favoring breeze bellying the sail. The previous year, Spaniards had been left in this place by the Admiral to garrison the mighty fortress, trade with the people of the island, and to civilize them by precept and admonition. On the next morning numerous islands hove into sight, where it was decided not to call. But on 14 November, when one of the Carib islands loomed before them, it was so attractive in appearance and location and inviting in the eyes of the mariners that it was decided to make port there. Since *laurancolae* and also *rubeae* appeared in the distance,² a small scouting boat was let down to find out the lan-

guage, customs, and manners of the inhabitants of the island. An officer was put in command of the boat and a few armed men. As he was making for that part of the harbor near which six small huts were discernible, the men spied astern a canoe of savages heading straight from the sea toward the huts. As the Caribs came closer, they were struck with wonder by the strange fleet and astounded by the tall masts and the high bulwarks; they strained at their task more vigorously and bent to the oars more earnestly. As soon as they spotted the Spanish boat and its armed men they suspected an ambush and immediately turned the prow to the nearest part of the shore. Thereupon, the officer sailed straight towards them and cut off their course to the shore. The Caribs offered battle and fought bravely, wounding two of our men, one of whom died four days later. The other was seriously hurt, for the shield on which he relied for protection had been pierced. The Caribs remained unmoved by his offer of terms of surrender and rejected his friendly overtures, for the officer was anxious to take them alive. He therefore attacked them more violently, rammed their canoe, and sank it. Nonetheless, the savages (there were three of them, in addition to two women and an Indian captive, whom

they had kidnapped from a neighboring tribe and were taking home) sought to swim to safety, for they were swift swimmers and made their way through the water with agility. Nevertheless, they were captured and led before the Admiral. One of them was wounded seven times, and his entrails were hanging out. Since it was thought that he could not be cured, he was cast into the sea. But keeping above water and raising one foot, he held on to his intestines with his left hand and swam courageously to the shore. This affair terrified the Indians who were brought along as interpreters, for they were afraid that the Caribs might escape and undertake to [inflict] a more barbarous torture. Accordingly they insisted that the Caribs should be done away with. Therefore, the wounded Carib was

caught again on shore. His hands and feet were bound more tightly and he was once again thrown headlong. But this resolute savage swam more furiously, until he was struck several times by arrows and perished. Shortly thereafter, a great host of loathsome savages rushed to the shore. They were very dark, grim-visaged, and smeared with red and many other colors to increase the ferocity of their appearance. On one side of the head, their hair was shorn off, on the other it hung down black and long. At the same time a large number of captives fled to the ships as to altars, loud in their complaints of the ruthlessness and savagery of the Caribs.

1. An exaggeration, even if all the Virgin Islands were counted.

2. What he means by these two words is anyone's guess. The place was Salt River, St. Croix; cf. Cuneo's account of the same fight, above.

*d. How they Returned to La Navidad in the Island of Hispaniola,
and found that all the Admiral's men had Perished*

On the following day they left this island, which they called *Crux Sancta* and sailed by numerous others. They reached the Indies at the end of a six-day voyage, and added to the Spanish Kingdom a certain large island, named *Joannesbaptista*,¹ which was endowed with many harbors. At dawn next day, they repaired to the island in which, as we have said, the Admiral had left some Christians in the previous year when he returned to Spain to the Sovereigns. As they were skirting the shores of this island they came by chance upon a harbor lying at the foot of the famous mountain called Monte Cristi, which rises about 60 miles away from the Christians. So after eight days at sea, during which they explored everything on

their course, they reached the Christians' harbor with feelings of joy and ineffable solicitude. For they were anxious to find their comrades safe and sound and then to hear about the customs of the Indians and about the trade with them. But the outcome was very different from what they had hoped. They entered the harbor late at night. And when none of the Christians garrisoning the fortress on shore answered their signals, poignant grief and sorrow overcame them all, for they suspected (and they were right) that the comrades whom they had left there had been completely wiped out. At about the tenth hour of the evening, while they were torn with despair and fearful anxiety, an Indian canoe put off from the



shore and sped towards the ships, carrying some of the chiefs and *Ossichauar*, a man who on the previous voyage had shown notable friendship to the Admiral. They came up hastily to announce that the arrival of the Spaniards was pleasing to King Guacanagarí, and that the return of the Christians gave joy to the Indians. They made signs that the people were happy. They signified the pleasure they anticipated by nods and gestures as well as by a sweet melody, sung softly and tenderly, which assuages grief. For the Admiral on his departure had commended the Spaniards to the special protection of King Guacanagarí and had won his friendship and devotion. Therefore a swift small boat was launched at once to reassure the Indians and tow them to the Admiral's ship. But they hesitated and refused to come any closer, unwilling to trust themselves to the ships before seeing and recognizing the Admiral with the faithful witness of their own eyes. As soon as an opportunity for speaking had been afforded, the Admiral first made solicitous inquiries about

Guacanagarí and then eagerly asked for news of the Christians. They replied that Guacanagarí was sick from a wound and that all the Christians had been slain. Simultaneously they presented munificent gifts, two vessels of pure gold like those used on the tables of the wealthy to serve water. It was evident that nothing could be learned from them that night about the manner or the cause of death. They then hastened back to their king and after day-break some of Guacanagarí's personal staff came to pay their respects to the Admiral. They related how the men had met their death, and that they had been killed by Caonabò, a strong and powerful ruler of a warlike spirit and varied talents, who was universally feared. He had carried out the slaughter of the Christians with the aid of a certain king by the name of *Marian*.² In the ensuing conflict Guacanagarí was wounded seriously in the arm while earnestly supporting a column of our men.

Bad feeling arose and broke out into warfare because of the licentious conduct

of our men towards the Indian women, for each Spaniard had five women to minister to his pleasure—for the sake of progeny, I have no doubt. But the husbands and relatives of the women, unable to take this, banded together to avenge this insult and eliminate this outrage (no race of men being free from jealousy), and attacked the Christians in great force. Although they resisted staunchly to the last man, our men were unable to withstand the close-order attacks of the enemy very long, and they were at length ruthlessly cut down. The truth of these words was

demonstrated both by Guacanagarí and by the corpses of ten Spaniards which had been found by our men, miserably deformed and corrupted, smeared with dirt and foul blood, and hideously discolored. For they had lain out in the open neglected and unburied for almost three months. The comrades over whom they wept and mourned were disfigured beyond recognition. After prayers for their souls they were given a Christian burial.

1. Puerto Rico.

2. Mayrení, a cacique and brother of Caonabò, as appears from Dr. Chanca's Letter (Jane I 48-54).

*e. How the Christians were Received in State by
Guacanagarí, and Exchanged Gifts*

Three days later the Admiral made ready to visit the king who had his seat some ten miles from the shore. He took along 100 of the more distinguished Spaniards and started out for the region from which smoke was arising and in which the largest number of roofs were seen. They proceeded to the royal palace in martial array to the accompaniment of flutes and drums. They were given the customary royal welcome, and a delegation selected for this purpose was sent in to the king. They saluted Guacanagarí as he lay in his swinging couch skilfully worked to resemble silk, and exchanged pledges of friendship and promise of loyalty. The king rejoiced in the presence of the Spaniards. When friendly relations had been re-established and good will restored, the king reported the death of the Christians in unhappy tones. He gave details mournfully, told of the battle, described the king's furious behavior, remarked on the superior forces of the enemy, discussed the perilous situation, and exhibited his

wound. When he finished speaking, he arose from the royal couch, removed the gold ornament he wore on his forehead, and bestowed it upon the Admiral deferentially. He also took off his cotton coronet and placed it upon the Admiral's head. In addition [he gave] twelve belts wondrously polished, some of them embellished by small bits of gold inlay work ingeniously interlaced with cotton. He munificently added a large number of gourds filled with a great quantity of gold in the state that it is unearthed in mines. The gold weighed over twelve *besses*, the *bes* being reckoned in bankers' tables as the equivalent of eight ounces. Bedecked with so many gifts and marks of tribute from Guacanagarí, the Admiral, taking his turn as giver, splendidly attired the cacique with an under robe of Moorish manufacture profusely adorned with magnificent colors. Moreover, the Admiral presented Guacanagarí with a wide brass basin used for washing hands and several tin rings; lastly he reverently unfolds an

image presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mother which, he explains, should be piously adored. Following this example the Indians, weighted down with a great amount of gold, urged the Spaniards to accept their gifts. For all the men were not permitted to accept gifts indiscriminately from the Indians, but only those who gave something in return, even if it were nothing but trifles like pins, bits of glass, bronze bells like those fastened to the tinkling talons of hawks. The Ethiopians and the Arabs are strangely fascinated by these bells and exchanged them for their wares, as we know from the history books. So it was that in exchange for the most worthless little trinkets the Spaniards that day carried off more than 30 *besses* of gold, the Indians grinning gleefully over the cheap brass [that they got], and our men in turn at this trade of gold for brass, since the Indians paid huge sums of gold in exchange for a single brass boss. But no one should be surprised by this, since it is demand which creates prices. Pennyroyal, he tells us, the least valuable of all the plants in our fields, is more highly prized by the Indians than pepper.

While this barter was going on, the king's wife with twelve naked girls without a stitch of clothing followed Guacanagarí in admiring the objects, while their friends and retainers lay stretched out on the ground as they were accustomed to do. Lest the royal welcome be deemed deficient in any respect, Guacanagarí emerged from his palace and spoke in a friendly manner with the Admiral, after chairs had been set up there. The Admiral then summoned his Indian interpreter and bade him inform the king of the reasons for their expedition. The Spaniards had set out for foreign parts

for the purpose of civilizing the inhabitants thereof by precept and admonition, and for the purpose of taking possession of the islands for the mighty monarchs of Spain, but King Guacanagarí above all others was to be treated as a friend and an ally. As soon as the king heard this from the Indian, he sprang to his feet and pounded the ground with his foot, raised his eyes toward Heaven, and called out to his people. Thereupon, the rest of the Indians assembled there, some 600 in number, joined in the outcry. This startled and alarmed our men so much (we had 100 light-armed men on the spot) that some grasped their sword-hilts, thinking that the business was to be settled by force of arms.

Order and confidence having been restored, Guacanagarí came down to the coast to visit the ships. There he was moved to admiration by the high bulwarks, inspected the rigging of the ships, studied our metal tools, and especially directed his gaze to the horses, which are not to be found in these regions. For the Spaniards had brought along a great many of their best horses, fleet of foot and capable of bearing armor. They had engraved bits, bright-hued caparisons, and handsomely polished belly-bands. Their formidable appearance did not fail to terrify the Indians. For they suspected that the horses fed on human flesh. When he got to the Admiral's ship, he was piped aboard with great pomp, welcomed by the beating of drums, the clashing of cymbals, and the flashing bombardment of the ship's cannon. After taking a seat on the deck, he enthusiastically welcomed our invitation. The table was laid sumptuously with sugar-cakes, confections and similar good things. The rest of the Indians looked

with amazement upon all these things, but the king preserved a ceremonious decorum and a gravity worthy of his rank. The king returned to his people at midnight.

The Spaniards made plans to survey the island and explore the countryside. So, setting out from the harbor they called Navidad, which has capacity for several vessels, they proceeded for 15 miles in their eagerness to see new lands. In that place, penetrating deep into the coast, was a well-protected harbor. It is called *Regalis*,¹ and, on the authority of seamen who know the seas, it is inferior to none, being abundantly endowed with fruit, and chiefly notable for its favorable natural position. Going up beyond this point toward the gold mines and the richly [laden] streams, they came upon another delightfully secluded body of water. This they called the Harbor of the Graces.²

A week before Christmas they landed in a lovely country through which the gleaming river *Caudal* runs.³ The land there is quite flat but rises gently now and then in hilly slopes. The climate is extraordinarily equable so that anyone could guess the vines were soon to bear grapes, and the wheat soon to render a rich crop. For garden seeds came up five days after they were planted, the gardens grew green over night, flourishing with onions and melons, radishes and salad greens and bringing new hope to all hands, for the ground, though more productive in the gardens near the city, nevertheless refuses no seed that is deposited there and accepts nothing which it does not reproduce much more profusely and with considerable interest. So great was the harvest the Spaniards reaped in a short time from the seeds which they planted that they were of the

opinion that it would provide vegetables for 20 years. Soon, the young vines were set out, the plains smiled with bounteous produce, then the tender ears of corn appeared, and the sharp pointed crops ripened to maturity, providing all the grain and all the wine that could be used for two whole years.⁴ I should be justified in calling this island fertile whether it be an Arabian or an Indian isle. In addition to all kinds of vegetables it yields large quantities of cinnamon, which men of ancient times were not permitted to harvest except with a god's permission. Ginger grows there as well as Indian spice with branches three cubits long and white bark. It abounds in silk, is redolent with castor (which we call musk), and offers favorable conditions for the growing of frankincense (one species of which, the Indian, is reddish brown, as we learn from Dioscorides, and the other, the Arabian, is white). The place abounds in rhubarb,⁵ a useful remedy in all maladies. Pliny calls it *raconia*. Furthermore, the rich soil is not grudging or stingy in its yield of these precious products, but pours them forth so liberally and so lavishly that our men are piling up huge and endless masses of commodities for use in trading operations. Wax-bearing trees⁶ flourish there; and wool-bearing trees, very useful for bedding and cushions, also bloom.⁷ There is a wide production of flax-like thread, thin as a hair, which the natives use for thread and out of this they manufacture ropes stronger and more durable than those made of hemp. There is a great variety of odoriferous trees, most of which are unknown and have never before been seen. In short, it has been found that all these natural products grow wild in this island as abundantly as we said shortly be-

fore they do in the Guadeloupe of the Caribs. The Spaniards will cultivate it and tame it by sowing seeds, bringing colonists and farmers to work the soil, break it

1. This Puerto Real is shown on the Bologna Map of 1516 (see Introduction to Part III above, note 6), and is evidently the present Fort Liberté Bay.

2. *Gratiarum Portus*, a translation of Columbus's *Rio de Gracia*, Puerto Blanco. See his Journal for 10 January 1493, note 1.

3. Probably the Rio Yaque del Norte.

4. Much too optimistic. Within a year the Spaniards declared that they were starving.

with hoes, and stimulate production by plowing and weeding. Because of the favorable climate there is no need of fertilizer.

5. For an attempt to identify these false attributes, see notes to Columbus's Journal for 30 December 1492, note 1.

6. *Cerifere arbores*. Translated "bread-fruit trees" in Thacher II 257, but the breadfruit was not introduced to the West Indies until after the famous voyage of the *Bounty*. Cf. Cuneo's report of a wax-bearing tree above.

7. The silk-cotton tree.

*f. How the Admiral Founded the City of Isabela,
and how Alonso de Hojeda Explored the Cibao*

Close by the city¹ is an admirable harbor abounding in fish of the most delicate flavor, which doctors, after tests, have prescribed as food that helps restore the sick to good health. Huge fish as large as cattle are caught here; they are eaten avidly (after their legs have been removed) and have the taste of veal.² Once you have tasted these you will give up eating any other kind. Our people called this *Bella Insula* and named the city Isabela. With its natural advantages of position and climate it will outstrip all the others and in a few years will have a large population. With colonists thronging its streets, the erection of magnificent buildings and splendid walls, it will rival any city in Spain. The arrangement of the houses and the construction of the walls are such as to provide for both the beauty of the city and the security of its citizens. A broad, straight avenue, intersected transversely by many others, runs through the middle of the city, and high up on the shore stands a mighty fortress with lofty battlements. The Admiral's residence is called the royal palace; for, at

some future time, if God, the creator and giver of countless blessings, wills it, the sovereigns may set out from Cadiz to visit this well-favored land and behold the islands won for them so far from home. A noble church has been erected here, endowed with gifts and bursting with the furnishings sent from Spain by Queen Isabella for the worship of God. Isabela had been selected to be the capital of the prov-



ince.³ Among the multitude of nobles who crossed over from Spain to take up residence in the city were Hojeda and Gorbálán,⁴ men of talent and wisdom, won by wide experience. The Admiral sent them with a company of light-armed troops to the interior of the land of the Sabaeans⁵ to make their way to King Saba, a monarch of great wealth who, as he had learned from the Indians, resided at no great distance. It is believed that these are the Sabaeans from whom frankincense is obtained and who are mentioned by our histories and foreign chronicles. For according to the well-known text, Kings shall come from Saba bearing gold and incense,⁶ and the island produces these in great abundance. The Sabaeans have great wealth in the heavy growth of odoriferous woods, in gold mines, in the rivers which flow through their fields, and in the vast yield of honey and wax. On his way to this land, passing through the villages, he was warmly received in each place by the Indians, who guided him on his way to the king without guile and freely brought them whatever food they had. The village chiefs are called caciques. The Indians led him to the gold mines and the auriferous sands which were 110 miles away. In that region he came upon a large number of rivers and more than 24 streams,—a country of such bountifulness that it is marvellous to describe and unbelievable to hear about. Gold is collected by cutting away the river banks. First the water rushes in, frothing and somewhat muddy; then it becomes clear again and the heavy grains of gold which lie at the bottom are plainly revealed. They weigh a drachma more or less; Hojeda himself picked up several of them. There is a very lovely tale, which

I should have been ashamed to relate if I had not got it from a credible witness, that a rock close to the mountain, when struck with a club, poured out a great quantity of gold and that gold splinters flashed all over with indescribable brightness. Laden down with a great quantity of gold, gleaned from the wealth of the bubbling waters, and overawed by the vastness of his treasure, Hojeda made ready to return to the Admiral with his splendid news.

In the meantime his comrade Gorbálán, with a company of Spaniards, rapidly continued on his way toward the king, for whose sake they had set out. But he was delayed for a time. As he pressed on diligently in his journey, he was detained by a huge river, which in Spain is called the Tagus and had a stronger current than the Ebro. It seemed scarcely traversable. Hence, when he found he could not cross so impetuous a torrent, friendly crowds of Indians assembling on the further bank promised assistance. Solicitously they indicate fords for crossing, and at the same time launch two small boats. In one of these Gorbálán was carried over, not without very great risk, owing to the length of the passage and the strong current. But Spanish valor despised all such things, although moved to extend the empire of their country. The supplies were loaded in the other boats, which crossed with the aid of 200 Indians swimming. Having crossed the river they were treated with many honors by the Indians and kindly guided by affable caciques, offering provisions for the journey, indicating that nothing would more deeply gratify them than to see those places inhabited and cultivated by Spaniards.

And when they had told wonders

about the gold mines and the source of silver, it so happened that they were led by a certain cacique to a goldsmith's shop, where a certain smith was beating gold into very thin plates. A conspicuous stone with a highly polished surface was used. This man, skilled in making diadems and mitres, which the Indian women use to adorn their heads, was there engaged in beating a plate so big that to carry it would surpass the power of a very strong man, to excessive thinness. The goldsmith having promised to show them where the gold came from, they went with him to a place not far from the hut where he lived, and where they saw four rivers flowing over gold-bearing sand. Here the gold was more abundant than in the place found by Hojeda. Grains of gold of two drachmas' weight were strewn all about. Much silver also glistened in the river bed. This abundance is attributable as much to the felicity of the climate as to the low value of gold and even silver set by the Indians, because their use of them is very rare. The very abundance of it debases its value in their eyes, and it is only used for pleasure, in making diadems and mitres.

1. Isabela, founded by Columbus on 2 January 1494.
2. Presumably the Manatee.
3. After all this elaborate city planning it is sad to relate that Isabela was abandoned in 1496 in favor of Santo Domingo.
4. Alonso de Hojeda and Ginés de Gorbálán. See

[The next three paragraphs largely repeat what Cuneo said about the appearance, manners and food of the Indians; the Admiral's pleasure over the exploring expedition, and his decision to send Torres and most of the ships home with the good news. Syllacio's informant evidently returned with the Torres fleet, in January 1494. The final paragraph is as follows:]

Great praise is due to Admiral Columbus, who first in our era conducted a fleet into the Indian Ocean. Greater is the glory of the excellent Sovereigns, whose empire hath been extended thither. These, in promoting the Christian faith, won a memorable victory, an inestimable triumph, first in the Spains, their country, for they expelled from it the most superb king of Granada, who long since had occupied the most opulent part of Andalusia. Moreover, they have driven out the Jews from this land, and have annihilated all superstitions. Now these most Christian Sovereigns direct their efforts toward exploring the shores of the Orient for the enhancement of the religion of Christ.

Morison *A.O.S.* II 102-4 (one-vol. ed. 431-3) for this expedition.

5. The Cibao; Columbus fluctuated between the belief that this was the Biblical Sheba, and the Marco Polian Cipangu.
6. I Kings x.

Ferdinand Columbus's Account of the Return Passage, 1496

FERDINAND COLUMBUS, KNOWN IN SPAIN AS DON FERNANDO, OR HERNANDO, COLÓN, was born at Cordova on 15 August 1488, the son of Christopher Columbus and his mistress, Beatriz Enríquez de Harana.¹ At a tender age he was appointed a page to the Infante D. Juan; and after the death of that prince in 1497, a page to the Queen. He accompanied his father on the Fourth Voyage, continued his education at court, accompanied his half-brother D. Diego to Santo Domingo in 1509, but remained there only six months. The rest of his life he led the life of a man of letters. Ferdinand was a scholar in his own right; he travelled widely, even to England, to collect books, corresponded with humanists such as Erasmus, and accumulated in his house at Seville a magnificent library of over 15,000 books and manuscripts, which he left to the cathedral chapter of Seville.² There it was shamefully neglected and plundered, so that by the end of the last century, when it was given a proper place and status, only about 2,000 items were left; and these did not include the ms. of the present work, which has disappeared.³

Ferdinand probably wrote this biography of his father between 1537 and his death on 12 July 1539. The ms. descended to his nephew D. Luís, the Third Admiral, a spendthrift and a wastrel who sold it to a Genoese physician, Baliano di Fernari. Dr. Fernari had it translated into Italian by Alfonso Ulloa, and published by Sanese in Venice in 1571 as *Historie del S. D. Fernando Colombo; nelle quali s'ha particolare, et vera relatione della vita, et de' fatti dell' Ammiraglio D. Christoforo Colombo, suo padre*. It has frequently been reprinted, for instance, by Dulau & Co. (London, 1867); but much the best edition is the critical one edited with an introduction by Rinaldo Caddeo (2 vols. Milan 1930).

English translations begin with two anonymous ones, both partial and imperfect, *The History of the Life and Actions of Admiral Christopher Columbus . . . by his own*

son *D. Ferdinand Columbus*, which appeared in John Churchill *Collection of Voyages*, II (London 1704 and 1744) and in John Pinkerton *General Collection of Voyages* XII (London 1810). At long last a faithful and complete translation has appeared, by Benjamin Keen, *The Life of the Admiral Christopher Columbus by his Son Ferdinand* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers Univ. Press 1959). There is also an excellent Spanish translation by Dr. Ramón Iglesia *Vida del Almirante D. Cristóbal Colón* (Mexico and Buenos Aires, Fondo de Cultura Económica 1947).

Like many principal sources of Columbus's life—Las Casas, the Journal of the First Voyage, Cuneo, Bernáldez—the *Historie* has been attacked as a fake by writers trying to prove some point with which it does not agree.⁴ These attacks have all gone down the drain, as it were; and Ferdinand is now accepted as one of the most reliable and authentic sources for the life and voyages of his father. For this passage in 1496 he used Columbus's own journal, now lost, and quotes from it.

The following translation is by Dr. Milton Anastos, from the text of the Caddeo edition. The chapter headings are just as they are printed in the 1571 edition.

1. This relationship is thoroughly explored in José de la Torre y del Cerdo *Beatriz Enríquez de Harana y Cristóbal Colón* (Madrid 1933). The date of Ferdinand's birth is discussed in Henry Vignaud *Histoire Critique* I 638-42.

2. A facsimile of Ferdinand's ms. catalogue was published in folio by Archer M. Huntington as *Catalogue of the Library of Ferdinand Columbus* (New York 1905).

3. Henry Harrisse *Fernand Colomb, sa vie, ses oeuvres* (Paris 1872) is still the best biography of Ferdinand; the only one in English is in Thacher III 421-53. Other important studies are Alejandro Cionarescu *Primera Biografía de C. Colón, Fernando Colón y Bartolomé de las Casas* (Tenerife 1960), Emiliano Jos *El Cen-*

tenario de Fernando Colón y la Enfermedad de Martín Alonso (reprint from *Revista de Indias* Madrid 1942); and José Hernández Díaz & Antonio Muro Orejón *El Testamento de D. Hernando Colón y Otras Documentos para su Biografía* (Seville 1941).

4. Henry Harrisse is an exception; his attack on the *Historie* reverberates even today, although he acknowledged the book to be genuine before his death. Emiliano Jos has an interesting account of these attacks in *Las Impugnaciones a la "Historia del Almirante"* (Madrid 1942, reprint from *Revista de Indias* No. 8). The latest and most furious attack on Ferdinand's honesty is in Edmundo O'Gorman *La Idea del Descubrimiento de América* (Mexico, D.F. 1951).

CHAPTER 62.¹ *How the Admiral Returned to Spain to Report to the Catholic Sovereigns on the Condition in which he had Left the Island*



To return, then, to the main subject of our history, I say that the Admiral securely re-established peace on the island at this time and built the city of Isabela, though it is a small one, and three forts on the island. He therefore decided to return to Spain to report to the Catholic Sovereigns on many matters which, it seemed to him, were to their interest, especially on account of the many malicious and cynical critics, who were

moved by envy and who maligned the project of the Indies to the Sovereigns without ceasing, to the great prejudice and detriment of the Admiral and his brothers.

Accordingly, on the 10th day of March, 1496, he embarked with 225 Christians and 30 Indians. About break of day he set sail from the harbor of Isabela and with the wind east, beat up the coast with two caravels, known as the

Santa Cruz and the *Niña*,² the same with which he had set out to explore the island of Cuba. Heading east as much as the wind allowed, on Tuesday, 22 March, he lost sight of the eastern point of Hispaniola. But the winds were mostly from the east, and he saw that he was in need of provisions and that people were tired and weary. He therefore made up his mind to turn south and make for the Caribbee Islands. These he reached in three days and anchored off Mariegalante on Saturday, 9 April.³ It was his custom not to weigh anchor on a Sunday, if he was in port. But he set sail the following day, because the people were muttering that if they were to go looking for food, they need not observe holy days strictly. So he stood over to the island of Guadeloupe and anchored there. The boats, well armed, were sent ashore, but before they touched land a muster of women came out of the bush, carrying bows, arrows and [wearing] plumes, apparently determined to defend the country. For this reason, and also because the sea was a bit rough, the men in the boats, without landing, had two of the Indians whom they were taking from Hispaniola swim ashore. From these the women sought full information about the Christians. And as soon as they learned that they only wanted provisions in exchange for such truck as they were carrying, the women said that if they went north by sea to the other side they would find their husbands, who would supply them with whatever they wanted. As the vessels were sailing close under the land, a host of people was seen on the shore, bearing bows and arrows, who let fly at our men with loud cries, and in vain, for they did not manage to hit them. But, when they saw that the armed

boats were intending to unload on shore, the Indians withdrew to an [ambush], and as soon as our men reached shore they tried by force to keep them from disembarking. But they were terrified by the cannon, which were fired at them from the vessels, and were forced to abandon their houses and belongings and flee to the bush. The Christians entered here, plundering and destroying what they found. And, having been instructed in the method of making their [cassava] bread, they put their hands to the dough and began to make bread, thus providing themselves with what they needed. Among other things which they found in the houses were big parrots, honey, beeswax, iron which they used to make hatchets, and looms, like ours on which rugs are made, on which they wove their tent cloth. Their huts were built square, not round like those on the other islands. In one a man's arm was found all dressed to roast on a spit.

While the bread was being made, the Admiral sent 40 men through the country to acquire some information about its character and nature, the which on the following day returned with ten women and three boys, the rest of the people having fled. Among the women they captured was a cacique's wife, caught only with great difficulty by a very daring and nimble Canary Islander whom the Admiral had taken along, and even so she would have escaped, had it not been for the fact that, seeing him [the Canarian] alone, the lady thought she could capture him. So they came to blows, but the Canarian could not stand up to her and she got him down and would have strangled him if the Christians had not come to his aid. The legs of these women were bandaged

with cotton cloth from the calf to the knee, to make them look thick, the which adornment they call *coiro* and regard it [as a mark of] great gentility. They bind their legs so tight that if for any reason the bandage comes undone, the leg at that point appears to be very thin. The men and women of Jamaica make use of the same sort of thing; they even bind up their arms up to the armpit, which is the thinnest part, like the spiral sleeves which we used to wear. Moreover, these women are in other respects so fat, that there was one whose breadth measured a fathom or more! But for the most part they are well shaped. As soon as the little boys are able to stand on their feet and know how to walk, they put bows in their hands, so they may learn to shoot. All the women wear their hair long, letting it fall loose to the shoulders. They clothe no part of the body at all. This lady cacique whom they captured said that this island was in-

habited by women only and that the people who had prevented the boats from landing were all women with the exception of four men who had happened to come from another island. For they used to come at a certain season of the year to sport with the women and lie with them. The same was true of the women of another island, called *Matrimino*,⁴ of which she told all those yarns that one reads about the Amazons. The Admiral believed her because of what he had seen of these women, and the courage and strength they displayed. Moreover they are said to seem to be more intelligent than the people of the other islands, for in the other places time is reckoned by the sun for the day and by the moon for night; whilst these ladies reckoned the time by other stars, saying, When the Wain⁵ rises, such a star reaches the zenith, that is the time to do this or that.

1. So numbered in the original ed., and Caddeo; No. 63 in the Churchill and Keen translations.

2. The same *Niña* of the First Voyage, which Columbus had purchased, and *Santa Cruz*, nicknamed *India*, which had been built at Isabela out of the wrecks of caravels *San Juan* and *Cardera*, destroyed in the hurricane of June 1495. She was the same burthen as *Niña*. How Columbus managed to cram 255 people into these two little caravels passes the imagination.

3. Columbus at first intended to return by the same route as in 1493, but changed his mind and decided to try back-tracking over the route of the outward pas-

sage of the Second Voyage, which, on account of the prevailing easterly trades, turned out to be a mistake.

4. Martinique; here is the Amazon myth again. See Columbus's Journal for 15 January 1493, note 3.

5. *il carro*, called Charles's Wain in England, Big Dipper in the United States. Using movements of heavenly bodies as an indication of what to do is as old as history (see especially Hesiod's *Works and Days*) and plenty of people believe in it today; I have been told by a countryman of Mt. Desert Island "cut your alder bushes in the September full moon and they will never sprout again" (but they did).

CHAPTER 63. *How the Admiral Set Out for Castile from the Island of Guadeloupe*

Since they had made enough bread to last 20 days, as much again as they already had on board, the Admiral decided to proceed on his course for Seville. But, reflecting that this island was like a staircase and

a gateway to the other islands, he was anxious, before leaving, to win the favor of those women by some gifts in satisfaction for the damage which had been done to them. He, therefore, sent them ashore, ex-

cept for the lady cacique, who was content to go to Castile with a daughter of hers, along with some other Indians who were being taken from Hispaniola. One of the latter was the king Caonabò, who was said to be the mightiest and most famous on the island; this was because he was a native of the Carib islands and not of Hispaniola. Nevertheless, the lady cacique was not unwilling to go to Castile with the Admiral.

On Wednesday, 20 April, after having taken on water, bread and wood, the Admiral set sail and departed from the island of Guadeloupe. With head winds and much calm he followed his course along latitude 22° , more or less, according as the wind veered, because they had not yet had the experience that we now have had to put themselves well to the northward, in order to find the SW winds.¹ Nevertheless, on 20 May after they had gone a short distance, they all began to suffer greatly on account of the lack of provisions, for there were a large number of people. The shortage was so acute that all hands had a daily ration of only six ounces of bread, a beaker and a half of water, and nothing else. And although there were eight or ten pilots in the two caravels, none of them knew where they were. But the Admiral was certain that they were making their way somewhat to the westward of the Azores. Of this he gives an account in his Journal in the following words:

"This morning the Flemish compass needles varied a point to the NW as usual; and the Genoese ones, which formerly agreed with them, only varied a trifle to the NW, and later oscillated between westerly and easterly variation, which was a sign that our position was somewhat

more than 100 leagues to the west of the Azores; for, when we were just at 100 leagues, and then there were only a few scattered branches of gulfweed in the sea, the Flemish needles varied to the NW a point, and the Genoese cut the tone N; and when we are farther to the ENE, they will do something else."²

And this was suddenly verified the following Sunday, 22 May, by which indication, and the certainty of his dead-reckoning, he then found that he was 100 leagues from the Azores. He marvelled at this, and attributed the cause to the difference of the lodestone with which the needles are magnetized, because up to that meridian they all varied a point to the NW; and then some held steady, while the others (which are the Genoese) pointed right to the Star. And the same was verified the next day, 24 May.

He continued on his course, and on Wednesday, 8 June, when all the pilots were going like lost men or blind, they sighted Odmira, which lies between Lisbon and Cape St. Vincent, having run several days during which the other pilots kept expecting to sight land, but not the Admiral, who the night before shortened sail for fear of danger from the land. He said he acted thus because at that moment they were somewhere off Cape St. Vincent. They all laughed at him, some declaring they were in the English channel near Flanders, others off the coast of England. Closest to the mark were those who said they were near Galicia and on this account should not take in sail, for it was better to perish on land than to die miserably at sea of the starvation which now afflicted them. Their hunger was so great that many, like the Caribs, proposed to eat the Indians they had on board. Others, to

conserve what little food that remained, argued that the Indians should be cast into the sea; and they would have done this had the Admiral not exerted himself strenuously to prevent it, arguing that they were very like Christians and therefore ought not to be treated less decently

1. Columbus, who never found any latitude correctly until his Fourth Voyage, probably thought that Gualdeloupe lay on 22° N; its correct latitude is 16° N.

2. For full explanations of these puzzling data see Morison *A.O.S.* II 185-8, and *Anuario del Sociedad de Historia de Argentina* for 1941 (B.A. 1942) 20-23. In brief, Flemish compasses were compensated for 8° to 11° of easterly variation, but Genoese ones were not; and Columbus believed that 100 leagues (318 nautical miles) west of the Azores there came a change of climate, as of compass variation; hence the allusion to scarcity of gulfweed. Here grew up an amusing be-

than other men. And so, the following day, it pleased God to reward him by giving him the landfall which to all he had promised.

On this account he was regarded by mariners as most expert and admirable in matters of navigation.³

lief that lice and other insects disappeared from ships at that parallel of longitude, and reappeared on the homeward passage.

3. This was indeed a neat piece of dead-reckoning navigation. Las Casas informs us that it was a bit too neat for the Admiral's good, leading to gossip that he did it by witchcraft. This voyage ended at Cadiz 11 June 1496; onlookers noted that the passengers had "faces the color of lemon or saffron." Cf. Dr. Saul Jarcho "Jaundice during the Second Voyage of Columbus" *Revista de la Asociación de Salud Pública de Puerto Rico* II (Dec. 1956) 24-7.

PART IV

The Third Voyage of Discovery

1498-1500





Introduction

COLUMBUS'S THIRD VOYAGE, IN 1498, IS EVER MEMORABLE for his discovery of the South American continent.

Almost two years elapsed after his return from the Second Voyage on 11 June 1496, before he was able to set forth again. After receiving the Sovereigns' invitation to visit them at Burgos he traveled across Spain with a cavalcade of Indians and sumpter mules laden with gold objects, and proposed a new voyage. The Sovereigns were then engaged in war with France, and contracting a series of alliances, which were very costly and required a large number of ships. No fewer than 130 splendidly equipped vessels were sent to escort the Infanta D. Juana, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, to Flanders for her marriage to Archduke Philip of Hapsburg, son of the Emperor, and to bring back to Spain Philip's sister Margarita to marry the Infante D. Juan, heir to the throne of Castile. Columbus only



asked for eight small ones, and after a wait of nearly two years got six; three for carrying colonists and supplies to Hispaniola, and three for a voyage of discovery.

The objects of the Third Voyage were (1) to discover a continent whose existence (following a hint from the sapient D. João II) Columbus suspected; (2) to ascertain by longitude whether it was on the Portuguese or the Spanish side of the Line of Demarcation laid down in the Treaty of Tordesillas; and (3) to find gold or spiceries in vastly greater quantities than hitherto, lest the "Enterprise of the Indies" be abandoned altogether.

The three vessels which Columbus chose for the voyage of discovery were (1) a ship of about 100 tons, referred to in these narratives only as *la nao* ("the ship"), but from other sources we learn that her name was *Santa Maria de Guia*; (2) *La Vaqueños*, a 70-ton caravel; (3) *El Correo*, a smaller and handier caravel. The names of the three ships destined for Hispaniola we do not know. All six sailed in company from Sanlúcar de Barrameda at the mouth of the Guadalquivir on 30 May 1498. Off Ferro in the Canaries the two squadrons parted company. Columbus's three vessels called at the Cape Verde Islands, thence took departure for "the Indies" on 4 July. The voyage proper ended at Santo Domingo on 31 August 1498. Columbus's next return passage to Spain, in 1500, was made as a prisoner, in consequence of his enemies taking advantage of rebellions and other disturbances in Hispaniola.

This Third Voyage is well related in the three principal sources, whose translations follow. These are: (1) Las Casas's Abstract of Columbus's original Journal; (2) Columbus's Letter to the Sovereigns of 18 October 1498; and (3) his Letter to Doña Juana de Torre of October 1500. The voyage is also covered by Ferdinand's *Historie* (see above, Part III no. 5), and to a lesser extent by Peter Martyr. Minor details are found in the *Pleitos de Colón* (see Part II no. 3, above).

No Royal Instructions for the voyage of discovery have survived; but there are several orders for the peopling, provisioning and government of Hispaniola, which are printed in Navarrete II (1825) 180-216 and summarized in Morison *A.O.S.* II 225-7. In my one-volume edition chaps. xxxvii-xli are a narrative of this voyage.


Las Casas's Abstract of the Journal of the Third Voyage, 30 May - 31 August 1498

LAS CASAS MADE AN ABSTRACT OF THE JOURNAL OF THE THIRD VOYAGE, much less detailed than that of the First, but the most detailed account of the Third that we have. The ms., in the library of the Real Academia de Historia, Madrid, was first printed in full by De Lollis in the *Raccolta* I ii 1-25, and so far as I can ascertain, the only English translation hitherto published is an unreliable one in Thacher III 374-408. Las Casas boiled down the Abstract for his *Historia de las Indias* chaps. 127-146 (1951 ed. I 482-500, II 7-73). A hybrid translation of these chapters, combined with the Thacher translation of the Abstract, is in Olson & Bourne *Northmen, Columbus and Cabot* 319-66.

The following translation, which is the joint product of Dr. Milton Anastos and myself, follows the text in the *Raccolta*, omitting the frequent insertion of three stops in the ms. by Las Casas, which indicate the omission of data which he thought unimportant, or introduce his own remarks. Some of these remarks we have indicated in the notes.

Sub-headings have been inserted to break the narrative.

a. How the Admiral Voyaged from Sanlúcar to the Cape Verde Islands, 30 May to 4 July 1498

 Our first Admiral departed then, "in the name of the most Holy Trinity" (as he says, and as he always used to say) from the harbor of Sanlúcar de Barrameda, Wednesday 30 May, 1498, with the intention of discovering

new land, not already discovered, with his six vessels . . .¹ And since war had then broken out with France, he got news of a French fleet which was lying in wait for the Admiral off Cape St. Vincent to take him. For this reason, he decided to

give them the slip, as they say, and made a detour, shaping his course straight for the island of Madeira.

He arrived at the island of Porto Santo, on Thursday, 7 June, and called to take on wood, water and fresh provisions. He heard Mass, and he found the whole island in an uproar and all the *haciendas*, furniture and cattle under guard for fear that they were French; and that very night he departed for the island of Madeira, and arrived there the following Sunday, 10 June.

In the town [Funchal] he was very well received and feted, for he was well known there, having been a resident there for some time. He stayed there six days and loaded up with water, wood and other stores necessary for his voyage.

On Saturday, 16 June, he left the island of Madeira with his six vessels, and arrived at the island of Gomera, the following Wednesday. There he found a French privateer with a French ship and two vessels which it had taken from the Spanish; when the French captain saw the Admiral's six vessels he slipped his anchors, excepting [those of] one vessel, and took to flight with the others. The Admiral sent a vessel in pursuit; and when six Spaniards on board the prize saw a vessel coming to their aid, they fell upon the six Frenchmen of the prize crew, clapped them below, and thus brought them in.

Here, in the island of Gomera, the Admiral determined to send three vessels directly to the island of Hispaniola, so that, if he were delayed, they might carry news of him and gladden and console the Christians with their supplies, and above all, give joy to his brothers, the Adelantado and Don Diego, who were very eager to get news of him. As captain of one ves-

sel he appointed Pedro de Harana,² a native of Cordova, a man of high repute and discretion, brother to the mother of Don Hernando Colón, second son of the Admiral, and eldest son of that Harana, who had remained in the fort with the 38 men whom the Admiral found dead on his return. The captain of the other ship bore the name of Alonso Sánchez de Carvajal, *regidor* of the city of Baeza, a gentleman . . . of honor.³ The third, for the other ship, was *Juan Antonio Columbo*, Genoese, a relative of the Admiral, a man of great competence, prudence and influence.⁴ He gave his orders, as was fitting, and commanded that for one week one of them and for the next week another, should be commodore of all three vessels in all that concerned navigation and lighting up at night, which means a lantern with a light that they set on the poop of the vessel so that the other vessels may know and follow the course set by the commodore. He bade them sail to the W by S for 850 leagues, saying that they would then be close to the island of Dominica and that from Dominica they should sail WNW and they would reach the island of San Juan and that they should proceed to the south of it because that was the direct route for Isabela Nueva. Once the island of San Juan was behind them, they were to leave the island of Mona to the north and from there they should make for the cape point of Hispaniola, which he called *Sant Raphael*; thence to Saona, which he says makes a good port between it and Hispaniola. Seven leagues beyond there is another island; from there to Isabela Nueva it is 25 leagues.⁵ He commanded them that wherever they put in and disembarked to refresh themselves they should procure

what they needed by barter and that for a trifle which they might give to the Indians, even though these were the *Canibales* who were said to eat human flesh, they would obtain what they wanted, and the Indians would give them all that they had; but if they proceeded by force, the Indians would hide their stuff and be hostile.

He says further in his orders that he was heading for the Cape Verde Islands with the intention of sailing to the south of them so as to cross over the equator and follow a westerly course until Hispaniola lay to the NW, in order to see if there were islands or lands there. "May our Lord guide me," says he, "and grant me that which may be for His service and that of the King and Queen, our Lords, and to the honor of Christendom; for I believe that no man has yet taken this course and that this sea is altogether unknown." And here end the Admiral's commands.

Then, after taking on water, wood and other provisions, especially cheeses, which there⁶ are abundant and good, the Admiral set sail with his six vessels on Thursday, 21 June, in the direction of Ferro, which is more than 15 leagues distant from Gomera and is the last of the seven Canaries toward the west. Having passed it, the Admiral shaped his course with one ship and two caravels for the Cape Verde Islands and dismissed the other three vessels in the name of the Holy Trinity; and he says that he implored the Holy Trinity to watch over him and all of them. At sunset, they separated, and the three vessels made for this island.⁷ Here the Admiral mentions to the Sovereigns the Treaty they had concluded with the King of Portugal, according to which the Portuguese were not to advance west

of the Azores and the Cape Verde Islands; and he mentions how they had summoned him to appear at the conferences with those who were to agree upon the division, and that he was unable to go because of the grave illness he contracted in the discovery of the mainland of the Indies, that is to say, of Cuba;⁸ he adds furthermore that the death of King João took place immediately thereafter, before he could carry out the work.

Following his course, the Admiral arrived at the Cape Verde Islands which, according to him, have a misleading name, for he never saw a single green thing, everything was dry and sterile. The first he saw was the island of Sal, on Wednesday 27 June; it is a small island. Thence he went to another, which is called Boavista, and it is very barren. There he anchored in a bay, and near it there is a small island.⁹ To this island all the lepers of Portugal repair to be cured; it does not have more than six or seven houses.

The Admiral gave orders for the barges to go ashore to stock up with salt and meat, for there are a great many goats on the island. A majordomo, owner of this island, whose name was Rodrigo Alonso, secretary of the demesne of the King of Portugal, came to the vessels to offer the Admiral whatever he had which the Admiral needed. The Admiral thanked him and caused him to be given fresh provisions from Castile, with which the majordomo was much pleased. He told the Admiral how the lepers came thither to be cured of their leprosy because of the great abundance on that island of turtles, which are frequently as large as shields. By eating their flesh and washing repeatedly in their blood they are cured of leprosy.¹⁰ Thrice a year, in

June, July and August, countless turtles come to that place from the direction of the mainland, which is Ethiopia, to lay their eggs in the sand. They scratch in the sand with their claws and legs and lay five hundred eggs and more, as large as a hen's, but they have no hard shell but only a delicate membrane which covers the yolk, like the membrane of hens' eggs after the hard shell has been removed. They cover the eggs with sand just as a person might do. There the sun hatches them; and as soon as they are formed and alive the young turtles go running off to find the sea, as if they had come alive from it and on their own feet. They caught turtles there in this manner: at night, with lights, which are torches of dry wood, they go seeking out the tracks of the turtle, which are not hard to follow, and they find it sleeping from exhaustion; they come upon it suddenly and upset it, turning the belly side up and the shell of the back down. Then they leave it, because it cannot turn around again, and they go forth at once in search of another. The healthy people who lived on that island of Boavista (and a laborious life it was as they had no water except brackish water from some wells) were six or seven natives, whose function it was to slaughter goats and salt the skins for shipment to Portugal in the caravels which come there for them. In one year they would slaughter so many goats and ship so many skins as to be worth 2000 ducats to the secretary who owned the island. So great a multitude of goats have been bred from only eight head. The people who lived there would go four or five months without eating bread or drinking wine or anything else but that goat's meat or fish or turtles. All this the people there told the Admiral.

He set out from there on Saturday 30 June, at night, for the island of *Sant Iago*, and reached it on Sunday at the hour of vespers, for it is 28 leagues distant; this is the most important of the Cape Verde Islands. Here he wanted to take on some cattle to transport to Hispaniola, as the sovereigns had commanded him. Accordingly, he stayed there eight days. He was unable to carry out his orders; and as the island is very unhealthy (for men there suffer from the heat) and his people began to fall sick, he decided to depart. The Admiral goes on to say that he desires to steer westward, for he is determined with the aid of the Holy Trinity, to find islands and lands wherewith God might be served and Their Highnesses and Christendom gratified. He wishes also to see what King D. João of Portugal meant when he said that there was mainland to the west. On this account, he says, the King had a controversy with the Sovereigns of Castile. And, finally, he says it was agreed that the King of Portugal should have 270 leagues west of the Azores and the Cape Verde Islands from north to south, from pole to pole. He says, furthermore, that the King of Portugal was certain that within his limits there were to be found notable things and lands. Certain of the chief people of that island of Sant Iago came to see him and told him that to the SW of the island of Fogo, which is one of the same Cape Verde Islands and 12 leagues from this, an island was visible, and that King D. João was much inclined to send to make discoveries to the southwest, and that canoes had been found which set out from the coast of Guinea and sailed to the west with merchandise. Here the Admiral goes on to say as if he were addressing the Sover-

eigns: "May That which is Three and One guide me by Its charity and mercy that I may serve It and that I may give Your Highnesses and all Christendom

1. In an omitted passage Columbus remarks that he had been greatly fatigued by the difficulties of fitting out, and even more by court intrigue.
2. The Adelantado ("Advancer," a title confirmed by the Sovereigns) was brother Bartholomew. Harana was a brother to Columbus's mistress Beatriz; it was proper for a great man who took a mistress to find jobs for her relatives.
3. Sánchez had volunteered on the Second Voyage and managed to draw municipal pay too; he liked the sea so much that he shipped again.
4. Juan Columbo is our old friend Giannetto, whose brothers chipped in to send him to Uncle Christopher to get a job—see their agreement in Part I, above.
5. These were sound orders; W by S (with a Flemish compass) had taken Columbus to Dominica on the Second Voyage. But Harana, Sánchez and Columbo managed to get lost beyond Dominica, and after many

some great delight, as was done by the finding of the Indies, which resounded throughout the world."

- vicissitudes arrived at Santo Domingo after the Admiral, as Ferdinand relates in chap. 77 of the *Historie*.
6. At Gomera. No romance, no mention of Doña Beatriz; only cheese!
7. By "this island" Las Casas means Hispaniola, because he made the Abstract there.
8. Las Casas here observes that Columbus always insisted that Cuba was mainland. His description of the Treaty of Tordesillas (16 August 1494) is inaccurate; but in a later paragraph he describes it correctly. See map of Line of Demarcation in *A.O.S.* II 369.
9. Porto Sal Rei, or English Road.
10. The Cape Verdes were then a spa for leprosy; the "cure" consisted of eating turtle meat and bathing in turtles' blood. Louis XI of France sent ships thither to procure turtles to cure his leprosy in 1485, but died before they returned.

*b. How the Admiral Navigated from the
Cape Verde Islands through Excessive Heats and Flat Calms,
and how he Discovered the Island of Trinidad*

On Wednesday, 4 July, he gave orders to weigh anchor and set sail from that island of Sant Iago, in which he says that, after he arrived there, he never saw the sun or the stars, but only the heavens covered with a mist so thick that it seemed that it could be cut with a knife, and the intense heat tortured them. He ordered that the course be set for the SW, which is the route leading from these islands to the S and the equator, in the name, he says, of the Holy and Indivisible Trinity; for then he would be on the latitude of the lands of Sierra Leone and the Cape of Sant Ana in Guinea, which is below the equinoctial line.¹ There, he says, below that parallel of the world, more gold and things of value can be found. He says that he would then sail to the west, if it please Our Lord, and thence would pass to this

Hispaniola; and on this course he would test the above-mentioned theory of King D. João. He was also thinking of testing what the Indians of this Hispaniola used to say, that to Hispaniola from the south and the southeast had come black people, the tips of whose spears were made of a metal called *guanín*, of which he had sent a portion to the Sovereigns for an assay, from which it was found that of 32 parts 18 were gold, 6 were silver, and 8 copper.²

Continuing along his course to the SW, he began to find weed of the kind met on the direct route to the Indies. The Admiral says here that after he had gone 480 miles, which are 120 leagues, he took the altitude at nightfall and found that the North Star had an elevation of five degrees.³ And he says that there, on Friday, 13 July, the wind failed, and he

came into such great, vehement, burning heat that he feared lest the ships catch fire and the people perish. So suddenly and unexpectedly did the wind cease and the excessive and unusual heat come on that there was no one who would dare to go below to look after the casks of wine and water, which burst, snapping the hoops of the pipes; the wheat burned like fire; the bacon and salt meat roasted and putrefied.⁴ This heat and fire lasted eight days. The first day was clear with a sun that scorched them; God granted him a respite, for on the six following days it rained and was cloudy. But, despite all this, they got no relief to give them hope that they would not burn to death; and if the seven days had been bright and sunny like the first, the Admiral says here that it would have been impossible for even one of them to escape with his life. So they were divinely succored with the rain-storms and those days of cloudy weather. Hereupon he determined, if God would vouchsafe a wind so that they might be delivered from that peril, to run for some days to the west, and, after he found himself in a temperate zone, to turn south, which was the course he wished to follow. "May Our Lord," says he, "guide me and grant me grace that I may serve Him and bring good tidings to Your Highnesses." He says that when he was in these fiery furnaces, he recalled that when he came to these Indies on previous voyages he always found a change in temperature from north to south when he got about 100 leagues out from the Azores;⁵ and for this reason he wanted to sail west so as to put himself on that course.

On Saturday, which they reckoned as 14 July, the Guards being on "left arm,"⁶ he says that he found the North

Star at an elevation of seven degrees. He saw black and white terns,⁷ birds which do not go out very far from land and for this reason he took them as a sign of land. On this voyage he suffered an attack of gout and insomnia; but he did not on this account cease from watching and working with great care and diligence.

On Sunday and Monday they saw the same birds and also flying-fish, and there appeared some fish called sunfish,⁸ which are slightly smaller than large calves and have blunt, flat heads. At this point the Admiral says in passing that the islands of the Azores, which were anciently called *Casetérides*, are situated at the extremity of the fifth climate.⁹

On Thursday, 19 July, the heat was so intense and scorching that they were afraid that men and ships would burn up together. But Our Lord, forasmuch as He is wont to abate the woes He inflicts by a contrary interposition to relieve them, succored him with His mercy at the end of those seven or eight days, granting excellent weather for escaping from that fire. With this fair wind the Admiral sailed westward 17 days, always with the intention of turning southward and taking such position (as he said above) that Hispaniola would lie north of him. In that region he thought he ought to find land, before or after reaching the said position. He was intending thus to repair his vessels, which were all opened up by the former heat, and to [conserve] his provisions which were now being damaged and destroyed, and which he valued highly both because he had to transport them to this island and because of the great trouble he had to get them out of Castile.¹⁰

On Sunday, 22 July, in the evening, while he was sailing with fair weather,

they saw innumerable birds cross over from the WSW toward the NE; he says they were a sure sign of land. They saw the same on the next Monday and on the following days. One of the birds, an albatross, lighted on the Admiral's ship, and many others appeared on another day, and other birds called frigate-birds.

On the seventeenth day of the fair weather, which was bearing them along, the Admiral hoped to sight land on account of the said indications from the birds they had seen. And as he did not sight it on Monday, on the next day, Tuesday, 31 July, since there was already a shortage of water, he decided to change his course toward the west, and to turn to the starboard hand, and seek to pick up the island of Dominica or one of the Carib islands. So he gave orders to steer to the N by E, and he continued on this course until midday. "But, as His Divine Majesty," says he, "ever showeth mercy towards me, fortuitously and by chance a seaman from Huelva, my servant named Alonso Pérez, climbed to the crow's nest and saw land to the west, distant 15 leagues, and it appeared to be in the shape of three rocks or mountains." These are

his words.¹¹ He named this land "The Island of Trinidad" because he had determined that the first land he should discover would be so called. "It pleased Our Lord," he says, "by His Divine Majesty that on the first sight there were three rocks, I mean mountains, all in a group, all at once and in a single view. May His Almighty power guide me by His charity," says he, "in such wise that He be well served and Your Highnesses have much pleasure, for it is certain that the finding of this land in this region was a great miracle, as great as the discovery on the First Voyage." These are his words. He gave infinite thanks to God, as is his custom, and all glorified the divine bounty and with great joy and merriment they repeated, singing, the *Salve Regina* with other devout canticles, and prayers which glorify God and Our Lady, according to the custom of mariners, at least of our mariners of Spain, who are wont to say them in time of rejoicing as in time of tribulation.

[I have omitted what Las Casas called "a digression and epilogue on the services he rendered the Sovereigns" and a recapitulation of the events of this voyage, and his belief that Trinidad lay on the same parallel as Guinea, and must therefore be full of gold.]

1. Columbus had been much impressed (see his Postille on the subject in Part I above) by a report that Master Joseph, sent to Guinea by D. João II, had found the latitude of the Los Islands to be 5°N—it was really 9° 30'. He therefore assumed throughout this voyage that he was four or five degrees further south than he really was. See Morison "Columbus and Polaris" *American Neptune* I 6-25, 123-37, and *A.O.S.* II 243.

2. This assay of *guanín* (now called *tumbaga*) was not far wrong; see *A.O.S.* II 265, 273 (one-vol. ed. 544). The natives of the Spanish Main had found that by melting a portion of silver or copper with gold the melting point was lowered from about 1073° C. to about 875° C.

3. Here Las Casas interpolates, in the *Historia*, his opinion that Columbus must have sailed more than 200 leagues to get within 5° of the equator. This and the other latitude sights taken on this passage are discussed

by me in *American Neptune* I 124-34, and *A.O.S.* II 239-44, where a conjectural chart of this leg of his voyage will be found (one-vol. ed. 523).

4. Columbus was in the doldrums. Although his report of the heat there is exaggerated, it probably started a secondary fermentation in the new wine and swelled the casks, as the coopers neglected their duty to start the bungs to make an air vent.

5. See Ferdinand's account of the return passage of 1496, chap. 63, note 2.

6. See Journal for 30 September 1492, note 2, and diagram of Polaris and the Guards.

7. *grajaos*; see Journal First Voyage, 8 October, note 2.

8. *botos*. In Conrad Gesner *de Aquatilibus* (1558) *bota* is given as the common Italian name for the ocean sunfish, *Mola mola* L. T.H.W.

9. Meaning, a Ptolemaic climate-belt. But the Azores were unknown to the Ancients.

10. Columbus observed in his 1494 memorandum to the Sovereigns that Spaniards could or would not subsist on native food, but must have wheat, meat and wine from Spain. He had unusual trouble fitting out for this voyage, and on one occasion socked a rascally ship chandler in the jaw; an incident which commends the Admiral to all sailors.

11. See Morison *A.O.S.* II 246-7, 252. If the landfall was fortuitous, Columbus's calculation that he lay due south of the Windward Islands was almost uncannily correct. Our *Capitana* on 12 December 1939 made the same landfall—the three hills behind Galeota Point, Trinidad, at lat. 9° 51' N. long. 60° 28' W. They are still called the Trinity Hills.

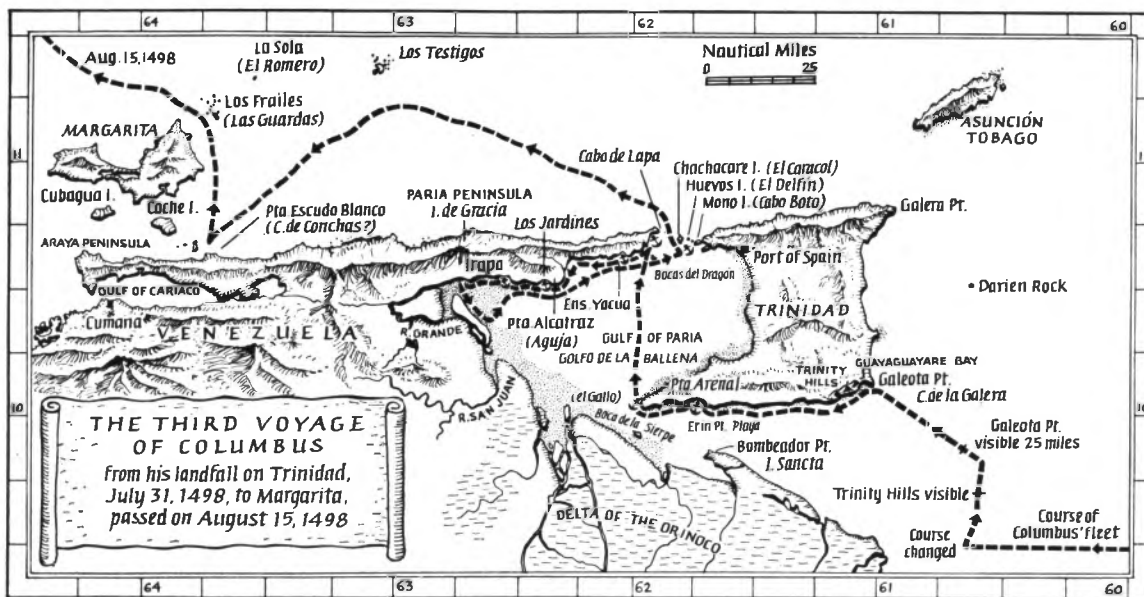
*c. How the Admiral Ranged the Southern Shore of the
Island of Trinidad, and Sailed through the Strait
that he Named Boca de la Sierpe, into a Great Gulf*

Having sighted the land, to the great cheer of all hands, he altered the course that he had intended to follow in search of one of the Carib Islands to take on water, of which he was in great need, and headed toward the land which they had sighted, toward a cape which appeared to the westward and which he called *Cabo de la Galera* from a great rock there which from a distance looked like a galley under sail.¹ They reached it at the hour of compline.² They saw a good harbor, but it was not deep,³ and the Admiral was disappointed that they could not enter it. He pursued his course to the point he had seen, which was seven leagues to the south;⁴ found no harbor. In all the coast he found that groves of trees went right down to the sea—the fairest thing that eyes have seen. He says this island must be large; people appeared, and at a distance a canoe full of them, who must have been fishing, fled to land, to some houses which appeared there. The land was carefully cultivated, high and beautiful.

On Wednesday, 1 August, he ran five leagues down the coast to the west and reached a point at which he anchored with all three vessels, and they took on water from springs and streams. They found signs of people, fishing-tackle, and tracks of goats.⁵ He says they found aloes,⁶ large

palm groves and lands of great beauty, “for the which let infinite thanks be given to the Holy Trinity.” These are his words. He saw many farms along the coast, and many villages. From this place, he saw, towards the south, another island which was more than 20 leagues long. To this he gave the name *Isla Sancta*.⁷ He says here that he did not want to take any Indians so as not to offend the country. From Cabo de la Galera to the point at which he took on water, which I believe he named Punta de la Playa, he says that, having gone a great distance and having run E to W, there was no harbor in all that voyage, but the land was well populated and cultivated and contained many waters and exceedingly dense groves—the loveliest thing in the world—and trees right down to the sea. The rising current, which is on the surface, and the under current, which rises to the top from below, appear to be strong, he says. He says the island to the southward is very big.

He says that he came to look for a harbor along the island of Trinidad on Thursday 2 August, and went as far as the end of the island of Trinidad, a point to which he gave the name *Punta del Arenal*, which is in the west. Consequently, he had already entered the gulf which he named *de la Ballena*,⁸ in which he was in great danger of losing all his



vessels. He says here that the island of Trinidad is large, for, as he says, from Cabo de la Galera to Punta del Arenal, where he then was, was a distance of 35 leagues.⁹ He commanded the people to land at this Punta del Arenal, the end of the island toward the west, to rest and divert themselves, for they were weary and exhausted. They found the land much trampled by deer, although they thought they were goats. On this Thursday 2 August, there came from the east a large canoe in which were 25 men; when they got within range they stopped rowing and shouted many words. The Admiral thought they were proclaiming who they were, as the other Indians usually do; we did not reply in words, but by displaying some brass chamber-pots and other bright objects, coaxing them with signs and motions to approach the ship. They came a little nearer and then were frightened by the vessel; and, since they would not come close, the Admiral gave orders that a tabor player get up on the

poop and that the ships' boys dance, thinking it would please them. But they did not feel that way about it; on the contrary, when they saw the playing and dancing, they took it as a sign of war, and as a challenge to them. They all dropped their oars and seized their bows and arrows, and each man clasped his shield and began to shoot at them a great shower of arrows. When he saw this the Admiral ordered the song-and-dance show to cease and some cross-bows to be brought out on deck; and two of these he ordered to be fired at the Indians merely in order to frighten them. And they, having shot their arrows, betook themselves immediately to one of the two caravels and suddenly, without fear, placed themselves under the poop; and the pilot of the caravel, also without any fear, let himself down from the poop and got into the canoe with them, with some articles which he gave them; among others, a coat and a cap to him who seemed to be the chief man. They received him in the canoe and, as if

in gratitude for what he had given them, they told him by signs that he should go ashore and that they would bring to him thereof whatever they had. He accepted and they went ashore. The pilot got into the barge and went to the ship to ask leave of the Admiral; and when they saw that he did not go straight to them, they waited no longer and so departed, and were never seen again by the Admiral or anyone else.¹⁰

The Admiral says here that they were all young men and very well formed and adorned, but they were equipped with bows, arrows and shields. They were not so brown as the others but whiter than the others whom he had seen in these Indies, and of very fine manners and handsome bodies, the hair long and smooth, cut in the manner of Castile. They bound their head with a cotton bandanna woven with designs and colors, which the Admiral thought was a Moorish shawl, an *almaicar*,¹¹ and he says another one of these is worn around the waist and is used for covering instead of trousers. He says they are not black, although they live near the equator, but of the Indian color, like all the others he has found. They are of very fair form, go naked, are warlike, wear their hair long like the women of Castile, carry bows and feathered arrows at the top of which there is a sharp bone with a thorn, like a fishhook, and they carry wooden shields, the like of which he had not seen hitherto. He says that from the signs and motions which they made he was able to infer that they thought the Admiral came from the region to the south, on which account he concluded that there must be great lands to the south. The climate of this land is very mild, he says; and proof of it, according to him, is to be found in

the color of the people, the flowing hair of all, and the dense groves which are to be found throughout. He says it is to be believed that out beyond a point 100 leagues west of the Azores there is a change, as he has often said, in the sky, sea and climate. "And this," he says, "is manifest" for here where he was, so close to the equator, he says it was cold every morning, although the sun was in Leo. The waters ran to the west stronger than the river of Seville, and the rise and fall of the tide is 65 feet¹² and more than at Sanlúcar de Barrameda, so that they could careen carracks. He says that the current flows so strong as to make its way between those two islands, Trinidad and the one which he called *Sancta* and soon afterwards called *Ysla de Gracia*. They found the fruits, trees, lands and climate as on this Hispaniola. They found very big *hostias* or oysters, he says, countless fish, parrots as big as domestic fowls, says he.

While at this Punta del Arenal, which is the end of the island of Trinidad, he saw towards the N by E, at a distance of 15 leagues, a cape or headland of the same mainland. Believing that it was another distinct island, the Admiral called it *Ysla de Gracia*; he says that it extends to the west, that is, towards the setting sun, and is very high land.¹³

1. Now Galeota Point; the resemblance to a big galley is striking. But, owing to a former false identification of this landfall, the northeast cape of Trinidad has been named Galera Point.

2. This canonical hour should be at 9:00 P.M., but Columbus must have observed it earlier, to have sailed so much further that day.

3. Guayaguayare Bay. See chart of this leg of the voyage in *A.O.S.* II 248-9 (one-vol. ed. 530).

4. A mistake for west.

5. Las Casas remarks pertinently that these must have been deer slots; goats were later introduced to Trinidad by the Spaniards.

6. *ñaloes*; see Columbus's Journal for 21 October 1492, note 8. The palms were royal palms; the coconut palm had not yet reached the Caribbean.

7. This must have been Punta Bombeador, Venezuela; Columbus's first sight of the Continent.

8. "Of the whale"; *arenal* means a sandy beach. He evidently sailed through the Boca de la Sierpe into the Gulf of Paria at a time of slack water, or else his earlier remarks on the currents were intended for the Boca.

9. Actually it is less than half that length; but Las Casas interpolated "more than 45," and later maps made

even greater overestimates. See table in Morison *A.O.S.* II 269.

10. Las Casas here adds that a servant of the Admiral who was with him told him that a cacique came on board and swapped his gold diadem for a scarlet cap.

11. A moorish kerchief, such as the Portuguese imported from Guinea.

12. A scribe's error; the range of tide at the Boca de la Sierpe is from 4.3 to 5.6 feet.

13. He had sighted, 35 miles away, the Cerro Mejillones in the Paria Peninsula.

*d. How the Admiral Circumnavigated that
Gulf of Paria, and Went Ashore to Take Possession,
and discovered Pearls and a Mighty Flood of Fresh Water*

On Saturday 4 August, he decided to go to see the island of Gracia, weighed anchor, and set sail from the said Punta del Arenal, where he had moored. And as that narrow channel by which he entered the Gulf of la Ballena was no more than two leagues, for on the one side is Trinidad and on the other the mainland, the fresh water flowed out very swiftly. From the direction of Punta del Arenal on the island of Trinidad there came a current from the south as strong as a mighty flood, with such great noise and din that it terrified all hands, so that they

despaired of escaping, and the ocean water which confronted it coming from the opposite direction, caused the sea to rise, making a great and lofty tidal wave which tossed the ship on top of the bore, a thing which none had ever heard or seen; and it tripped the anchors of the other vessel (which ought already to have weighed), and forced her farther out to sea; and he made sail to get out of the said bore.¹ "It pleased God that they were not damaged," the Admiral says, at this point. When he wrote of this matter to the Sovereigns, he said, "Even today I feel that



fear within me, lest the ship be swamped when she came beneath it." Owing to this great peril, he called this strait *Boca de la Sierpe*.

When he reached the mainland, which he saw in that region and which he thought was an island, he saw near that headland two small islands in the midst of another strait which is made by that mainland cape which he called *Cabo de Lapa*, and another cape of Trinidad which he called *Cabo Boto* because it is thick and blunt, and one islet he named *El Caracol*, and the other, *El Delfin*.² He cruised along the coast of the mainland of Paria (which he believed to be an island and named *Isla de Gracia*), toward the west, in search of a harbor. From *Punta del Arenal*, which is a Cape of Trinidad, as has been said, and faces the south, up to the other Cape Boto, which is also on Trinidad, and which faces the sea, the Admiral says it is 26 great leagues and this seems to be the width of the said island at this point. The said capes extend north and south. There were great waves of currents, one against the other; many rainstorms occurred since it was the rainy season, as we said above. The Isle of *Gracia*, says the Admiral, is very high land and full of trees, which grow down to the sea. This is because that gulf is surrounded by land and has no surf or waves crashing upon the shore, as there is where beaches are found. He says that while he was at the cape or point of this land he saw an island with very high ground to the NE at a distance of 26 leagues. He called it *Belaforna* because from a distance it seemed beautiful.³

On Sunday 5 August, he sailed five leagues from the point of Cape Lapa, which is the eastern extremity of the is-

land of *Gracia*. He saw many good harbors close to each other, and he says that almost all this sea is a harbor, for it is surrounded by islands and has no waves. He sent the boats ashore⁴ and found fish and fire, and traces of people, and a large abandoned house. From there he went eight leagues and found fine harbors along the way. He says this part of the island of *Gracia* is on very high ground and has many valleys, "and must all be inhabited," he says; it all looked cultivated. The rivers are numerous, for each valley has its own from league to league. They found much fruit, and grapes like [our] grapes and with a good flavor, and myrobolans of high quality, and others like apples, and others, he says, like oranges, of which the inside was like figs.⁵ They found innumerable monkeys,⁶ the water, he says, is the best they had seen. "This whole island," he says, "is full of harbors; this sea is fresh, although not altogether, but brackish like that of *Cartagena*." Further on he says that it is as fresh as the water of the River of *Seville*, and this was caused by its striking against a wave of sea-water, which made the water of the river brackish.

On Monday, 6 August, he sailed five leagues to a bay;⁷ there he landed and saw people and straightway there came to the caravel closest to the shore a canoe with four men. Her pilot called out to the Indians that he wanted to go ashore with them and as he approached and entered the canoe he overturned it and while they were swimming about, he caught them and took them to the Admiral. He says they are of the same color as all the other people of the Indies. Some of them wear their hair very long, others wear theirs as we do; none of them has sheared hair as

in Hispaniola and the other lands. They have very beautiful figures and are all very large; the genital member is bound up and covered and the women are all naked as their mothers bore them.⁸ "As soon as these Indians came here," says the Admiral, "I gave them hawk's bells and beads and sugar and sent them ashore, where there was a large throng of them, and after they heard of the good treatment accorded their fellows, they all wanted to board the vessels. Those who had canoes came, and they were many, and all were warmly received and kindly bespoken, and given things which pleased them." The Admiral asked them questions, and they replied but were not understood. They brought bread and water and some beverages like green wine. They are heavily armed with bows and arrows and shields, and almost all of the arrows are poisoned.

On Tuesday 7 August, there came hosts of Indians by land and sea, and all brought offerings of bread and maize and things to eat and pitchers of a beverage, some of it white like milk with the taste of wine, some green, and some of a dark color. He thinks it is all made of fruit.⁹ They all carried their bows and poisoned arrows with very sharp tips. They gave nothing for beads, but all they had for hawk's bells; and other things they did not want. They esteemed brass highly. At this point the Admiral says that the Indians smelled everything that was given them from Castile as soon as it was put in their hands.¹⁰ They brought parrots of two or three species, he says, especially the very big ones with the long tails found in the island of Guadeloupe. They brought kerchiefs of cotton carefully embroidered and woven in colors and workmanship

exactly like those which are brought from Guinea, from the rivers of Sierra Leone. But he says there cannot be any connection between them, for it is more than 800 leagues from this place where the Admiral now is to that. Later on he says that they resemble *almayzares*.¹¹ He wanted to take a half dozen Indians to go along with him but he says he was unable to capture them because they left the vessels before nightfall.

But soon afterwards, on Wednesday 8 August, there came to the caravel a canoe with 12 men, and they were all seized and brought to the Admiral's ship and he picked out six of them and sent the other six ashore. He immediately set sail for a point which he calls *de l'Aguja*,¹² but he does not tell when he named it. After that he says that he discovered the loveliest and the most populous lands that they have seen. Arriving at a certain place, which, because of its beauty he called *Jardines*, he there found innumerable houses and people, and those whom he had taken told him that there were clothed people, for the which reason he decided to anchor; and there came to the vessels countless canoes. These are his words. Every one, he says, wore his kerchief so worked in colors that it looked like an *almayzar*; one tied around the head and one covering the rest, as has already been said. Of these people who this day came to the vessels he says some wore some golden eyes around the neck,¹³ and one of the Indians he had taken told him that there was much gold thereabouts and that they made large mirrors¹⁴ out of it, and he showed how they gathered it. He says that since he went there in haste, because the provisions which had cost him so much to obtain were spoiling and this island Hispan-

iola was more than 300 leagues away, he did not tarry, though he was very eager to do so in the hope of discovering much more land; and he says that the whole region is full of very beautiful and populous islands, lands of great altitude, valleys and plains, and all are of great size. The people are much more civilized than those of this Hispaniola, they are warriors, and the houses are attractive. He says that when he got to Punta de l'Aguja, he saw another island 15 leagues to the south, stretching from SE to NW, a very large island with very high ground, and he called it *Sabeta*, and in the evening he saw another to the west, a very high land.¹⁵

He anchored off the point which he called Los Jardines and at once there came numberless canoes, large and small, full of people, as he says. Afterwards, in the

evening, more came from all that region, many of whom wore pieces of gold in the shape of horseshoes around the neck. It seemed that they valued it highly but they gave it all, he says, for hawk's bells and he did not take it. Still he got some of it and it was of low grade so that it seemed to be gilded over. As far as could be understood by signs, they said that there were in that region some islands whereon that gold was to be found in great quantity, but that the people were Cannibals, and the Admiral says here that this word *Cannibales* in that place was universally regarded as a cause of enmity; or, perhaps, they said this because they did not want the Christians to go away but stay there themselves all their lives. The Christians saw an Indian with a piece of gold as large as an apple.

1. According to my local informants (see *A.O.S.* II 258) this was not a tidal bore but the result of a volcanic disturbance, not uncommon in those waters.

2. *Cabo Boto* was Monos Island, *El Delfin* was Huevos, and *El Caracol* ("the snail"), Chacachacare. The channels between these three islands and Trinidad and the mainland Columbus named the Bocas del Dragón, and they are so called to this day.

3. Fr. R. P. Devas, O.P. "Discovery of Tobago and Grenada" in *The Bajan* (Bridgetown, Barbados) for June 1957, has convinced me that what Columbus saw at this point was a headland on the north coast of Trinidad which from a distance looks insular. Cf. however *A.O.S.* II 271.

4. Probably Ensenada Yacua on the Paria Peninsula, although possibly any one of three others near by—see *A.O.S.* II 262 (one-vol. ed. 538-41). Unless John Cabot reached continental Nova Scotia in 1497, this was the first landing on the American continent by any European since those of the Norsemen in the 11th century.

5. The sea-grape, the *hugo* or hog plum, and the guava.

6. *gatos paulos*, lit. "Paul cats"; a Marco Polian name for monkeys. Europeans then called tame monkeys "Paul" as they called tame cats "Tom."

7. This place, where Columbus took formal possession (having given the former cove the go-by because no natives appeared), must have been Guiría, at the mouth of the Rio Guiría, Venezuela. The ceremony, conducted by Pedro de Terreros, as later described by witnesses in the *Pleitos de Colón*, is translated by Alice Gould in

BRAH for 1943 261-9, and in Morison *A.O.S.* II 264. At pp. 260-1 (538-9 in the one-vol. ed.) will be found a chart of the Admiral's route in the Gulf of Paria. See also Manuel Romero de Terreros *Pedro de Terreros* (Mexico D.F. 1941).

8. Columbus was now in a new culture area, extending from Eastern Venezuela to Honduras, in which the Indians were expert fishers, weavers and metallurgists, but the *Guayquerí* or Paria tribe which Columbus encountered, is supposed by modern ethnologists to have been rather backward. Las Casas here adds:—"This is what the Admiral says, but I have been within 30 leagues of this land, yet I never saw women that didn't have at least their *pudenda* covered."

9. *chicha*, a fermented drink made from maize, still drunk in Venezuela.

10. The sniffing was to detect in any hardware offered the presence of copper, which, as a compound of *guanín*, was more valuable to them than gold.

11. See above, note 11 to section (c).

12. "of the needle," a good description of the modern Punta Alcatraz as one approaches from the eastward.

13. Gold adornments from this region, corresponding closely to Columbus's description, will be found in almost every museum of native American art.

14. Las Casas interpolates that he doesn't believe the mirrors; but not only on this but on the Fourth Voyage the Spaniards called any shiny gold disk a mirror.

15. These must have been high points on the continent, which from a distance looked like islands.

*e. How the Christians were Entertained
by the People of Paria, and the Admiral gave Orders
to Depart from that Gulf*

On another occasion there came countless canoes filled with people; they all wore gold and collars and beads of infinite variety and they tied their heads with small kerchiefs which held in place their hair, which was neatly clipped and looked very fine. It rained a great deal, and accordingly the people stopped going and coming. Some women came who wore on their arms strings of small beads and among them pearls or baroque pearls of high quality, not like the colored pearls found in the islands of Babueca. They bartered these, and he says he would send them to Their Highnesses. The Admiral asked the Indians where they found or fished for them, and they showed him some of the mother of pearl in which they are formed. They replied by unmistakable signs that they were produced and gathered toward the west, behind that island which was Cape Lapa, the Point of Paria; and the mainland which he believed to be an island. He sent boats ashore to determine whether there was any new thing which they had not seen, and they found the people so complaisant, says the Admiral, that "although the sailors did not set out with the intention of going ashore, yet there came two persons of importance with the entire village and persuaded them to land and escorted them to a large house with a slanting roof, and not round like a field tent such as those on the islands. There they received them very well and feasted them, and gave them meat, bread and fruit of many kinds; the beverage was a white drink which they greatly esteem, some of which they

brought out every day; some of it is red and one kind is better than another, like wine with us. The men stayed together in one part of the house, and the women together in another. After they had supped at the house of the eldest, the youngest took them to another house, where the same celebration was repeated. It seemed that the one must have been the cacique and lord, and the other must have been his son. Then the sailors returned to the boats and in them to the vessels, much pleased with this people." All these are the Admiral's words. He also says, they have very handsome figures and are whiter than any other people he had seen in these Indies, and yesterday he says he saw many as white as we with better hair, well clipped, and of excellent disposition. "No lands in the world can be greener and lovelier and more populous; the climate is also excellent, for since I have been on this island it has been cold enough every morning, I say, for a lined coat, although it is so close to the equinoctial line; still the sea is fresh. They call the island Paria." All these are the Admiral's words.

On Friday, 10 August, he gave orders to set sail, went to the west of that which he thought to be an island, proceeded five leagues, and anchored. For fear that he might not find deep water he went in search of a strait by which he might get out of that gulf within which he was surrounded by mainland and islands, although he did not believe it mainland, and he says it is certain that it was an island, for that is what the Indians

said, and so it seems that he did not understand them. From this point he saw another island facing the south and extending from SE to NW; this he called *Ysabela*. After that he saw another which he called *la Tramontana*, a high and very beautiful land; it appeared to extend from north to south and seemed to be very large.¹ The Indians he had taken told him, as he understood, that the people in that place were Cannibals and that gold was found or produced there, and that the pearls which they had given the Admiral had been caught and gathered to the north of Paria, on the west side. He says the water of that sea was as sweet as that of the river at Seville, and just as muddy. He would have liked to go to those islands, but he would not turn back on account of his haste, for the provisions he was carrying for the Christians of Hispaniola, and which he had secured with so much effort, difficulty and exertion, were being destroyed.

And as [this was] a matter in which he suffered great tribulations, he frequently rehearses the matter of these provisions. He says that he believes that in those islands which he had seen there must be things of value, for they are all large and lofty lands, valleys and plains, well watered, well cultivated, and populous, and the people are of excellent disposition, as their behavior demonstrates. These are the Admiral's words. He also says here that if pearls are produced, as Pliny says, from the dew which falls into oysters when they are open, there is much reason to find them there, for heavy dew falls there and there are limitless numbers of oysters of great size there, and there are no storms there but the sea is always quiet, proof of which is the presence of trees down to the water's

edge. All the branches of the trees which go into the sea are covered with numberless oysters and when a branch is pulled out it is covered with oysters adhering to it; they are white inside, as is their flesh; they are very palatable,² not salty but sweet and they require some salt. He says he does not know if they come from mother of pearl. Wherever they grow, he says, they are very fine, and they bore a hole into them as in Venice. In this passage the Admiral makes mention of many islands and places, and the names which he had given them but it does not appear when he did so. He mentions here *Punta Seca*, the island *Ysabela*, the island *Tramontana*, *Punta Llana*, *Punta Sara*, supposing them to be known, but he has said nothing about them, or about some of them.³ He says that that whole sea is sweet and that he does not know whence it springs, for it did not seem to be fed by large rivers, and he says that even if it had it would not cease to be miraculous.

Seeking now to leave this gulf of La Ballena where he was surrounded by mainland, and Trinidad, as has been said, and sailing westward along the coast of the mainland which he called *Gracia* toward *Punta Seca*, which he does not locate, he found two fathoms of water, no more. He sent the small caravel to see if there were an outlet to the north, for facing the mainland and the island which he called *Ysabela* to the west, an island appeared, very high and beautiful. The caravel returned and reported that she had found a vast gulf and four large openings therein which appeared to be small gulfs, and at the end of each of them a river.⁴

This gulf he named *Golpho de las Perlas*. It seemed to be at the corner of the entire vast gulf in which the Admiral was

surrounded by the mainland and the island of Trinidad. The Admiral thought that these four outlets or openings were four islands and that there did not appear to be any sign of the river which made that whole gulf of 40 leagues of sea, all sweet water; but the sailors asserted that the openings were mouths of rivers. Greatly did the Admiral long to find the key to the mystery, which was the cause of there being a gulf like this of fresh water 40 leagues long and 26 wide, the which he says, was matter for wonder. And greatly did he burn to penetrate the secrets of those lands for he did not believe it possible that they did not contain things of value or things not to be had

1. These alleged islands were merely parts of the Paria Peninsula.
2. These tiny oysters that grow on mangrove roots are esteemed a great delicacy in Port of Spain, but several members of the Harvard Columbus Expedition were made very sick by eating them, and at Government House too.
3. At this point Las Casas becomes somewhat annoyed with the Admiral and inserts: "In this, as in other voy-

in the Indies, especially since he had found there evidence of gold and pearls and had news of them, and had discovered such lands and so many great people therein from the which the products and wealth there could easily be imagined. But, forasmuch as the supplies were perishing which he was carrying for the people in Hispaniola, and those which he was transporting to be used in the mines for the amassing of gold, and which he had procured with such great pain and travail; they did not suffer him to delay, and he says that if he had hope of obtaining other supplies speedily, he would abandon everything to discover more lands and to probe their secrets.

ages, it appears that he was native to another language, for he does not penetrate the significance of Castilian words, nor of the manner of pronouncing them."

4. *El Correo* had discovered the four mouths of the Rio Grande, northernmost branch of the mighty Orinoco. Although Columbus noted the decreasing salinity of the Gulf of Paria, he did not yet connect this with its continental character.

*f. Wherein the Admiral Decides that this Region
is "An Other World," departs through the Bocas del Dragón
and Discovers the Pearl Coast*

Finally he decided to follow the safest course and come to this island and send money thence to Castile to bring provisions and hire people and also, as soon as he was able, to send his brother the Adelantado to continue his discovery and to find important things such as he hoped would be found, in order to serve Our Lord and the Sovereigns. And he writes thus:

"May Our Lord guide me by His loving kindness and grant me such [favors] that with them He may be served

and Your Highnesses be afforded much gratification; and surely they should be pleased, for here they have something so noble and royal, suitable for great princes. And it is a great error to credit anyone who speaketh them ill concerning this enterprise; rather should they abhor him, for never hath prince received such grace from Our Lord or so great a triumph in a matter so signal and so honorable to his high estate and dominions, and for which the eternal God may receive more services, and the people of Spain more advan-

tage and gains. For it hath been seen that boundless are the treasures, and although what I say not be admitted now, the day will come when it [the enterprise] shall be reckoned for its great excellence, and to the great infamy of the people who opposed it before Your Highnesses. For, though they have expended somewhat in this venture, it hath been a thing nobler and of higher estate than that which any other prince hath done hitherto, nor was it an affair to be abandoned coldly; rather it is necessary to go on with it and to grant me aid and favor. For the kings of Portugal spent and took heart to spend in Guinea both money and men for four or five years before they received any profit, and then God gave them both gains and gold. For truly, if the people of the kingdom of Portugal and the number of those who died in this enterprise of Guinea be counted, they would be found to be more than half the kingdom; and, surely only a part of the revenue of one estate in Spain, at the most, has been expended upon this enterprise [of the Indies]. Your Highnesses will leave no greater memorial; and may they ponder this, that no prince of Castile is to be found, nor have I found one in word or writing, who has ever gained any land outside of Spain; and Your Highnesses have won these vast lands, which are an Other World,¹ in which Christendom will have so much enjoyment and our faith in time so great an increase. All this I say with very honest intent, and because I desire that Your Highnesses may be the greatest lords in the world, lords of it all, I say; and that all be with much service and satisfaction to the Holy Trinity, so that in the end of your days you may have the glory of Paradise; and this I say not for my own

sake, but I trust in His Divine Majesty that Your Highnesses will see the truth of the matter, and what of my opinion is."

All these are the formal words of the Admiral.

Thus, in order to debouch from the gulf in which he was surrounded by land on all sides with the aforesaid purpose of preserving provisions (which were spoiling) by reaching this island of Hispaniola, on Saturday, 11 August, at moonrise, he weighed anchors² and set sail and headed for the east, in the direction where the sun rises, so as to make his way out between the point of Paria and the mainland which he called "Point" or "Cape" Lapa, and the land he named the "Island of Gracia," and between the cape which he called "Cape Boto" on the island of Trinidad.

He reached a very fine harbor which he called *Puerto de Gatos*³ which is near the entrance in which lie the two islets of Caracol and Delfín between Cape Lapa and Cape Boto. This was on Sunday, 12 August.

He anchored near the said harbor in order to sortie by the Boca in the morning. He found another harbor near there, and he sent the barge to view it. Very good it was; they found some fishermen's huts and plenty of fresh water. He gave it the name *Puerto de los Cabañas*.⁴ On the land, he . . . says, they found myrobolans. Close to the sea there were countless oysters adhering to the branches of the trees which dip into the sea, with their mouths open to receive the dew which falls from the leaves, until the drop falls out of which pearls will be formed, as Pliny says, and he cites the dictionary called *Catholicon*.⁵

On Monday, 13 August, at moonrise, he weighed from the place where he

was anchored and made for Cape Lapa in order to sortie northward by way of the mouth which he called *del Drago*, for the following cause and the peril in which he there found himself. He says the Boca del Dragon is a strait between Punta de Lapa, which is the end of the island of Gracia.⁶ He says that between the two capes is a distance of a league and a half. Reaching the said mouth at the hour of terce, he found a great contest between the fresh water seeking an exit to the sea and the salt water of the sea seeking an entrance into the gulf; and it was so furious and violent that it raised a great tidal bore with a very high crest, and with this the two waters raised from east to west a noise and a thundering, very great and terrifying, with a wave, succeeded by four other waves, one after the other, with conflicting currents. Then they thought they would perish no less than in the Boca de la Sierpe off Cabo del Arenal, when they were entering the gulf. But the peril was now double what the other had been, for the wind which they hoped to carry them out died down, and they would have anchored, which would have given some relief, though not without danger on account of the conflict of the waters; but they could not hit bottom, for the sea was very deep at that point.⁷ When the wind fell, they feared lest the fresh water or the salt cast them on the rocks by their currents, and there they would have no hope. It pleased the goodness of God that from that very danger sprang safety and liberation, for the same fresh water, overcoming the salt, swept the vessels out, without a scratch; and thus they were saved; for when God wishes that one or many should live, water becomes their medicine [instead of their poison].



Thus, he sortied on Monday, 13 August, from the said gulf and the treacherous Boca del Dragon. He says that from the first land of Trinidad to the gulf which the mariners whom he sent in the caravel had discovered (where they saw the rivers and he would not believe them), that gulf he named *de las Perlas* (and this is in the bight of that mighty gulf which he named *de la Ballena*, in which he was landlocked so many days), it is 48 leagues long.

Having escaped from the gulf and the Boca del Dragon and his peril, he decided to go westward along the coast below the mainland, still believing it was the island of Gracia, in order to come abreast of the said *Golpho de las Perlas*, north and south, and around, and see whence came

such a great flood of water and if it proceeded from rivers, as the sailors asserted, the which he says he did not believe, for he knew that neither the Ganges, nor the Euphrates, nor the Nile carried so much fresh water. The consideration which moved him was that he did not see lands large enough to provide a source for such large rivers, unless, he says, this land is a continent.⁸ These are his words . . .

So, that Monday, he proceeded down the coast till sunset, going in search of the Gulf de las Perlas, into which the said rivers empty, and believing he could find it by rounding the land, so as to ascertain whether it were an island and to see if there were an entrance over there or an outlet towards the south. But he says that if he could not find it, he would then declare that it was a river and that both one and the other were great marvels. He went down the coast that Monday until sunset. He saw that the coast was full of good harbors and that the land rose very

high. Down along that coast he saw many islands toward the north and many capes on the mainland, to all of which he gave names: one he called *cabo de Conchas*, another *cabo Luengo*, another *cabo de Sabor*, another *cabo Rico*.⁹ The land was high and very lovely. He says that along this course there are many harbors and very large gulfs, which must be inhabited. The farther west he went the more level and the more beautiful was the land which he saw. On leaving the mouth, he sighted an island, 26 leagues north of the mouth, and he named it the *isla de la Asunción*; he sighted another island and called it *la Concepción*; three other islands, which were close together, he called *los Testigos*. Another nearby he named *el Romero* and some other little islands he named *las Guardias*.¹⁰ Later on he arrived off the island Margarita and named it *Margarita*, and another island near it he designated *El Martinet*, which, he says, on the north side, is close to Margarita.¹¹

1. *que son otro mundo*. Columbus meant exactly the same as Peter Martyr did in 1493 when he called Columbus *Novi Orbis Repertor* and, in his history, described the new discoveries as *Orbis Novus*. See discussion in Morison *A.O.S.* II 40-3 and 279-80. This meant that they were lands unknown to Ptolemy or any ancient writer, or even to Marco Polo. Amerigo Vespucci meant the same when he entitled a little book of his voyages *Mundus Novus*, which attracted the attention of Waldseemüller at St. Dié and led him to make the pregnant suggestion, in his *Cosmographiae Introductio* (1504) that since Amerigo was the first (which he was not) to recognize this as a New World, it should be called *America*. See discussion of the significance of *Otro Mundo* in E. G. Bourne *Spain in America* 94-8. I should add, however, that Vespucci does not lack partisans today. The Argentinian historian Roberto Levillier has come to his defense in a two-volume biography *América la Bien Llamada* (B.A. 1949), and an interesting debate on him, as well as on Columbus's motives, is Marcel Bataillon & Edmundo O'Gorman *Dos Concepciones de la Tarea Histórica* (Mexico, D.F. 1955). Dr. O'Gorman has also written two books, *La Idea del Descubrimiento de América* (Mexico, D.F. 1951) and *The Invention of America*

(Bloomington 1961) to prove that Columbus should not be called the discoverer of America because he didn't call it America, and, incidentally, to abuse Morison.

Columbus's ideas were now shaping up to the concept, which he held to the end of his life, that South and Central America were a continent which bore somewhat the same relation to the Malay Peninsula that Sumatra and Java actually do. Magellan's voyage killed this concept, but it was a long time dying; for a century or more map makers were trying by some means to hook up the New World with Asia. Of course nature nearly did so, in Bering Strait.

2. According to my calculations he was then anchored off Irapa on the Paria peninsula, at about long. 62° 02' W. For this part of the voyage, see *A.O.S.* II 275-94.

3. "Monkey Harbor" was Chacachacare Bay.

4. "Port of the Cabins" was one of the little harbors on Huevas Island.

5. Giovanni Balbi of Genoa compiled this popular Latin lexicon, a copy of which Columbus may have had on board.

6. I.e., of the Paria Peninsula. Columbus wisely chose the widest of the Bocas, the Grande, and even so had

a tough time, owing to the phenomenon which he describes with great accuracy.

7. No wonder—120 fathoms!

8. Columbus still thought that the Paria Peninsula was an island, so that he could find a back entrance to the Gulf of Paria.

9. What he meant by these capes on the Caribbean coast of the Paria Peninsula is anyone's guess.

10. Assumption, so called from the vigil of the Assumption of the Virgin, was Tobago; Conception, Grenada; *Los Testigos* (The Witnesses) are still so

called; *El Romero* (The Pilgrim) is the solitary La Sola, and *Las Guardias* are now called Los Frailes. These are the identifications by Fr. R. P. Devas in *The Bajan* (Bridgetown, Barbados) for July 1957, correcting my earlier ones. But you must assume that Columbus made a wide circle to the E, N and W on 13 August to have sighted Tobago and Grenada.

11. Margarita is still so called; Columbus named it after the plucky little princess whose wedding to the Infante D. Juan he had attended. Alice Gould in *BRAH* for 1942, 147-8.

*g. How the Admiral crossed the Great Gulf with
Caution, Made Land at Alta Vela, and Sailed thence
to Santo Domingo*

Here the Admiral suffered great affliction in his eyes from lack of sleep; for he always [went without sleep] when sailing amid so many dangers in the islands; such was his custom, as it should be for anyone, like pilots, who is in charge of vessels. And he says he felt more fatigue here than when he discovered the other mainland, which is the island of Cuba; for his eyes were bloodshot and his travails at sea were without parallel. That night, therefore, he kept his bed, and shortly found himself further out at sea than he would have been if he had been on watch, for he put no trust nor confidence in the sailors, nor should the diligent and perfect pilot trust anyone, since he himself is responsible and accountable for every one on board ship; and the most proper and necessary duty pertaining to the exercise of his office is to keep awake and to go without sleep all the time that he is navigating.¹

The day before, Monday, and this day, Tuesday [13 August] the Admiral seems to have gone about 30 or 40 leagues at most since leaving the Boca del Dragon, although he does not say so, not being able to on account of his grave illness at this

time; he himself complains that he did not write down everything that he ought to have written. He observed that the land stretched out wider and appeared flatter and more beautiful down toward the west and that the Gulf of the Pearls, which was in the remotest bight of the gulf or sea of fresh water, had no outlet, which he had been expecting to find when he was of the opinion that this mainland was an island. He therefore came to the conclusion that so great a land was not an island but a continent; and, as if addressing the Sovereigns, he speaks thus:

"I have come to believe that this is a mighty continent which was hitherto unknown. I am greatly supported in this view by reason of this great river, and by this sea which is fresh, and I am also supported by the statement of Esdras in Book 4, Chapter 6, which says that six parts of the world consist of dry land, and one part of water. This work was approved by St. Ambrose in his *Exameron* and by St. Augustine [in his commentary] on the passage *Morietur filius meus Christus*, as cited by Francisco de Mayrones.² Moreover, I am supported by the statements of several cannibal Indians

whom I captured on other occasions, who declared that there was mainland to the west of them. At that time I was in the island of Guadeloupe. I heard this also from others in the islands of Santa Cruz and San Juan, who said that there was much gold on the mainland. Furthermore, as Your Highnesses know, a short time ago it was not known that there was more land than that described by Ptolemy, and there was no one in my own time who believed that a man could sail from Spain to the Indies. For this reason I spent seven years in Your court, and not a few took part in the discussions. But finally only the extraordinary daring of Your Highnesses decreed that the venture be made, against the judgment of all those who said it could not be done. And now the truth appears, and will before long appear in greater measure. And if this is a continent, it is a wonderful thing and will be so regarded by all men of learning, since from it flows as large a river as to form a sea of fresh water 48 leagues [in extent]." These are his words.

To continue, he wishes to come to this Hispaniola for reasons of great urgency: first, because he was suffering great pain and suspense, since he had heard no news from this island for so many days; second, so that he might send out his brother the Adelantado immediately with three vessels to continue the discovery of the mainland which he had just begun; the third reason the Admiral gave for his haste to go to this island was that he saw the supplies which were needed so badly for the relief of the men here were being damaged and destroyed, which he laments, pointing out that he had acquired them at the cost of much affliction and pain; and he says that, if he should lose them, he had

no hope of getting others, on account of the great hostility which he always suffered at the hands of the Sovereigns' counsellors, "who," says he at this point, "are not the friends of Their Highnesses, nor do they desire glory for their high estate, these people who spoke ill of this great enterprise. The expense was not so great that it could not be afforded, although profits were not immediately forthcoming to make up for the cost. Secondly a very great service was performed for Our Lord in spreading His name in unknown lands. Besides this, it would be a greater memorial than any prince, spiritual or temporal, had left." And, the Admiral adds, "and for this the income of one good bishopric or archbishopric would have been well spent," says he, "the best in Spain, since there is so much income [from the Indies] but no priesthood; and they may have heard that there is an endless population, which might have decided [them] to send here learned and intelligent persons, and friends of Christ to try to turn them Christians and begin the work. The outlay, I am quite sure, please Our Lord, would soon be made up and repaid." These are his words.

The fourth reason for his coming to this island and not tarrying to make additional discoveries, although he wanted very much to do so, as he says, was that the mariners had not come prepared for discovery, for he had not dared to tell them in Castile that he was setting out with the intention of discovering, lest they set up obstacles and ask more pay than he could give. He says also that the people were very tired.

The fifth reason was that his vessels were too big for voyages of discovery, for one was over 100 tons and the other over

70, and he had no wish to go out for discoveries except with smaller [ones]. Because the ship he had on his first voyage was a large one, she was lost in the harbor of Navidad, the kingdom of Guacanagarí. The sixth reason, furthermore, which constrained him to knock off discovering and come to this island, was that he had almost lost his eyesight, owing to lack of sleep, as a result of the long and continual watches or vigils that he had undergone. And in this passage he writes thus: "May it please Our Lord to free me from them (the eyes, he means), for He knows well that I do not bear these sufferings to enrich myself or to find treasures for myself, for, certainly, I know that everything in this age is vain, except what is done for the honor and service of God, which is not the amassing of wealth and riches and many other things which we use in this world, to which we are more favorable than to the things which can win salvation for us." These are his words.

Determined, thus, to go as quickly as possible to this island, on Wednesday, 15 August, which was the Assumption of Our Lady, after sunrise, he gave orders to weigh from his anchorage, which must have been within the gulf which unites Margarita and the other islets with the mainland. He set sail on his voyage from this island and, proceeding on his course, had a good view of Margarita and of the small islets thereabouts, and the farther he moved away, the more high land of the mainland he could see. And that day, from sunrise to sunset, he made 63 leagues,³ by reason of the swift currents which helped the wind.

The next day, Thursday, 16 August, he sailed NW by N 26 leagues on a flat sea, "thanks be to God," as he always

used to say. At this juncture he mentions a marvellous thing, that when he was 300 leagues beyond the Canaries bound for Hispaniola the compass-needles varied one point to the NW, and the North Star had an elevation of only 5 degrees; and now, in this voyage, it had not varied to the NW until the night before, when it varied to the NW more than a point and a half, and some needles northwested to NNW which makes two points. And this happened all at once at night time.⁴ He says that every night, after having found land, he stood watch, marvelling at so great a change in the heavens and at the mildness of the weather, so close to the equinoctial line, during the entire voyage, especially when the sun was in Leo; where, as I have said above, loose coats were worn in the morning, and the people of that region, in Gracia, are whiter than any others whom he had seen in the Indies. Furthermore, in the place where he had now come, he found that the North Star rose 14° when the Guards had passed the "head" position two and a half hours.⁵

Here again he exhorted the Sovereigns to hold this business dear, since he had demonstrated that there was gold in these lands, and he had seen innumerable minerals which can only be extracted through intelligence, industry and labor; since even iron, as much as there is, cannot be extracted without it; and he has brought them a nugget of 20 ounces, and many others; and where this is, one must believe that there is more; and he has brought Their Highnesses a lump of virgin copper of six arrobas' weight, lapis lazuli, gum arabic,⁶ amber, cotton, pepper, cinnamon, an abundance of dye-wood, aromatic gum,⁷ white and yellow sandalwood, flax, aloes, ginger, incense, myrob-

sent the barges ashore to summon Indians, as there are villages thereabouts, to write to the Adelantado of his arrival; come mid-day he dispatched them. Six Indians came to the ship, and one of them carried a crossbow complete with cord, and bolt and rack, which caused him no small surprise, and he said, "Please God that nobody is dead."¹² And because those three ships¹³ must have been seen passing to leeward, and holding for certain that it was the Admiral whom he was expecting daily, the Adelantado took a caravel and caught up

with the Admiral here. Both were overjoyed to see one another. Being asked about the state of the country, the Adelantado told him how Francisco Roldán had risen with 80 men and all that had happened in the island since he left it.

He departed thence 22 August and eventually with some difficulty owing to the strong currents and breezes, which here are continuous and contrary, he made this harbor of Santo Domingo on Friday the last day of August, the same year 1498.

1. Las Casas's remarks on caution at sea are well put. Columbus learned his lesson on Christmas Eve, 1492. More ships have been lost at night by the Old Man or the officer of the deck "caulking off" than by any other cause.

2. 2 Esdras vi 42, "six parts hast Thou dried up." This text had always been a favorite of Columbus's—see his Postille, in Part I, above. Whoever wishes to check Columbus's references to Ambrose and Austin will find them in Jane II 42-3.

3. This alleged run of over 200 nautical miles in 12 hours was impossible; Las Casas must have garbled this part, and the 63 leagues have been reckoned from the time the fleet left the Bocas on 13 August. It evidently passed between Margarita and Los Frailes on 15 August and steered northwesterly for Hispaniola. Cf. *A.O.S.* II 291.

4. For comment on these observations see Morison "Colón y la Polar" in *Anuario de la Sociedad de Historia Argentina* III (1941) 11-52, which is an amplification of *American Neptune* I 13.

5. *American Neptune* I 133-4, and see diagram used to illustrate Polaris and Guards on First Voyage. This was the best of the Admiral's Polaris observations on the Third Voyage—only two or three degrees off. Both it, and the preceding one on compass variation, enabled him to alter his course, or he would have missed Hispaniola altogether. Morison *A.O.S.* II 286-7.

6. *açul, lacar.*

7. *estoraque.* Sad to relate, in all this list only the *brasil* (dye-wood), the pearls and the cotton were the genuine articles.

8. Columbus develops the Terrestrial Paradise theme later in his Letter to the Sovereigns, below.

9. Now Beata Island. His identification with the one named Santa Caterina on his return from Cuba in 1494, was incorrect.

10. Now Alta Vela.

11. The fact that Columbus came so near Santo Domingo, and was sore at not hitting it "on the nose," is a tribute to his skill as a dead-reckoning navigator. Considering that he had to note on a self-made chart all changes of course since the Cape Verdes, his last sure point, and that he had not met a single ship or seen a former landmark with which to check, and that his celestial navigation gave him no help, his figuring out the correct course from Margarita to Santo Domingo is nothing short of marvellous. And he would have made it, but for the Equatorial Current, which set him down to Alta Vela.

12. Plenty were dead. The point was that for an Indian to have a crossbow with its equipment was like a North American Indian in 1600 carrying musket, powder and ball.

13. The three he had parted with at the Canaries. They had missed Santo Domingo altogether and fetched up to leeward of Alta Vela.


Columbus's Letter to the Sovereigns on the Third Voyage, 18 October 1498

THIS IS COLUMBUS'S OFFICIAL REPORT TO FERDINAND AND ISABELLA ON THE THIRD VOYAGE, having the same relation to Las Casas's Abstract of the Journal as his Letter of March 1493 has to the First Voyage Journal. It is, however, very much longer than the 1493 Letter; and since for the most part it is a mere *précis* or repetition of the above Journal, I have printed here only a translation of those parts where Columbus developed his odd notions of cosmography, and his conviction that he had found the Terrestrial Paradise.

The original ms. has long since disappeared. A copy in Las Casas's hand, which formerly belonged to the Duke of Osuna, is now in the Biblioteca Nacional of Madrid. It was printed badly in Navarrete I 242-64, accurately by De Lollis in *Raccolta* I ii 26-40. Cecil Jane reproduced this text, with one unindicated omission, in his *Select Documents* II 3-47, together with his own translation, which is not bad except where it deals with navigational matters. Dr. Anastos and I used the *Raccolta* text and made a fresh translation. Dr. Carlos Sanz has published a facsimile of the Las Casas ms. with printed text as *Descubrimiento del Continente Americano* (Madrid 1962).

The ms. is given, in Las Casas's hand, the heading "The Story of the Voyage which the Admiral *Don Christóval Colón* made the Third Time he went to the Indies, when he discovered the Continent; as he sent it to the Sovereigns from the Island of Hispaniola." Columbus's own part begins with the salutation, "Most serene, exalted and powerful princes, the King and Queen our Lords: The Holy Trinity moved Your Highnesses to undertake this Enterprise of the Indies . . ."

The following extract begins about half way through the Letter, at p. 34 of the *Raccolta* text.

 When I sailed from Spain to the Indies I found immediately on passing 100 leagues west of the Azores a very considerable change in the sky and the stars, and in the temperature of the air and in the waters of the sea. I took great pains in putting this to the test. I found that, from north to south, passing the said islands by the said 100 leagues, the compass needles, which hitherto had varied northeasterly, now varied a full point to the NW. On reaching that line it was as if someone had transported a hill thither.¹ Moreover, I found the sea full of a certain weed, resembling little pine branches² and heavily laden with fruit like that of the mastic. It is so thick that on the First Voy-

age I thought that it was a shoal and that the ship would run aground. But until we reached this line we did not come upon a single branch. When we got there, moreover, I found the sea very calm and smooth and although the wind was strong, it never got rough. Furthermore, beyond the said line, towards the west, I found the weather to be very mild and unchanging in character, winter or summer. When I was there I discovered that the North Star described a circle, with a diameter of 5° , and when the Guards are in the Right [E] Arm, the star is at its lowest elevation, and it continues to rise until it reaches Left [W] Arm; then it has 5° [elevation]. From that point it sinks until it once more returns to Right Arm.³

On this [Third] Voyage . . . as soon as I succeeded in attaining this line [100 leagues W of the Azores] I immediately found the temperature very mild, and the further forward I went the more it increased; but I did not find the stars consistent with this. I found that, as night fell, I observed the North Star at an altitude of 5° , and then the Guards were at "head"; and afterwards at midnight I observed the Star 10° high, and at daybreak at 15° with the Guards at "feet."⁴ I found the smoothness of the sea conformed to this, but not the gulfweed. I was much amazed by this business of the North Star, and hence for many nights I "shot" it with the quadrant very carefully. But I always found that the plumb-bob and line hit the same point [on the scale].⁵ I regard this as something new, and mayhap it will be concluded that in this little space the sky changes so much.

I have always read that the world, both land and water, was spherical, as the authority and researches of Ptolemy and



all the others who have written on this subject demonstrate and prove, as do the eclipses of the moon and other experiments that are made from east to west, and the elevation of the North Star from north to south. But I have seen this discrepancy, as I have said. I am compelled, therefore, to come to this view of the world: I have found that it does not have the kind of sphericity described by the authorities, but that it has the shape of a pear, which is all very round, except at the stem, which is rather prominent, or that it is as if one had a very round ball, on one part of which something like a woman's teat were placed, this part with the stem being the uppermost and nearest to the sky, lying below the equinoctial line in this ocean sea, at the end of the East. I mean by the end of the East the point where its land and islands terminate. To confirm this I cite all the arguments written above about the line which passes from north to south 100 leagues west of the Azores. For in crossing this to the westward the vessels keep rising gradually toward the sky and then enjoy milder weather; and the needle varied a point on account of this mildness. The farther and higher we went, the more the needle varied towards the NW. This elevation is responsible for the variation of the circle which the North Star describes with the Guards. The closer one comes to the equator, the higher they will rise and the greater the difference will be in the said stars and their orbits.⁶

Ptolemy and the other scholars who have written about this world believed it spherical, thinking that this hemisphere was round like that in which they lived and which has its center in the island of Aryn,⁷ which is below the equinoctial

line between the Arabian Gulf and the Persian Gulf; the circle passes over Cape St. Vincent in Portugal in the west and by Cangara and the Seres in the east.⁸ In that hemisphere I see nothing that stands in the way of its being round, as they claim. But as for this other hemisphere I maintain that it is like a half of a very round pear which had a long stem, as I have said, or like a woman's teat on a round ball. So neither Ptolemy nor the others who wrote about the world had any information about this half, for it was altogether unknown. They merely based their opinion on the hemisphere in which they lived, which is round, as I have said above. And now that Your Highnesses have ordered navigation and search and discovery it is revealed very clearly. For during this voyage when I was 20 degrees N of the equinoctial line I was there in the latitude of Arguin⁹ and those other lands, and the people there are black and the land thoroughly scorched. After I went to Cape Verde Islands [I noticed] that the people in those regions are much darker, and the farther south they are the closer they approach the extreme; so, on the parallel of Sierra Leone, where I was when the North Star at nightfall had an elevation of 5°, the people are extremely black, and, after I sailed westward there, [I met] extreme heat. Once the line of which I spoke was passed, I found the climate increasingly mild, to such a degree that when I made the island of Trinidad, where the North Star at nightfall also had an elevation of 5°,¹⁰ I found the temperature there and in the land of Gracia very mild, the ground and the trees being very green and as beautiful as the orchards of Valencia in April. The people there are of very handsome build and whiter than

any others I have seen in the Indies. Their hair is very long and smooth. The people are more intelligent and have more ability, and they are not cowards. The sun was then in Virgo, above our heads and theirs.

All this comes from the very mild temperature which prevails there, and this in turn comes from its being the highest land in the world and the closest to the sky. I therefore assert that the world is not spherical but that it has this other shape which I have already described, and which is in the hemisphere where the Indies end and the Ocean Sea [begins], and its extremity is below the equator. And this view is greatly supported by the fact that the sun, when Our Lord first created it, was at the first point of the East,¹¹ and the first light was here in the Orient, here where the world is highest. Although Aristotle was of the opinion that the Antarctic pole or the land beneath it is the highest part of the world and nearest the sky, other wise men opposed him, saying that the highest part is beneath the Arctic pole. By this reasoning it appears that they believed that one part of the world must be higher and closer to the sky than the other, and they did not hit upon this view that it is beneath the equator, for the reason I have stated. This is not surprising, for no sound knowledge was available about this hemisphere, but only very vague information of uncertain character, for no one had ever gone, or been sent, to check on it until now, when Your Highnesses gave orders that the sea and land be explored and discovered.

Holy Scripture testifies that Our Lord created the Terrestrial Paradise and planted in it the tree of life, and that a

fountain sprang up there, from which flow the four principal rivers of the world: the Ganges in India, the Tigris and the Euphrates in [blank], which cut through a mountain range and form Mesopotamia and flow into Persia, and the Nile, which rises in Ethiopia and empties into the sea at Alexandria. I do not find and have never found any Latin or Greek work which definitely locates the Terrestrial Paradise in this world, nor have I seen it securely placed on any world map on the basis of proof. Some put it at the sources of the Nile in Ethiopia, but others have visited all these countries without finding evidence of it in the mildness of the sky, or in its height towards the sky, by which it might be understood that it was there, or that the waters of the flood, which had risen above, had penetrated to it. Some gentiles attempted to argue that it was in the Fortunate Islands, which are the Canaries, etc. St. Isidore, Bede, Strabo, the Master of Scholastic History,¹² St. Ambrose, Scotus, and all dependable theologians, agree that the Terrestrial Paradise is in the east, etc.

I return to my discussion of the land of Gracia and the river and lake I found there, so large that it may better be called sea than lake; for a lake is a place containing water and if it is large it is called a sea, as in the case of the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. I say that if this river does not originate in the Terrestrial Paradise, it comes and flows from a land of infinite size to the south, of which we have no knowledge as yet. But I am completely persuaded in my own mind that the Terrestrial Paradise is in the place I have described, and I rely upon the arguments and authorities above cited.

May it please Our Lord to grant Your Highnesses long life, health and leisure to be able to pursue this very noble Enterprise by which I think Our Lord is greatly served and Spain receives increase in dominion and all Christians are much consoled and pleased, for the name of Our Lord will here be preached. In all the lands which the vessels of Your Highnesses visit, and on every cape, I order a cross to be set up, and I inform all the people whom I find of the estate of Your Highnesses and how you are fixed in Spain. I tell them of our holy faith as best I can and of the dogma of our Holy Mother Church, which has her members in the entire world: I tell them of the polity and nobility of all Christians, and of their faith in the Holy Trinity. May it please Our Lord to forgive the persons who reviled and do revile this most excellent Enterprise and who oppose and have opposed it so that it may not go forward,

without considering how much honor and glory it is for the royal estate of Your Highnesses throughout the world. They know not what to say to malign it, except that it involves expense and that vessels have not been immediately dispatched laden with gold, without taking into account the shortness of time and the considerable difficulties that have been experienced here. They do not consider that in Castile, in the household of Your Highnesses, there are persons who each of them annually earn greater sums than it is necessary to expend on this enterprise. They likewise fail to note that no princes of Spain ever gained territory outside their borders save now, when Your Highnesses have an Other World here,¹³ by which our holy faith can be so greatly advanced and from which such great wealth can be drawn . . .

Thanks be to God.

1. Meaning, that it was "downhill" sailing before the trades the rest of the voyage.

2. *ramitos de pino*, a fanciful comparison for gulfweed.

3. See diagram at Journal of First Voyage, page 59, note 2, for meaning of this.

4. This, apparently, was the "shot" at Polaris between Margarita and Hispaniola; see Las Casas in the previous document for 16 August. The 10° change of altitude is wrong, it was really 7½°; but the positions are correct, and for an observation when Polaris hung so low, it is pretty good. But I do not understand what Columbus thinks it proves about the climate.

5. For a description and picture of the primitive form of quadrant used by Columbus see *A.O.S.* I 242 (one-vol. ed. 185).

6. Of course this is all nonsense; even Peter Martyr wrote that he couldn't make head or tail of it. Nothing in Columbus's writings has produced more raucous laughter than his conclusion that the globe had a protuberance here like a woman's teat. For explanation of why he arrived at so bizarre a theory see my *A.O.S.* II 283-4 (one-vol. ed. 556-8).

7. A sacred city somewhere in Asia, which Ptolemy and medieval writers believed to be the world's umbilic, where East ended and West began.

8. Seres is the ancient name for China. Columbus is evidently greatly pleased with himself for "discovering" something that Ptolemy didn't know.

9. An island off the West Coast of Africa, south of Cape Blanco. Columbus's estimate of its latitude is almost correct.

10. This, too, was wrong; Polaris would not have been higher than 6.5° at the Boca de la Sierpe. See note by Magnaghi to the Caddeo ed. of Ferdinand's *Historie* II 82-4.

11. I.e., at Aryn.

12. Petrus Comestor's commentary on Genesis entitled *Historia Scholastica*. There is an immense medieval literature on the Terrestrial Paradise (the Paradise whence Adam and Eve were expelled for their sin); and Columbus made many comments on the subject on the margins of his copy of *Imago Mundi*. Washington Irving has a good resumé of it in an appendix to his *Columbus* Vol. III.

Several pages of the Letter follow, attempting to "sell" the idea that "Gracia," the Gulf and Peninsula of Paria, was the Terrestrial Paradise.

13. *Otro mundo* again. The rest of the Letter is the usual plea to the Sovereigns to have patience, to continue to support his work, and not listen to his enemies.

Columbus's Letter to Doña Juana de Torres

October 1500

CONDITIONS IN HISPANIOLA WHEN COLUMBUS ARRIVED after discovering, as he thought, the Terrestrial Paradise, were infernal. The Admiral, when he left the island in 1496, had placed the government in charge of his brother Bartholomew, whose title of Adelantado ("Advancer") the Sovereigns had confirmed. During this period a rebellion of the Spanish colonists broke out, under the leadership of Francisco Roldán, Alcalde (chief justice) of the island. The rebels wanted to remove all restrictions on individual gold hunting and exploiting the Indians, some of whom believed Roldán's very contrary promises to them and joined him. By the time the Admiral arrived in Santo Domingo, 31 August 1498, the Adelantado had the situation well in hand; but a new situation was created by the three ships of the provision fleet, which had parted from Columbus at the Canaries, making land in the province of Xaragua west of Alta Vela, over which Roldán still held sway. Some of the new recruits they brought for the colony, many of them criminals, joined the rebels, who, thus happily reinforced, marched into the interior and besieged a government fortress in the Vega Real. The Admiral was able to command little support, since he and his brothers, as foreigners, were unpopular with the Spaniards, and many of the loyal colonists were laid low with syphilis. So Columbus made the best of a bad situation, appeasing Roldán by various concessions, in September 1499. About that time Alonso de Hojeda turned up, as Columbus relates in the following letter, and made more trouble.

By this time Ferdinand and Isabella, impressed by the many complaints against the Columbus brothers' rule that reached their ears, and disappointed at the small returns either in gold or in conversion, decided to send an important person to Hispaniola with full powers as royal inquisitor. The man they chose was Francisco de Bobadilla, Comendador (knight commander) of the Order of Calatrava. His credentials, dated 21 and 29 May 1499 (printed in Navarrete II 237-40), created him not only a judge to inquire

into and punish rebels, but "Governor of the Islands and Mainland of the Indies," thus superseding Columbus's powers in fact, if not by right.

After the usual delays, Bobadilla arrived at Santo Domingo on 23 August 1500. It was an unfortunate moment for the Columbus family. With the ex-rebel Roldán's assistance, they had just put down a second rebellion, led by one Adrián de Moxica. As Bobadilla entered the Ozama river mouth, the harbor of Santo Domingo, he was appalled by the sight of seven Spanish rebels' corpses hanging on a gallows. He took over the citadel and the Admiral's house, and clapped first the Admiral's younger brother D. Diego, governor of the city, and then the Admiral himself, in irons. When the Adelantado, on his brother's advice, submitted, he, too, was jailed. Bobadilla then conducted a series of *ex parte* hearings, summoning only rebels and malcontents; and on the strength of what they told him decided that the Columbus brothers were a set of unprincipled villains, and shipped them to Spain for trial in the caravel *La Gorda*. She sailed from Santo Domingo in early October of 1500, and arrived at Cadiz, after an unusually quick passage, before the end of that month. Columbus on this voyage was a passenger and a prisoner, refusing to remove the manacles that Bobadilla had ordered placed on his wrists until it could be done by the Queen.

The following letter was written on shipboard or immediately after landing. It well expresses Columbus's deep mortification over his treatment, and his sense of wounded honor. The letter is addressed to Doña Juana de Torres, former governess to the Infante Don Juan and the Infanta his sister. Columbus had evidently made friends with her during his last sojourn at court, where his sons had been pages to Don Juan. The Torres lady, after the Infante's death on 4 October 1497, became a pensioner and confidante of the Queen, which doubtless was the reason why Columbus unburdened himself to her.

The original letter is lost. Four early ms. copies are extant, and from these De Lollis established the text in *Raccolta* I ii 66-74. The letter has frequently been translated, by G. F. Barwick for B. F. Stevens (ed.) *Christopher Columbus His Own Book of Privileges* (London 1893) 246-65, together with a facsimile of the ms. copy in that book, and a printed Spanish text. The Barwick translation, a rather inept one, is used in Olson & Bourne *Northmen, Columbus and Cabot* 371-83. Cecil Jane printed the *Raccolta* text with his own translation in his *Select Documents* II 48-70. We have used the *Raccolta* text and have made a fresh translation.

While the Letter tells nothing new about Columbus's Third Voyage, indeed little that is not known from Las Casas and other sources, it is of the highest importance in understanding Columbus the man.

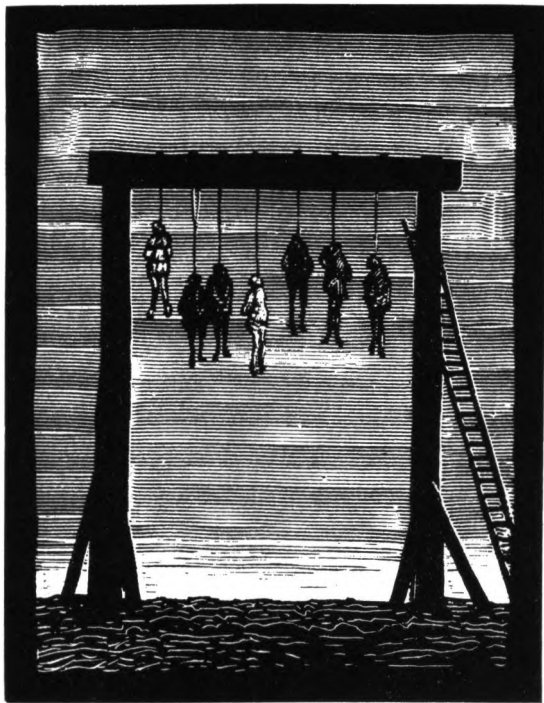


Copy of a letter which the Admiral of the Indies, coming as a prisoner from the Indies, sent to the governess of Don Juan of Castile in the year 1500.

Highly virtuous Lady:

If resentment against the world is un-

usual for me, its practice of maltreating me is nothing new. It hath given me a thousand battles, and all have I resisted until now, when neither arms nor prudence have been of any avail to me. Cruelly it hath cast me down into the depths. Hope in Him who created all men



sustaineth me: His succor hath always been very near. At another time, not long ago, when I was in great distress, He helped me up with his right hand, saying, "O man of little faith, arise, for it is I; fear not."¹

I came with such cordial affection to serve these princes, and I have served them with unheard of and unseen devotion. Of the New Heaven and Earth which Our Lord made, as St. John writes in the Apocalypse, after he had spoken it by the mouth of Isaiah, He made me the messenger thereof and showed me where to go. There was incredulity among all men, and He gave the Queen, my Lady, the spirit of understanding and great courage and He made her the heiress of all, as His dear and well-beloved daughter. I went to take possession of all this in her Royal Name. They all sought to cover their ignorance, concealing their small knowledge by harping upon obstacles and

the expense. Her Highness on the contrary approved the Enterprise and supported it the best she could. Seven years were spent in discussion, and nine in performance. Outstanding memorable events, of which there had been no conception, took place in the latter period.

I have now come to such a pass that there is none so vile as to dare not abuse me; for anyone who refrains from such abuse, it shall be reckoned as virtue. Had I despoiled the Indies, or the land which lies towards them (whereof I now speak), from the altar of St. Peter and given it to the Moors, I could have been shown no greater enmity in Spain. Who will believe such a thing of a country where there has always been such magnanimity?

I would gladly sink the whole business, were it honorable towards my Queen so to do.² The support of Our Lord and of Her Highness made me persevere and, in order to assuage somewhat the grief which death has brought upon her,³ I undertook a new voyage to the New Heaven and World⁴ which hitherto had been hidden. And if, like the rest of the Indies, this is not held in esteem over there; this is no wonder, since it came to light through my exertions.⁵

The Holy Spirit inspired St. Peter and, with him, the others of the Twelve, and they all struggled in this world, and many were their labors and their hardships; in the end they triumphed over all.

I thought that this voyage to Paria would appease [my critics], owing to the pearls and the discovery of gold in Hispaniola.⁶ I ordered the people to gather and fish for pearls and an agreement was made concerning my return for them, to such an amount, as I understood it, that they would be measured by the bushel. If

I have not written of this to Their Highnesses, it was because I wanted to dispose of the gold business first.⁷ This business turned out for me like many others. I should have lost neither them [the pearl fisheries] nor my honor, had I sought my own advantage and allowed Hispaniola to be ruined; or if my privileges and contracts had been respected. And the same goes for the gold already collected, and which, after so many killings and travail, I have, by Divine Grace, delivered perfectly.

When I arrived from Paria, I found almost half the people in Hispaniola in rebellion, and they have made war on me until now, as if I were a Moor; and the Indians, too, seriously. At this juncture Hojeda turned up and attempted to put the seal on this situation. He claimed that Their Highnesses had sent him out with promises of gifts, privileges, and money. He gathered a big following, for in Hispaniola most of the men are vagabonds, and none of them has a wife and children.⁸ This Hojeda caused me a great deal of trouble. He had to be sent away, and away he went, boasting that he would return shortly with more vessels and people and that he had left the Queen, Our Lady, at the point of death.

At this point Vicente Yáñez turned up,⁹ with four caravels; this raised tumults and suspicions, but he did no damage. The Indians spoke of many other caravels being in the Carib Islands and at Paria, and later there was a report of six other caravels, commanded by a brother of the Alcalde,¹⁰ but this was due to malice. This took place at a time when I had all but abandoned hope that Their Highnesses would ever send a vessel to the Indies, nor did we expect them, and when it was

commonly reported that Her Highness was dead.

At this point one Adrián tried to rebel again, as before, but Our Lord would not suffer his evil purpose to be achieved. I had made up my mind not to touch a hair of anyone's head, but owing to his ingratitude, I was unable to save him, as I had hoped to do.¹¹ I would not have done less to my brother, if he had wished to kill me and steal the dominion which my king and queen had intrusted to me. This Adrián, as it appears, had sent Don Fernando¹² to Xaragua to gather some of his followers. There was a dispute there with the Alcalde, and whence arose a fatal quarrel, but Adrián did not accomplish his purpose. The Alcalde arrested him and some of his adherents and would have punished them, if I had not prevented it. They were imprisoned, awaiting a caravel in which they were to depart. The news about Hojeda, which I have mentioned, made them lose hope that it would ever come.

For six months I had been ready to leave to come to Their Highnesses with the good news about the gold, and to escape from governing a dissolute people, full of vice and malice, who fear neither God nor their King or Queen. I could have paid off the people with 600,000 maravedis, and for this I had four millions¹³ and a little more from the tithes, and also my third of the gold. Before my departure I frequently implored Their Highnesses to send over at my expense someone to administer justice. After I found that the Alcalde had revolted I asked for this again or for some men, or at least for a servant bearing letters from them; for my reputation is such that, though I were to erect churches and hospi-

tals, they would always be "lairs for brigands."¹⁴ Finally, they did do something, but very different from what the situation demanded; so let it be, since that was their pleasure. I was there two years without being able to secure anything for myself or for those who were there; but *he*¹⁵ brought a chestful; whether they will be used in their behalf, God knows. Already, at the beginning there are [given out] permits for 20 years, a man's lifetime, and one man took in five marks' worth [of gold] in four hours; whereof I shall speak more later. It would be an act of charity, were it to please Their Highnesses, to put to shame a mob of those who know my sufferings, for their calumnies have done me the greater injury, so that I have not profited from my great services or from my protection of Their [Majesties'] estate and dominion. I should thus regain my honor, and the whole world would talk of it; for the matter is of such nature that its fame and esteem increases daily.

At the time when Comendador Bobadilla arrived in Santo Domingo, I was at La Vega¹⁶ and the Adelantado was in Xaragua, where Adrián had made trouble; but now all was quiet, and the land prosperous, and all at peace. The day after he arrived, he made himself governor, appointed officials, performed executive acts, issued permits for [gathering] gold, remitted tithes and all other obligations in general for 20 years, which, as I say, is a man's lifetime.¹⁷ He announced that he had come to pay everyone, even those who had not served properly up to that day. He also announced that he was to send me back in chains, and my brothers also; and that I was never to return thither, nor any other member of my family, making a thousand false and abusive remarks

about me. All this happened the very day after he arrived, I being far distant, without knowledge of him or his arrival. He filled in and sent to the Alcalde and his fellows, with compliments and flattery, some letters from Their Highnesses, signed in blank, of which he had a large number. To me he sent neither letter nor messenger, nor has he done so to this day.

Consider, Your Grace, what one who held my position was to think! Honors and favors for those who sought to usurp Their Majesties' authority and who have done so much harm and damage; humiliation for one who has sustained it through so many perils! When I heard of this, I thought it would be like the affair of Hojeda, or of one of the others;¹⁸ I restrained myself when I learned for certain from the friars that Their Highnesses had sent him. I then wrote to him that he had arrived opportunely, and that I was ready to go to court and that I had put up all that I had for sale, and that there should be no haste about the permits, for I would immediately hand over the government to him calmly and peacefully; and so I wrote this to *los religiosos*.¹⁹ Neither he nor they replied. On the contrary, he assumed a hostile attitude and forced all who went there to take an oath to him as governor; for 20 years, they told me.

As soon as I heard about the permits, I determined to repair this great error and [I thought] that he would be pleased. Without reason or necessity he had granted to vagabonds privileges of such extent that they would have been excessive for a man who had brought out a wife and children. I proclaimed orally and by letters that he had no authority to use his credentials, for mine took precedence, and I showed them the grants which Juan

Aguado²⁰ had brought.

All this that I did was to gain time, so that Their Highnesses might be informed of the state of the country and have occasion to give orders that would be in their interest.

It is unprofitable to them to issue such permits in the Indies. It is a free gift to those inhabitants who have taken up residence; since they are given the best lands [each of] which will be worth 200,000 maravedis, at a low estimate at the end of the four years, when the permit terminates, without being even touched with a spade. I would not so speak if the inhabitants were married. But there are not six of the lot who are not determined to grab what they can and then make a quick departure. It would be a good thing to have people come from Castile, and to know, too, who they are and what their intentions are, and to settle the country with men of probity.

I had agreed with these settlers that they should pay tithes and a third of the gold, and this at their request and they looked on the agreement as a great favor from Their Highnesses.²¹ I reproved them when I heard that they were giving this up, and I expected the Comendador would make another [arrangement] like it; but the contrary was the case. He provoked them against me, declaring that I wanted to rob them of what Their Highnesses had granted them, and he labored to have them blame me, and got away with it. He persuaded them to write to Their Highnesses that they should not send me out again (and which I begged for myself and for my household connected with me, so long as the people remain the same). He ordered an inquiry into my misdeeds, the like of which were

never known in hell. But Our Lord reigns, who delivered Daniel and the three boys²² with so much wisdom and power and with manifestation, as pleased Him and according to His will.

I would have known how to remedy all this and the other things which I have mentioned and which have taken place since I have been in the Indies, had I permitted myself to seek personal gain, and if it were honorable. But maintaining justice and extending the realm of Their Highnesses to this day, hath brought me to the depths, now, when so much gold has been found, it is doubtful whether it is more profitable to go plundering or to go to the mines. Moreover, a hundred castellanos, or a farm, are paid for a woman, and this has become a common practice; there are many merchants who go looking for wenches—those of nine or ten years old are now at a premium, but a good price can be obtained for women of all ages.

I assert that the violence of the calumnies of disaffected people has done me more injury than my services have afforded me profit; a bad example for present and future. I swear that a quantity of fellows have gone to the Indies who did not deserve [baptismal] water before God and the world; and now they are returning, with his [Bobadilla's] consent.

I assert that when I said that the Comendador could not grant permits, I nevertheless did what he wanted, although I told him it was to gain time until Their Highnesses could obtain information concerning the country and then consider and command what would be to their interest.

He aroused everyone against me, and it appears from his conduct and his meth-

ods that he came here with this purpose, already greatly inflamed. It is said that he paid a great deal of money to get this job; I only know what I hear. I never heard of an investigating magistrate assembling rebels and others without faith and unworthy of it, and bringing them as witnesses against the man who was governing them. If Their Highnesses would order a general investigation to be made there, I tell you they would be greatly surprised that the island had not sunk.

I think Your Grace will remember that when the storm drove me into Lisbon without sails, I was falsely accused of having gone there to the King, to sell out the Indies. Later Their Highnesses learned the contrary and that it was all malice.

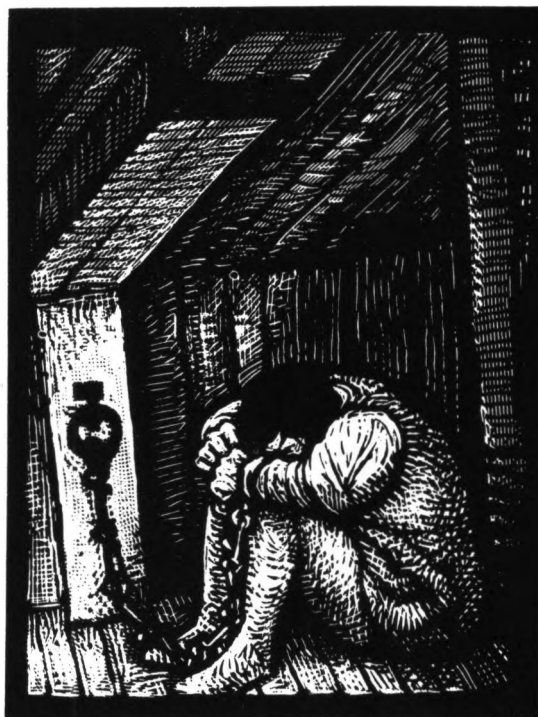
Although I have little knowledge, I do not know who thinks I am so stupid as not to realize that, even if the Indies were mine, I could not maintain myself without the support of a prince.²³ This being so, where could I get better security and protection against being driven out of the Indies altogether than from the King and Queen, our Lords, who from nothing have raised me to such high estate, and who are the most exalted rulers in the world, on sea and land? They know that I have served them and they safeguard my privileges and rewards against anyone who transgresses them, Their Highnesses increase them to my advantage, as hath been seen in the matter of Juan Aguado, and they command that I be shown much honor; and as I have already said, Their Highnesses have received service from me, and they hold my sons as their servants,²⁴ which could in no way happen with another prince; for where there is no love all else is wanting.

I have spoken thus against a malicious

slander, and against my will, for it is a matter which I would not care to recall even in a dream. The Comendador Bobadilla malevolently wishes to elucidate his deeds and his methods in this affair, but I shall easily demonstrate that his trifling knowledge, great cowardice, and inordinate greed, have caused him to fail therein.

I mentioned what I wrote to him and to the friars, and I left immediately, as I told him, all alone, because all the people were with the Adelantado, and also to allay suspicion. When he learned this, he arrested Don Diego and cast him loaded with chains into a caravel; and when I got there, he did the same to me, and afterwards to the Adelantado, when he came. I spoke no more to him; nor up to this day hath he allowed anyone to speak with me. I swear that I cannot tell why I was imprisoned.

His first concern was to seize the



gold, without measuring or weighing it; and, in my absence, he said he wished to pay the people out of it. As I heard, he took the first part for himself and sent for new people to oversee the barter. I had put aside some specimens of this gold, nuggets of great size, as large as the eggs of a goose, and a hen, and a pullet, and many other samples, which some people had collected in a short time, so that Their Highnesses might be pleased and might thus judge the situation on the basis of a number of large stones filled with gold. But these he first maliciously took for himself, so that Their Highnesses might not deem this affair to be of any moment until he had feathered his nest, which he hastened to do. The gold which is to be smelted diminishes in the fire; some chains weighing as much as 20 marks have never been seen [again].

I was even more aggrieved in this matter of the gold than I was about the pearls, because I did not deliver them to Their Highnesses.

The Comendador immediately set about doing everything which he thought would injure me. I have said that with 600,000 maravedis I could have paid all the men without defrauding one, and that I had more than four millions from tithes and fees, without touching the gold. He has made some gifts, which are ridiculous, although I think he began with himself first. Their Highnesses will find out the truth on this head when they command him to render an account, especially if I may be present at the time. He frequently says that a large sum is due, and it is the amount I have mentioned, and even less.

I have been very greatly aggrieved in that the man who has been sent to investigate me knows that, if the results of the

investigation should prove damaging, he would remain as governor. Would that it had pleased Our Lord that Their Highnesses had sent him or someone else two years ago; for I know that I should then have been untouched by scandal and infamy, and I should not have been robbed of my honor, nor lost it. God is just, and will make known how and by whom.

They judge me there as a governor who had gone to Sicily or to a city or town under a regular government, where the laws can be observed *in toto* without fear of losing all; and I am suffering grave injury. I should be judged as a captain who went from Spain to the Indies to conquer a people numerous and warlike, whose manners and religion are very different from ours, who live in sierras and mountains, without fixed settlements, and where by divine will I have placed under the sovereignty of the King and Queen our Lords, an Other World, whereby Spain, which was reckoned poor, is become the richest of countries.

I ought to be judged as a captain, who for so long a time, up to the present day, hath borne arms without laying them down for an hour, and by knights of the sword and not by [men of] letters, unless they were Greeks or Romans²⁵ or others of modern times, of whom there are so many and so noble in Spain; for otherwise I am greatly aggrieved, since in the Indies there is neither a town nor settlement.

The gateway to gold and pearls is now opened, and a quantity of all—precious stones, spices, and a thousand other things—can be confidently expected.

The report on the gold which I said I would give, is that on Christmas Day, when I was suffering great affliction and attacks from the malicious Christians and

the Indians, and was about to give up everything and escape with my life, if I could, Our Lord miraculously consoled me and said, "Be of good cheer, be not dismayed, fear not. I shall provide for all. The seven years, the term of the gold, are not passed. In this and in the rest I shall grant thee relief." That day I learned there were 80 leagues of land and mines all over it. It now appears that they are all one. Some have collected 120 castellanos a day, others 90, and it has gone as high as 250. It is considered a good day's work there to get from 50 to 70, and even in the judgment of many, from 15 to 50; many continue at this work, commonly getting from 6 to 12 castellanos. Whoever gets less than this is dissatisfied. It seems, furthermore, that these mines are like the others, for they do not yield the same every day. The mines are new, and so are the men who work them. Everyone agrees that, even if all Castile goes there, the most untrained person will not fall below a castellano or two every day. It is true that [everyone] has an Indian, but the Christians do all the business.

Observe the discernment of Bobadilla, to give all for nothing, and four millions' worth of permits without reason or necessity, without first notifying Their Highnesses! And that is not the entire damage.

I know that my errors have not been committed with malicious intent, and I think Their Highnesses believe me when I say so. I know and see that they use mercy to one who seeks maliciously to

do them ill. I believe and am certain that they will be kinder and more charitable towards me, for I have fallen into error through ignorance and by force, as they will learn fully hereafter, and that I am their creature, and they will wonder at my services, and every day will realize that they have been advantageous. They will weigh all in the scales, as Holy Scripture telleth us good and evil will be weighed on judgment day. If they still command that some other judge me (which I do not expect), and that there be an inquiry about the Indies, very humbly I beg them to send two honorable and conscientious people at my expense, and I believe they will find that gold to the value of five marks is had in four hours. Be that as it may, it is very necessary that they provide for this.

The Comendador, upon arriving at Santo Domingo, took up his abode in my house, and everything he found there he took for himself. Well and good;²⁶ no pirate ever used a merchant thus. Of my records I make the greatest complaint, that they have been taken from me, that never have I been able to get one back, and that those which would most have cleared me, he has kept the most concealed. Behold the just and honorable inquisitor! Whatever he may have done, they tell me that it is the end of justice, except as absolutely.²⁷ But Our Lord God is present as of old in His power and wisdom, and in the end chastises, especially ingratitude and injuries.

1. Mark vi. 50.

2. It is significant that he mentions no obligation to Ferdinand. Isabella always regarded "the Indies" as a colony of her kingdom of Castile and Leon, in which Aragon and the King had no part except to help pay the bills. Columbus's descendants adopted the motto:

Por Castilla y por León
Nuevo Mundo halló Colón
to which some wag at Barcelona added
Pero lo pagó Aragón
—but Aragon paid for it.
3. Of the Infante D. Juan.

4. *nuevo cielo y mundo*; this is the first record of the Admiral's using the phrase "New World." See note to Las Casas's Abstract of Journal of Third Voyage, (f) note 1.
5. The Admiral here is being sarcastic—"It is considered no good in Spain, because I did it."
6. Gold was discovered in Hispaniola in 1492. He must mean new measures for extracting gold—the *repartimiento* system, by which a tract of land with the Indians living there, was assigned to each colonist. Columbus started this system to appease the rebels, and it spread all over Spanish America as a convenient method of equating land with the native labor supply.
7. Columbus, as we have seen, discovered the Pearl Coast west of the Paria Peninsula, but did not tarry, owing to his haste to reach Hispaniola. This allowed that gay rascal Alonso de Hojeda to pull a fast one on the Admiral. When the flagship and *El Correo* returned to Spain in the fall of 1498 he got possession of Columbus's chart of the Pearl Coast and obtained a license from D. Juan de Fonseca (which Fonseca had no right to grant) to make a voyage thither in 1499, with Juan de la Cosa and Amerigo Vespucci. It was this voyage, an account of which was published in 1504, which Vespucci, or the editor, antedated as 1497, and which caused people to think that he, not Columbus, discovered the mainland. See G. T. Northup *Vespucci Reprints* IV (Princeton 1916). By the time Columbus wrote this letter, Peralonso Niño had also been poaching on the Pearl Coast—see Alice Gould in *BRAH* CXIII (1942) 40.
8. That most of the settlers were bums was true enough; but the Admiral himself had suggested emptying the jails to get them, and women of a sort had already been sent out. Alonso de Hojeda, after his rich haul of pearls, called at Puerta Brazil (Jacmel) to cut dyewood, and after trying to displace Roldán as rebel leader, went on a slave hunt to the Bahamas. To annoy Columbus he declared that the Queen was dying, and suggested that all his privileges would go down the drain.
9. The younger Pinzón. He had sailed a notable voyage along the northern coast of Brazil, discovering one mouth of the Amazon, then doubled back and made Hispaniola on 23 June 1500.
10. Roldán. No such voyage took place; the other reports were of Peralonso Niño's voyage.
11. Adrián de Moxica, who revolted a second time; when arrested and found guilty of treason he behaved in so defiant and insulting a manner that some of Columbus's fellows shoved him off the walls of a fortress where he was confined.
12. Fernando de Guevara. His row with the Alcalde (Roldán) was over an Indian girl, daughter of the beautiful lady cacique Anacaona (widow of Caonabó), for whom Bartholomew Columbus had "fallen" on his visit to Xaragua in 1497. This brawl is confirmed by Ferdinand Columbus's *Historie* chap. 84 (Keen trans. 218) and Las Casas chap. 169. (1951 ed. II 141-5).
13. *cuentos*; a *cuento* or *conto* meant a million maravedis. Most of the settlers in Hispaniola were on a payroll.
14. Las Casas observes that Columbus by that time realized that, as a foreigner, he could never obtain respect or obedience from Spaniards, "such being the peculiar temper or pride of Spain." Ferdinand tells how he and his half-brother D. Diego were mortified by returned colonists hooting at them and calling their father "the Admiral of the Mosquitoes."
15. Francisco de Bobadilla. Upon arrival at Santo Domingo, to curry favor with the colonists, he declared open season for gold collecting, and granted the *franquesas*, franchises or permits, to which Columbus alludes.
16. Vega Real, the central valley of Hispaniola.
17. Columbus's insistence on 20 years being the active life of a man is a striking testimony to the short expectation of life in that violent era.
18. I.e., a minor rebellion.
19. Two friars, who acted as go-betweens. This correspondence has disappeared, but Bobadilla's credentials (Navarrete II 235-40) prove that the Admiral was wrong in his belief that the Comendador had authority only to investigate, not to act or govern.
20. An investigator sent out by the Sovereigns in 1495. He had thrown his weight about and infuriated Columbus, but did not presume to take over the government.
21. He is referring to his *repartimientos*, whose beneficiaries had to turn in 10% to the Church and 33% to the Crown; but Bobadilla's pets did not have to pay anything.
22. The Prophet from the lions' den, and Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego from the fiery furnace, Dan. iii 26, vi 22. These were favorite subjects in medieval art.
23. An oblique reference to a rumor that Columbus intended to persuade Genoa to take over the Indies.
24. After the death of Don Juan, both Diego and Ferdinand were appointed pages to the Queen.
25. What Columbus meant by dragging in the Greeks and Romans is not clear; probably he was implying that Bobadilla was illiterate in the ancient tongues; and the Sovereigns should either have sent out a real scholar, or an army officer, who would be the Admiral's equal.
26. *vaya en buen hora*; lit. *à la bonne heure*.
27. *salvo absolutamente*. He means that it could be considered justice only under an absolute or totalitarian regime. The letter closes on the next line.


The Royal Mandate Ordering Restitution to the Admiral for Wrongs Done to Him by Bobadilla, 27 September 1501

ABOUT A YEAR ELAPSED BEFORE COLUMBUS COULD GET ACTION ON HIS BEHALF from the Sovereigns. He arrived at Cadiz toward the end of October 1500, and, still wearing his "bracelets," went to stay at the Carthusian monastery of Las Cuevas in Seville, as a guest—for Bobadilla had impounded all his property in Hispaniola and returned him almost penniless. On 12 December the Sovereigns ordered him released from the manacles, and summoned him to court, then at Granada. Spain, like Portugal, at that time had no capital; the kings and queens moved about between places where they had palaces, or hospitable persons and monasteries where they could stay. This kept them in touch with their subjects, but it also explains why so many important documents were lost. One can imagine some *repostero de la camera*, whose duty it was to pack up the royal archives, saying, "Here's the Journal of that bore Cristóbal Colón who calls himself Admiral of the Ocean Sea—no use carting that about; let's burn it!"

On 17 December 1500, the three Columbus brothers presented themselves to Ferdinand and Isabella at Alhambra, and were very well received. The Sovereigns ordered that all Christopher's rights and privileges be restored and confirmed. Months passed, but nothing was done. On 3 September 1501 the axe fell, as far as Columbus's honorable offices were concerned. D. Nicholas de Ovando, Comendador de Lares, was appointed governor, viceroy and chief justice of and in the Indies. The Sovereigns had decided that it would do no good to send the Columbus family back to Hispaniola; a new deal was wanted. But it was some consolation to the Admiral that Bobadilla didn't get the job, that he was recalled, and forced to disgorge what he had stolen from Columbus, as the following mandate relates.

This ms., copied into the book where Columbus recorded all his most important documents, was reproduced in facsimile, with printed translation by G. F. Barwick, in B. F. Stevens *Christopher Columbus, His Own Book of Privileges* (London 1893) 198–205. This translation is Barwick's, somewhat corrected by me.

THE KING AND THE QUEEN



What we declare and command to be done in the matter of property belonging to *Don Christoual Colon*, our Admiral of the Ocean Sea.

Firstly, in what concerns the contribution of the eighth part of the merchandise which we now command to be sent to the said islands and mainlands, and of that which shall go henceforth, the said Admiral, upon his supplying the eighth part of such merchandise or giving the value thereof, after the costs and expenses which shall be incurred therein shall have been first deducted, may have for himself the eighth part of the profit which shall be derived from the said merchandise, conformably to the capitulation dealing with this matter which has been made with him.¹

Furthermore, forasmuch as the Comendador Bobadilla took for himself certain gold and jewels and other moveable goods, landed property and livestock, which the said Admiral held in the island of Hispaniola, because it is the produce and revenue of the said Indies, we command that first of all there be paid from the said things which were taken from him the costs and expenses and wages which shall be due and shall have been expended since the said Admiral went last time to the Indies in the year '98, after he arrived in the island of Hispaniola; for although, by the Capitulation, that is the charge of the said Admiral, yet it is understood that he is to pay the same out of what may be obtained from the said Indies; and of what shall remain, after the abovesaid has been paid, let a total be made, and ten parts having been formed, nine parts shall be for us and the tenth for

the said Admiral; and out of the said nine parts we will pay the wages, costs and expenses which have been laid out and shall be due until the said voyage which was made in the year ninety-eight, when the Admiral was in the said island of Hispaniola; forasmuch as we made him a grant of that part of the said expenses for which he was liable. And the said Admiral shall pay from the said tenth part whatever it shall be proved that he owes individually to any persons, as Admiral.²

Item, that in respect to the cattle which were taken hence at our cost, although, according to the said capitulation, the costs and expenses which have been incurred therein were to be deducted, and out of the remainder the said Admiral was to have the tenth part; nevertheless, in order to show him favor, we command that, without deducting the said costs and expenses, there be rendered to him the tenth part of the said cattle, and first and second of their progeny; and the nine parts shall remain and fall to us.

Item, we command that there be returned and restored to him all the furniture of his person and household, and provisions of bread and wine, which the Comendador Bobadilla took from him, or their just value, without our receiving any part thereof.

Item, that forasmuch as the said Comendador Bobadilla, among other things which he took from the said Admiral, took from him a certain quantity of nuggets from the source whence the gold comes, and which contain a portion of gold; we command our Governor of the said islands to receive a declaration upon oath from the said Comendador Bobadilla

of their number and weights, and to cause them to be restored to him, in order that they may be divided and distributed in the manner aforesaid.

Item, we command to be restored to the said Admiral two mares with their foals, which the said Admiral bought from a husbandman in the Indies, and two horses which the said Admiral had, one of which he bought from Gorbacán, and the other he had from his mares, which the said Comendador Bobadilla took from him, or their just value, without his being bound to give us any part thereof.

Item, forasmuch as the said Admiral states that he suffers injury in that he does not appoint captains and officers to the vessels which we are now sending to the island of Hispaniola, whom he alleges that he was to appoint according to the said Capitulations, we declare that since the said captains and officers have been already appointed by our command, we will in future order appointments to be made conformably to the said Capitulation.

Item, we declare and command that the said Admiral may henceforth bring yearly from the island of Hispaniola 111 quintals of dyewood,³ on account of the tenth part which he is to have in respect of the thousand quintals of dyewood, which is to be given yearly, by our command, to the merchants with whom an agreement has been made thereupon; because, by the agreement which was made with the said merchants, his portion is excepted; which the said Admiral enjoys for the term contained in the said agreement of the said merchants; and later the tenth part of what shall be obtained.

Item, that forasmuch as the Admiral declares that the Comendador Bobadilla

has paid some debts of wages and other things in the said island of Hispaniola to some persons to whom neither wages nor anything else was due, as will appear by the books of the said officers, and can be proved and shown; we command that if he shall have made payments to persons to whom neither wages nor anything else was due, the said Admiral shall not be obliged to pay the same.

Item, forasmuch as the said Comendador Bobadilla took from the brothers of the said Admiral a certain quantity of gold and jewels, on the ground that it was acquired by them as administrators of the government of the said Indies; let ten parts be made of the whole, and the Admiral shall have the tenth part, and the nine parts shall remain and fall to us; and in respect to the furniture, provisions, plantations and houses which they held, and the gold which they possessed for things of their own which they had sold, upon proving that it was of this nature, although we have some right thereto, we make them a gift of the whole of it, so that they may dispose thereof as of their own property.

Item, it is our will and pleasure that the said Admiral shall keep in the said island of Hispaniola a person who shall attend to the affairs of his property and receive what he ought to have, and that it shall be Alonso Sánchez de Carvajal, paymaster of our household;⁴ and that the said Alonso Sánchez de Carvajal, on behalf of the said Admiral, shall be present with our Inspector to view the smelting and marking of the gold which shall be obtained in the said islands and mainlands; and shall, with our factor, attend to the transaction of the affairs of the said merchandise. And we command our Gover-

nor, and Accountant, and Justices and officials who are now, or shall be, of the said islands and mainland, to fulfil and cause to be observed the aforesaid, in so far as it shall be our will and pleasure; and, upon the said Alonso Sánchez de Carvajal showing sufficient authority from the said Admiral, to render to him the portion of the gold which shall belong to him on account of the tithe in the said island, after the costs and expenses have been deducted, and also the profit on the merchandise for the eighth part which the said Admiral shall show that he contributed to the cost thereof.

Item, forasmuch as the said Admiral has farmed out the offices of Bailiff and Notary of the said island of Hispaniola for a certain term, we command that the moneys and whatever the said offices shall have produced and been worth shall be divided into ten parts, nine to be for us and one for the said Admiral, first of all deducting the costs and expenses of the said officers; and because the person who held the said notaryship was not obliged to give a fixed sum for it, we command that upon being paid for his labor he is to render all that he has received, in order that it may be divided, as aforesaid.

This was followed by an order to the new Viceroy Ovando, dated 28 September 1501, to enforce the above mandate.

1. See the Capitulations above, Part I.
2. This clause applied to the gold and other profits obtained by people on the royal payroll. In addition, the Crown took ten per cent of all gold obtained by others, and of these the Admiral received ten per cent; i.e., two per cent of the total.
3. *Brasil*, from which Brazil takes its name. This "logwood," as all hardwoods yielding dyes used to be called, especially that which yields a black dye which

Item, that they return to him the books and records which were taken from him; and if any of them shall be required for the administration, let there be made a transcript signed by a notary public, and let the originals be delivered to him, as aforesaid.

Item, that in what concerns freight and provisions, the said Carvajal is to enjoy the whole of it, according and in the same manner as our other officers enjoy.

All that is aforesaid, and every article and portion thereof, we command you, our Governor and our Accountant, and other officers, and justices, and persons of the said islands and mainlands, so to perform and fulfil, in everything and by everything, as it is contained above. And in fulfilling it, you are to give and deliver to the said Admiral and his brothers, and to anyone who shall have his power of attorney, the things above said, without any impediment being offered to him therein. And you shall not act contrary hereto. Done in Granada, on the 27th day of September in the year 1501.

I THE KING. I THE QUEEN.

By the command of the King and of the Queen, Gaspar de Grizio.

the chemists have as yet been unable to equal for durability, are still an important export from Haiti and other parts of the Caribbean. Columbus saw *Caesalpinia echinata*. H.U.B.

4. Sánchez de Carvajal was the sea-going mayor of Baeza, who had been a captain of a vessel on the Second Voyage and of one of the provision ships on the Third. He was devoted to the Admiral and served him well in Hispaniola.

PART V

The Fourth Voyage of Discovery

1502-1504





Introduction

SOME TWELVE YEARS AFTER IT WAS OVER, ARIAS PÉREZ, AN OLD SALT WHO HAD MADE THIS VOYAGE, declared that the Admiral “always called this, his Fourth and last expedition, *el alto viaje*.”¹ And a “high voyage” indeed it was, for excitement, adventure, hurricanes, battles, mutinies and sheer guts. It was the most prolonged and dangerous of the four voyages, and the least fortunate; Columbus had the bad luck to miss making contact with the splendid Mayan empire in Yucatan; he missed by a hair discovering the Pacific Ocean; he failed to establish a trading-post in the gold-bearing regions of Veragua; and he returned to Spain at the age of fifty-three, after being marooned for a year in Jamaica, a tired, broken man.

So long as there was some chance of his returning to Hispaniola in triumph as Viceroy and Governor, Columbus shelved whatever ideas he may have had for a fourth voyage. Finally, on 13 February 1502, when the new Viceroy Don Nicholas de Ovando, Comendador de Lares, departed Cadiz with a magnificent fleet of 30 sail, carrying 2500 people, Columbus knew that he had lost. If he were ever to have his offices restored, it would only be after performing fresh exploits, or after Ovando had got himself in wrong with the Sovereigns. Within two weeks of Ovando's departure, Columbus made his proposals in a memorial which has been lost; and, *mirabile dictu*, it took the Sovereigns only two weeks more to reply. Although their authorization, which follows, was gracious, and the provisions they made for it were ample, it is obvious that their main object was to get rid of Columbus; note the frequent hints that the sooner he puts to sea the better pleased they will be.

Columbus's objectives were to explore the Western Caribbean, to find a strait to the Indian Ocean, and to rehabilitate his own reputation and fortune. First, to explore; for nobody had been to Cuba or Jamaica since his own Second Voyage in 1494; and, although Hojeda, Peralonso Niño and Rodrigo de Bastidas had sailed along the Pearl Coast



and the Spanish Main as far as Cartagena between 1499 and 1502, the entire coast of Central America west of the Gulf of Darien was unknown. Somewhere in that region he hoped to find the strait which would lead to the Indian Ocean, thus outdoing the recent Portuguese voyages to India; and, finally, he hoped to bring home such astounding discoveries that titles and privileges would be restored. What came first in the Admiral's mind, not even he could say, so mixed up were his personal and professional ambitions; but he certainly put the most time and effort in trying to find the strait that wasn't there.

The most important sources for this Voyage are printed here in translation. These are (1) the Royal Instructions for this Voyage, (2) the Payroll and List of Ships, (3) Ferdinand Columbus's account of the Voyage, (4) Columbus's *Lettera Rarissima*, and (5) the Narrative of Diego Méndez.²

1. *Pleitos de Colón* II 227.

2. Other sources are (1) the Narrative by Diego de Porras, one of the "bad actors" on this Voyage, of which the complete text has to be pieced out from Navarrete I 282-96 and *Raccolta* I ii 211-7; there is a poor translation in Thacher II 643-6. This was a pitiful attempt to prove that Columbus did everything wrong, and that the Porras brothers knew how to get to Veragua. (2) Several short letters and documents, including some depositions by participants, in *Raccolta* I ii. (3) Bartholomew Columbus's *Informatione* on this Voyage, taken down from him at Rome in 1505. Printed in Henry Harrisse *Bibliotheca Americana*


Vetustissima 471-74, from a ms. in the Biblioteca Magliabechiana, Florence. (4) Peter Martyr *de Orbe Novo Decades*, Decade III, Book iv. The Richard Eden translation of this in 1553 is reprinted in E. Arber *First English Books in America* (1885) 150-56. This is really a secondary account, based largely on Ferdinand's *Historie*, to which Peter evidently had access when it was still in ms. The same applies to (5) Las Casas *Historia de las Indias* Lib. II chaps. 4-5, 20-38 (1951 ed. II 217-24, 273-332).

For a narrative of this Voyage, see Morison *A.O.S.* II 315-409 (one-vol. ed. 581-659).

The Royal Instructions for the Fourth Voyage, 14 March 1502

THE INSTRUCTIONS ARE IN THREE PARTS: (a) the Sovereigns' answer to Columbus's recent requests (a document now lost), (b) their positive instructions for the voyage, (c) their letter of introduction to Vasco da Gama. There are two copies of the ms.; one made from an original, now lost, by the historian Muñoz, in the Real Academia de Historia, Madrid; another, of (a) only, which Columbus had copied into his Book of Privileges. The latter, in facsimile, with a printed Spanish text and English translation, is in B. F. Stevens *Christopher Columbus His Own Book of Privileges* (1893) 209-13. The entire ms. is printed by Navarrete, in his *Colección de Viages* (1825) I 277-82. That is the text we have used, and from which we have made this translation.

a. THE ROYAL REPLY TO THE ADMIRAL'S REQUESTS

 The King and the Queen to *Don Cristóbal Colón*, our Admiral of the Islands and Mainland which are in the Ocean Sea in the region of the Indies.

We have seen your letter of 26 February and the letters you sent with it, as well as the memorials you have given to us. As for your saying that on this voyage on which you are going you would like to go by way of Hispaniola; we have already told you that, since it is not meet that any time should be lost on this voyage, you are in any case to choose some

other route; but on the return passage, God willing, if it seems necessary, you will be able to pass thither and call for a short time, since (as you see), when you get back from the return passage it will be convenient that we be informed at once by you in person concerning all that you will have discovered and achieved, so that with your advice and counsel we may provide what will best accord with our interests; and the necessary materials to be provided here for trade.

We send you herewith instructions as to what, God willing, you should do on

this voyage; and, as for what you say about Portugal, we have written what was fitting on this head to the King of Portugal,¹ our son, and we send you herewith our letter which you request for his Captain,² in which we inform him of your voyage to the west, as we have been informed of his voyage to the east. If you should meet at sea you should treat each other as friends, as is proper between captains and subjects of kings bound together by such kinship, love and affection, telling him we have commanded you likewise; and we shall endeavor that the King of Portugal, our son, write a similar letter to his Captain aforementioned.

As for your request that we allow you to take your son D. Fernando with you on this voyage and that the stipend granted to him may be transferred to your son D. Diego, it pleaseth us.

As for your saying that you would like to take one or two men who know Arabic, we approve, providing that you be not delayed in so doing.³

As for your saying that a share of the profits be given to your crew, we say they should be paid like the others.⁴

As for the 10,000 pieces of money which you mention, it has been decided that they should not be struck off for this voyage until more information is seen.⁵

As for the gunpowder and cannon which you request we have already ordered you to provide them as you see fit.

As for your saying that you were unable to speak to Dr. Angulo and the Licentiate Zapata, because of your departure, write us full particulars.⁶

As for the other matters set forth in your memorials and letters, touching you and your sons and brothers, since, as you see, we are on the move and you are leav-

ing, these questions cannot be decided until we take up our residence in some place; and if you were to wait for this the voyage which you are now purposing would be lost. Therefore, since you are ready with everything that you need for your voyage, you should leave at once without any delay whatsoever and give your son charge of the affair of suing for the matters set forth in the said memorials. And rest assured that we were much distressed by your imprisonment, as you have clearly seen and as all men well knew; for as soon as we were aware of it we gave orders for relief, and you know the deference which we have always commanded should be accorded you, and now we are much more eager to honor and favor you, and the favors⁷ we have granted you shall be preserved in full, according to the form and tenor of our privileges which you hold without any contravention thereof; and you and your sons shall enjoy them, as is just; and if it be necessary to confirm them anew we shall confirm them and we shall give orders that your son be placed in full possession, and we intend to honor and favor you in other ways, too; and of your sons and brothers we shall take such care as is just. All this will be possible if you set forth speedily, leaving responsibility in the hands of your son, as has been said. And so we pray you not to delay your departure.

At Valencia de la Torre, 14 March 1502.

I THE KING.

I THE QUEEN.

By order of the King and Queen.
Miguel Pérez de Almazán.

1. D. Manoel I, "The Fortunate." He married, first, Doña Isabel, eldest daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, and, after her death, her younger sister Doña Maria;

hence he was doubly son-in-law to the Spanish Sovereigns.

2. This Captain must have been Vasco da Gama, already started on his second voyage to India. The hope that Columbus might bump into him in the Indian Ocean is a striking proof of where he, and his Sovereigns, thought that his *Otro Mundo* was located.

3. Arabic was then commonly supposed to be the original language of the human race; hence an Arabic scholar would be able to understand all the tongues of the Orient. Columbus's Arabic interpreter on the First Voyage, Luis de Torres, found that it did not help him with the Indians; but Columbus evidently had faith that it would work this time. Nevertheless, no such scholar will be found on the Payroll which follows.

4. I.e., the sailors on earlier voyages. Columbus felt that a gold bonus would help him to recruit sailors, and prevent individual gold hunting.

5. Columbus had evidently suggested that this large quantity of silver coins be struck off to help him in India, where silver was in great demand.

6. What this is about we cannot tell, owing to the loss of Columbus's letter of requests. "Licentiate" means a person who has the university degree still called *license-ès-lettres* in France. At this time in Spain it generally meant a law degree.

7. *mercedes*, lit. "graces." This word was used for any rewards, favors, concessions or titles granted by the Sovereigns. The promises in the rest of this document were not honored.

b. ROYAL INSTRUCTIONS TO THE ADMIRAL

The King and Queen: Don Christopher Columbus, our Admiral of the Islands and Mainland which are in the Ocean Sea in the region of the Indies. Our orders for you, on the voyage which you are about to make, if it please God, are as follows:

Firstly, you must set sail with your vessels as speedily as may be, since everything that had to be provided for your departure has been taken care of, and the people who are going with you have been paid. Forasmuch as the present season is very well suited for sailing and since the voyage which, if it please God, you are to make all the time henceforward is a long one, it is very needful [that you depart] before the winter season returns.

You must, if the weather does not prevent, sail straight out to discover the Islands and Mainland which are in the Indies in the region which belongs to Us, and if God grant that you discover or find the said Islands, you must anchor your vessels and enter into the said Islands and Mainland, providing as best you can for the security of yourself and your men; and you must take possession in Our name of the said Islands and Mainland which

you may so discover, and you must inform yourself on the extent of the said Islands and make a record of all said Islands and of the people there and their character, so that you may bring Us a full account of everything.

In these Islands and Mainland which you may discover you must observe what gold, silver, pearls, [precious] stones, spices and other products there may be and in what quantity and where they came from; and you must draw up an account of all this in the presence of Our Notary and Official whom We are commanding to go with you for this purpose, so that We may know everything that the said Islands and Mainland may contain.

In Our name you must issue orders forbidding anyone to presume to engage in barter with any merchandise or anything else for gold, silver, pearls, precious stones, spices, or any other articles of whatever kind, except if they be those which you may designate and specify with the approval, and in the presence of, Our said Notary and Official, who is to take down in writing the names of such persons who took part in the barter and their oath to reveal well and faithfully be-

fore you and the said notary and official everything that they acquired, without hiding anything. Moreover, let them be warned that for hiding anything they will incur forfeiture of life and person, at our discretion.

All that may be brought or secured from the said Islands and Mainland, such as gold, silver, pearls, precious stones, spices and other products must be delivered to Francisco de Porras¹ in your presence and in that of the Notary and Official whom we are sending, who shall make a complete record of the same, which shall be signed by Yourself, the Notary, and the person who obtained it; so that by the said record and account Francisco de Porras may have charge thereof, and we know how much it amounts to.

You shall leave in the Islands which you may discover those of your people whom you see fit to leave, and you shall make provision for their security and maintenance.

All the Captains, Masters, Seamen, Pilots and Soldiers who may be in the said vessels in your fleet will carry out and obey your orders, as if they were Our Commands. You will treat them as persons embarked upon this expedition to serve Us, and from the day you depart to the day you return you shall have civil and criminal jurisdiction over them. And We command them to obey you, as has been said.

Moreover, when, if it please God, you return, Our said Notary and Official shall return with you, and you shall arrange to bring Us the fullest, most detailed and most complete account of all that you may discover and of the races of the people of the said Islands and Mainland which you may find. You shall bring

no slaves;² but if someone wishes of his own accord to come with the intention of learning our language and of returning again, bring him.

Likewise, lest anything be concealed by the people whom you may bring on the vessels, which may not have been manifested and declared, you shall, before embarking for home, inspect everything which each man loads in the said vessels; and Our said Notary and Official shall make an inventory thereof, signed by your name and his; so that when you disembark (God willing) it may be clear from this list whether the people are bringing in anything not declared; and if they do so they shall forfeit it to Us and incur the penalty above mentioned.³

We command you to carry out and fulfil all the above in the manner and form herein prescribed, without contravention on any particular thereof; and if other questions should arise in addition to those above stated which require attention so as to serve Our interests and the security of Our Exchequer, do what will best serve our interests. For this, therefore, We grant you by this Our instructions full authority, and We command the said Captains, Masters, Seamen, Pilots and Soldiers to carry out all your orders to them on Our behalf conformably with these our instructions under pain of the penalties you may impose or command them to impose in our behalf. And We grant you authority to execute judgment upon them and upon their property.

Done at Valencia de la Torre, 14 March 1502.

I THE KING.

I THE QUEEN.

By command of the King and Queen,
Miguel Pérez de Almazán.

1. The royal comptroller. He and his brother Diego were intruded in this voyage by Alonso de Morales, treasurer of Castile, who was keeping their sister as mistress.

2. One of the Crown's many fruitless efforts to prevent the enslavement of the Indians.

3. These elaborate precautions reflect the constant smuggling of gold by sailors returning from the Indies.

c. A LETTER FROM THEIR HIGHNESSES TO THE CAPTAIN OF THE KING OF PORTUGAL'S FLEET

We, the King and Queen of Castile, León, Aragon, Sicily, Granada, etc., send greetings to you [blank], Captain of the Most Serene King of Portugal, Our Son; we inform you that we are sending Admiral D. Christopher Columbus, bearer of this letter, with certain vessels on the course they are accustomed to follow, and he is to sail westward; and, since We have learned that the said King of Portugal, Our Son, is sending you with certain vessels to the eastward, and since by good

hap you may meet at sea, We have commanded the said Admiral Don Christopher Columbus that, if you meet, you should treat one another as friends, and as Captains and Subjects of Kings who are bound together by so much kinship, love and affection. Wherefore, we beseech you to do likewise on your part.

From Valencia de la Torre, 14 March
1502.

I THE KING.

I THE QUEEN.

The Roster and Payroll for the Fourth Voyage, 1502-1504

THIS VALUABLE DOCUMENT, IN THE HANDWRITING OF DIEGO DE PORRAS, IS THE ONLY COMPLETE ROSTER of officers and men, with their pay, that we have for any of Columbus's voyages. The ms. is in the Royal Archives at Simancas. It was printed inaccurately in Navarrete's *Colección de Viages* I 289-95, from which Thacher III 569-72 made a very rough translation. The following translation, the first complete one to appear in English, is based on the accurate text as printed in *Raccolta* Iii 211-17.

The ships on this voyage, all caravels, were as follows:

La Capitana ("the flagship"), whose real name was *Santa Maria* something or other.

Santiago de Palos, nicknamed *Bermuda* after her master, about 60 tons.

Santo (rest of name lost), nicknamed *El Gallego* or *La Gallega* ("the Galician"), 60 tons.

Vizcaíno or *Vizcaína* ("the Biscayan"), 50 tons.


The roll opens with six months' pay advanced. Thereafter the men drew no more pay until they returned to Spain, and even then many had to wait for months before they got it.

Note, in this roll, the large number of very young boys among the *grumetes*; some of them who later testified in the *pleitos* gave their ages as 12 or 13 at the start of the voyage. Note also that several Genoese were on board; Columbus had learned that they were more loyal to him personally than most Spaniards.

Three important people were not on the roll, as they drew no pay;—the Adelantado Bartholomew, who sailed in *Santiago* and took over her command whenever Captain Porras showed funk; Ferdinand Columbus; and the Admiral himself.

Names are spelled exactly as on the roll, and unnecessary repetitions are omitted.

INDIES, LAST VOYAGE, WHICH RETURNED IN 1504. RECORD OF THE PEOPLE AND VESSELS WHICH ADMIRAL DON CHRISTÓVAL COLÓN TOOK TO DISCOVER.

a. La Capitana


On Wednesday 16 March 1502, Diego Tristán (died Thursday 6 April 1503), who went as captain of the caravel *Capitana*, received as pay for six months, at the rate of 48,000 maravedis a year,¹ 24,000 maravedis.

Anbrosyo Sánchez, master of the caravel *Capitana* received, on Wednesday 6 March of the abovesaid year, as pay for 6 months at the rate of 24,000 maravedis a year, 12,000 maravedis.

On Saturday, 19 March 1502, Juan Sánchez (died 17 May 1504), received, as chief pilot of the fleet, as pay for six months, 12,000 maravedis, at the rate of 24,000 a year.

Antón Donato, as quartermaster of the caravel *Capitana* received, Wednesday 16 March 1502, as pay for six months, 9,000 maravedis, at the rate of 18,000 a year.

Seamen

[Each of the following received, in March or April 1502, 6,000 maravedis for six months' advance.]

Martín Dati (stayed in Hispaniola);² Bartolomé García (died Sunday 28 May 1503); Pero Rodríguez (died Thursday 6 April 1503); Juan Rodríguez (stayed in Hispaniola); Alonso de Almagro (stayed in Hispaniola); Pedro de Toledo; Pedro de Maya; Juan Gómez; Diego Roldán; Juan Gallego; Juan de Valençia (died Saturday 13 January 1504); Gonçalo Rodríguez (died Tuesday 4 April 1503).

Tristán Péres Chinchorrero, as seaman, received Thursday 28 April 1502, 3,000 maravedis.

Rodrigo Vergayo, seaman, was en-

rolled on Tuesday 22 April. Received no money. Is owed his entire pay. Stayed in Hispaniola.

Esquires³

Pero Fernádes Coronel⁴ drew as pay for six months, 6,000 maravedis on Tuesday, 16 March 1502.

Françisco Rruys, as gentleman, received on Wednesday 16 March 1503, 6,000 maravedis.

Alonso de Çamora, as gentleman, received on Saturday, 19 March 1502, 6,000. Stayed in Hispaniola.

Guillermo Ginovés,⁵ as gentleman, received, Saturday, 5 March 1502, 6,000 maravedis.

Maestre⁶ Bernal, as physician, received Thursday 22 April 1502, as pay for six months, 12,500 maravedis, at the rate of 25,000 a year.

Grummets⁷

[Each of the following received, in March or April 1502, 4,000 maravedis for six months' advance.]

Diego de Portogalete (died Wednesday 4 January 1503); Martín Juan (stayed in Hispaniola); Donís de Galve; Juan de Çumados (died Friday 28 April 1503); Françisco d'Estrada; Antón Chavarín; Alonso, servant of Mateo Sánchez⁸ (died Thursday 6 April 1503); Grigorio Sollo (died Wednesday 27 June 1504); Diego el Negro;⁹ Pedro Sánchez; Françisco Sánchez; Françisco de Morón; Juan de Murçia; Grigorio Ginovés; Ferrando Dávila; Alonso de León; Juan de Miranda; Garçia de Morales (he remained sick in Cadiz; was a servant of the Admiral);

Juan Garrido (died 27 February 1504); Baltasar d'Aragón.¹⁰

*Chief Petty Officers*¹¹

Martín de Arriera, cooper, received on Monday 4 April 1502, as pay for six months, 9,000 maravedis, at the rate of 18,000 per year.

Domingo Viscaýno (died Thursday 6 April 1503), as caulker, had, as pay for six months, on Wednesday 16 March 1503, 6,000 maravedis.

Diego Françés, carpenter, received, on Saturday 12 March 1502, 7,200 maravedis as pay for six months, at the rate of 14,400 per year.

Juan Barva (died 20 May 1504), as gunner, received on Saturday 26 March

1502, as pay for six months, 6,000.

Matheo (died Thursday 6 April 1504), gunner, received Friday 25 March 1502, as pay for six months, 6,000 maravedis.

Juan de Cuéllar, trumpeter. Received on Wednesday 16 March 1502, 6,000 maravedis.

Gonçalo de Salazar, trumpeter, received on Wednesday 16 March 1502, as pay for four months, 6,000 maravedis.

Those who didn't show up at Cadiz on sailing day, are the following, and owe their pay:— Juan Rodrigues, seaman, received 6,000 maravedis; Ferrando de Çifuentes, seaman, received 6,000 maravedis; Juan de Salzedo, grummet, received 4,000 maravedis.

1. One thousand maravedis equalled \$6.95 in gold. For a rough comparison, Don Quixote paid Sancho Panza 780 maravedis per month, and you could then buy 10 bushels of wheat for 730 maravedis.

2. These men who "stayed in Hispaniola" were not deserters; they simply chose not to return to Spain after being rescued from Jamaica.

3. *Escuderos*, lit. "gentlemen," including some who had special ratings.

4. A captain both on the Second Voyage and the Hispaniola section of the Third.

5. "William the Genoese." *Ginové*s in this roll is not a surname, but means that the man was a Genoese. Spaniards could not make much of foreign surnames, as appears below in the way they handled *Fieschi*, and so made up names for them. I have seen an example of this in our own day. A Finn known as John, with an unpronounceable surname, was shipped by us as a rigger for our *Capitana*, in 1939. He became known

as "John the Rigger," and even signed on thus. Also, many, if not most, common people at Columbus's era had no surnames, and so were given the region or place they came from as a surname to distinguish them from others with the same Christian name.

6. "Master," common title for physicians who were M.A., not M.D.

7. *grumetes*; the English equivalent "grummet" or "gromet" was in common use for a ship's boy before 1800; it was the lowest rating in the Royal Navy, equivalent to Ordinary Seaman or Landsman.

8. Presumably gunner Matheo, listed among the *oficiales*.

9. "James the Negro." The first instance I have seen of a Negro shipping with Columbus.

10. Probably the same as Baltasar Calvo who testifies about this voyage in *Pleitos de Colón* I 347-9.

11. Petty officers not concerned with navigation.

b. THE PEOPLE WHO WENT IN THE CARAVEL CALLED Santiago de Palos

Françisco de Porras, as Captain, received on Wednesday 16 March 1502 pay for six months, at the rate of 44 [mistake for 48] thousand maravedis, 24,000.

Diego de Porras, as Chief Clerk and Auditor of the Fleet, received on Wednesday 16 March 1502, 17,500 maravedis, at the rate of 35,000 a year.

Françisco Bermúdes, as Master, received, Wednesday 16 March 1502, 12,000, at the rate of 24,000 maravedis a year, for six months' pay.

Pedro Gómes, as quartermaster, received on Saturday 12 March 1502, as pay for six months, 9,000 maravedis, at the rate of 18,000 a year.



Seamen

[Each of the following men received a six months' advance of 6,000 maravedis.]

Rodrigo Ximón; Francisco Domingo (died Saturday 4 February 1503); Juan de Quexo; Juan Rodríguez (died 6 April 1503); Juan de la Feria; Juan Camacho; Juan Grande; Juan Reynaltes (died Thursday 6 April 1503); Diego Gómez; Alonso Martín;

June 1503); Alonso de Çea; Pedro de Villatoro; Rramiro Ramíres; Francisco Dávila; Diego de Mendoza; Diego Cataño; Alonso Escarramán (this Alonso died Tuesday 23 January 1504); Francisco Márques; Juan de Moguer; these three divide the pay of two grummets.⁴

Esquires

[Each of these men, who enlisted *por escudero* ("as a gentleman") drew 6,000 maravedis for six months' advance pay in March or April 1502.]

Francisco de Farias; Diego Méndes;¹ Pedro Gentil;² Andrea Ginovés; Juan Jácome; Batista Ginovés.

Chief Petty Officers

Bartolomé de Milan, gunner, received, Friday 4 March 1502, as pay for six months, 6,000 maravedis.

Juan de Noya,⁵ cooper, received Wednesday 16 March 1502, as pay for six months, 9,000 maravedis, at the rate of 18,000 a year.

Grummets

[Each of these, in March 1502, drew 4,000 maravedis for six months' advance pay.]

Gonçalo Ramíres; Juan Baudroxín (died Friday 23 October 1503); Diego Ximón; Apariçio;³ Donís (died Thursday 1

Domingo d'Arana (died Thursday 6 April 1503), as caulker, received on Saturday 19 March 1502, as pay for six months, 6,000 maravedis.

Machín, as carpenter, received, Saturday 2 April 1502, as pay for six months, 7,200 maravedis, at the rate of 14,400 a year.

1. Organizer of the famous canoe voyage; see his narrative, below.

2. I.e., "Nice Pete," or "Genteel Peter."

3. "The Ghost," probably his nickname.

4. Probably two of these boys brought a friend who was

eager to ship; and as the roster of grummets was full, the captain said, "All right, if you two will split your wages with him."

5. Sole survivor of the Battle of Belén, as Ferdinand relates, below.

c. LIST OF THE PEOPLE WHO WENT IN THE VESSEL *Gallego*

Pedro de Terreros¹ (died Wednesday 29 May 1504), as Captain, received on Wednesday 16 March 1502, 24,000 maravedis, as pay for six months, at the rate of 48,000 a year.

Juan Quintero,² as Master, received Wednesday 16 March 1502, as pay for six months, 12,000 maravedis, at the rate of 24,000 a year.

Alonso Ramón (died Thursday 6 April 1503) as Quartermaster, received, Wednesday 16 March 1502, as pay for six months, 9,000 maravedis, at the rate of 18,000 a year.

Seamen

[Each of the following received 6,000 maravedis on 16 March 1502, as six months' advance pay.]

Ruy Ferrándes, Luys Ferrándes; Gonçalo Garçia; Pedro Matheos, Julián Martín (died Thursday 6 April 1503); Diego Cabeçudo; Diego Barranco; Diego Delgado; Rodrig' Álvares.

1. Pedro de Terreros is the only person definitely known to have been on all four of the Admiral's voyages. He shipped on the first three as the Admiral's personal steward, and had a large share of responsibility for fitting out the Second and the Third. In that Voyage he signed on again as steward, but on the outward passage was promoted captain of the flagship, and chosen by Columbus to conduct the formal taking possession on the Paria Peninsula. He stuck by Columbus through his period of disgrace, and showed such qualities of loyalty, courage and decision that the Admiral was glad to have him captain on this "High Voyage." The date of his death indicates that he was

Esquire

Gonçalo Camacho, as gentleman, received, Tuesday, 15 March 1502, as pay for six months, 6,000 maravedis.

Grummetts

[Each of the following received 4,000 maravedis on Wednesday 16 March 1502, as six months' advance pay.]

Pedro de Flandes; Bartolomé Ramíres (died Thursday 6 April 1503); An-ton Quintero; Bartolomé de Alça; Gonçalo Flamenco; Pedro Barranco; Juan Galdilón (died Saturday 9 September 1504); Alonso Penate; Diego de Santander; Garçia Polanco; Juan Garçia; Francisco de Medina (jumped ship in Hispaniola, no more heard of, on 4 July of year abovesaid);³ Juan de Sant Martín.

Estéban Mateos, page; received, on the said day, 1,000 maravedis as six months' pay.

mortally wounded in the second Porras rebellion on Jamaica (17 May 1504). Columbus later made efforts to obtain his back pay for his heirs. Alice Gould has gathered all the facts of his life in *BRAH CXIV* (1943) 253-83; see also note to Las Casas's Abstract of the Third Voyage, above (d), note 7.

2. Juan Quintero "de Algruta" had been boatswain of *Pinta* on the First Voyage; he probably sailed on the Second, and certainly on the Third. He was now part owner of the *Gallego*.

3. I.e., 1502, year he received his advance pay. The date was right after the hurricane; Francisco evidently had "had it."

d. LIST OF THE PEOPLE WHO WENT IN THE VESSEL *Viscaýno*

Bartolomé de Fresco,¹ Genoese, as Captain, had as pay for six months, 24,000 maravedis, at the rate of 48,000 a year. He received it on Wednesday 16 March 1502.

Juan Pérez² (died Saturday 7 Octo-

ber 1503), as Master, received Wednesday 16 March 1502, as pay for six months, 12,000 maravedis, at the rate of 24,000 a year.

Martín de Fuenterrabía (died 17 September 1502), as Quartermaster, received

Friday 1 April 1502, as pay for six months, 9,000 maravedis, at the rate of 18,000 a year.

Seamen

[Each of the following received in March or April 1502, 6,000 maravedis for six months' pay.]

Pedro de Ledesma,³ Juan Ferrón; Juan Moreno; Sant Juan; Gonçalo Días; Gonçalo Gallego (jumped ship in Hispaniola, and they say he was killed. He owed the ship four months' service); Alonso de la Calle (died Tuesday 23 May 1503); Lope de Pego.

Esquires

Fray Alixandre,⁴ in gentleman's billet, received, Saturday 19 March 1502, as pay for six months, 6,000 maravedis.

Juan Pasán, Genoese, as gentleman, received Thursday 17 March 1502, as pay for six months, 6,000 maravedis.

Françisco de Córdoba,⁵ entered in gentleman's billet, servant of the Admiral

when he was staying in Seville, received 6,000 maravedis as pay for six months; and the said Francisco de Cordova jumped ship in Hispaniola at the departure [of the fleet], and there he is.

Marco Surjano, Genoese (died Wednesday 11 September 1504), as gentleman, received Friday 4 March 1502, as pay for six months, 6,000 maravedis.

Grummetts

[Each of the following received 4,000 maravedis in March or April 1502, as pay for six months.]

Miguel de Lariaga (died Saturday 17 September 1502); Andrés de Sevilla; Luys de Vargas; Batista Ginovés;⁶ Françisco de Levante; Pedro de Montesel; Rodrigo d'Escobar; Domingo de Narbasta (died Tuesday 26 March 1504); Pascual de Ausurraga.

Cheneco, page, received Friday, 4 March, as six months' pay, 3,000 maravedis.

1. Bartolomeo Fieschi, member of a patrician Genoese family which had befriended the Admiral's father in years past. On this voyage he was known as "Fresco" or "Flisco," indicating the difficulty that Spaniards had with Italian names. He, too, made a canoe voyage from Jamaica to Hispaniola (but got no credit for it from Diego Méndez); he was present at Columbus's deathbed and a witness to his last will. Fieschi then returned to Genoa, led a popular insurrection against the government, in consequence of which he was imprisoned, and then exiled to France. Again returning to Genoa, he became commodore of a fleet of 15 warships in the war against France in 1525, and was awarded the title of *Padre del commune*. Caddeo ed. Ferdinand Columbus's *Historie* II 265 and *Raccolta* I ii 227, with De Lollis's note on p. xciii.

2. Part owner of the caravel; see Morison *A.O.S.* II 329 n. 4.

3. The number one bad actor on this voyage.

4. Columbus wrote to Pope Alexander VI in 1502 (letter in *Raccolta* I ii 164-66) asking for a supply of missionaries; but this Brother Alexander appears to be the only one who responded, and he cannot have been much use, even to the Spaniards, as Columbus asserts in his *Lettera Rarissima* that he was completely deprived of the sacraments at Jamaica.

5. As a deserter, Francisco was demoted in this list from the *escuderos* to the *grumetes*.

6. This name occurs before; but *Batista* was a common name in Genoa, one of whose patron saints was St. John the Baptist.

e. THE VESSELS

Chartered *la caravela Capitana* (the flag caravel) at the rate of 9,000 maravedis a month. Received pay for six months, 54,000, without counting the down pay-

ment that Juan Enero made and which he can't remember.

Chartered the caravel named *Santiago* at the rate of 10,000 maravedis a

month. Received pay for six months, which amounted to 60,000 maravedis. This [cavel] heeled excessively, and was a nuisance to the flagship.¹ Down money was also paid for her.

Chartered the vessel *Gallego* at the rate of 8,333 maravedis and two coppers² a month. Received pay for six months, which amounts to 50,000.

Chartered the caravel *Vizcaína* at the rate of 7,000 maravedis a month. Received pay for six months, which amounts to 42,000.

They made sail in the River of Seville, Wednesday 3 April 1502.

The flag caravel went on charter³ 3 April 1502. Wrecked on Jamaica by order of the Admiral on Saturday 12 August 1503.⁴

1. *este llevó demasyado, y fué agraviada la caravela capitana*. Columbus tried to get rid of her at Hispaniola, but she lasted out the voyage.

2. *cornados*; copper coins worth a third of a maravedi.

The caravel called *Santiago* went on charter 3 April 1502. Wrecked in Jamaica Sunday 23 July 1503.

The vessel *Gallego* went on charter on Wednesday 3 April 1502. This vessel remained in Veragua, where the Admiral left her and crew as a fortress. She served up to Saturday 15 April 1503, when the crew abandoned her.

The caravel *Vizcaína* went on charter on Wednesday 3 April 1502. The Admiral purchased her from her master for a price of 40,000 maravedis, to be remitted to Hispaniola. The sale took place on Wednesday 15 February 1503.

The Admiral finally anchored, on the return from his voyage, at the port of Sanlúcar, on Thursday 7 November 1504.

DIEGO DE PORRAS

3. *començó á ganar*, lit. "began to make money."

4. Why Porras chose this date, and the one for *Santiago*, is not clear. Both were run ashore at Jamaica around the end of June 1503 and abandoned a year later.

Ferdinand Columbus's Account of the Fourth Voyage

FOR AN ACCOUNT OF FERDINAND COLUMBUS, AND THE DIFFERENT EDITIONS OF THE *HISTORIE*, his biography of the Admiral, see Part III above, Introduction to the last section.

As the biographer of a father whom he remembered with respect and affection, writing to rescue his memory from the neglect into which it had fallen, Ferdinand could not be completely objective; but, although he had a copy of the Admiral's Letter on this Voyage at hand, he did venture to contradict him. Note, for instance, in his Chapter 91, his different account of the two young Indian wenches from that of the Admiral in the *Lettera Rarissima*, below. After the writings of Columbus himself, and other contemporary documents, Ferdinand's *Historie* is the most important source for the Admiral's life. Las Casas had a copy of the original manuscript before him when he wrote his *Historia de las Indias*, some of which is almost a literal transcription of the *Historie*.

This section, relating to the Fourth Voyage, in which Ferdinand was a participant, is indispensable for our knowledge of *El Alto Viaje*. He was 13 years old when the fleet sailed, and 16 when he returned to Spain with his father. It was his first and only participation in a voyage of discovery; and, having made it at a highly impressionable age, he described it with a detail and vividness that are wanting in any other account of that voyage.

The following translation was made for me by Miss Luisa Nordio in 1940-41, from the Caddeo text of the *Historie*. As Ulloa, the 16th century Italian translator of the now lost Spanish ms., tried to Italianize all place names, I have departed from my usual practice of reproducing all such names exactly as in the text. Instead, I use either the modern name, or the old Spanish one from another source. I have also taken the liberty of suppressing Ferdinand's constant repetition of such phrases as "it is said," "as I remarked above," "as aforesaid."

CHAPTER 88. *How the Admiral set out from Granada to Seville to Assemble the Fleet needed for his Discovery*



The Admiral, having been duly dispatched by the Catholic Sovereigns, set out from the city of Granada for Seville in the year 1501.¹ As soon as he arrived there he assembled his fleet with such dispatch that in a short time four topsail vessels² were furnished with arms and provisions. The largest [of these had] a burthen of 70 and the smallest, a burthen of 50 tons,³ with 140 men and boys, among whom was I.

And so we set sail from the channel of Cadiz on 9 May 1502 and went to Santa Caterina,⁴ whence we departed on Wednesday the 11th of the same month and went to Arzila⁵ on the second day after to succor the Portuguese, who were reported to be in great distress. But by the time we arrived the Moors had raised the siege. The Admiral therefore sent ashore his brother the Adelantado D. Bartholomew Columbus and me, along with the captains of the ships to call on the Captain of Arzila, who had been wounded by the Moors in an assault. He thanked the Admiral heartily for that visit and his offers, and to this purpose he sent aboard some gentlemen who were with him, including some relatives of the late Dona Felipa Perestrello, who had been the Admiral's wife in Portugal.

After that and on the same day we made sail and arriving at Grand Canary on 20 May we anchored at the Isleta,⁶ and on the 28th we passed on to Maspalomas which lies on the same island, to take on the water and wood needed for our voyage.⁷ On the following night we departed for the Indies, with fair weather as it pleased Our Lord. So, without ever low-

ering the sails, on the morning of Wednesday 15 June we arrived at the island of Martinique⁸ with considerable change of wind and sea. There, according to the use and custom of those who go out from Spain, the Admiral gave orders to the people to take on fresh water and wood and to wash their linen, staying until Saturday, when we proceeded to the westward of that island and went to the island of Dominica, 10 leagues distant from the other. Then, running along among the Caribbee Islands, we reached Santa Cruz, and on the 24th of the same month we ranged the south coast of the island of San Juan.⁹ Thence we shaped a course for Santo Domingo, because the Admiral intended to exchange one of the four vessels that he had for another. That vessel was a bad sailer, and besides being dull she could not carry sail without putting her gunwale under. On this account considerable damage was sustained on the voyage.¹⁰ The Admiral's purpose in entering the Gulf¹¹ had been to go directly to investigate the land of Paria and to keep along that shore, until he came upon the Strait, which he certainly believed would be found in the direction of Veragua and Nombre de Dios. But in view of the defects of the vessel, he was forced to repair to Santo Domingo to exchange it for another and a good one.

And because the Comendador de Lares,¹² who at that time was governing the island, having been sent by their Catholic Majesties to call Bobadilla to account for his administration, took no notice of our unexpected arrival, on Wednesday



29 June, being already near the harbor, the Admiral sent to him Pedro de Terres, captain of one of the vessels, to explain that he needed to exchange that vessel. For which reason, as also because he was apprehensive of a great tempest which was blowing up, he desired to enter that harbor for safety, and to urge the Comendador not to let his fleet leave for eight days to come, because it would run into great danger. But the Comendador refused to permit the Admiral to enter the harbor, nor did he forbid the departure of the fleet that was bound for Castile, which consisted of 28 vessels, and was to take home the Comendador Bobadilla who had imprisoned the Admiral and his brothers, and Francisco Roldán and all the others who had rebelled against them, and who had done them so much ill. It pleased God so to blind the eyes and minds of all these people that they would not receive the Admiral's good counsel. And I am satisfied it was divine providence, for had they arrived in Castile, they would never

have been punished as their crimes deserved. Instead, because they were favored by the Bishop,¹³ they would have received many favors and privileges. This was prevented by their setting forth from that harbor toward Castile. For, no sooner had they reached the eastern cape of Hispaniola, than the tempest assaulted them in such manner that the flagship carrying Bobadilla and most of the rebels sank, and the tempest worked such havoc among the rest, that of 28 ships only three or four were saved.¹⁴

When this happened, which was on Thursday 30 June, the Admiral, having predicted such a tempest, and being denied the harbor, drew up for his security as close as he could to the land, for its shelter, not without much sorrow and displeasure among his crew, who, because they were under him, lacked that hospitality which was due to strangers and much more to those of the same nation. And they feared the same might happen to them in the future if any misfortune

should befall. The Admiral in his secret mind felt the same grief; nay it was doubled for him by the affront and ingratitude he suffered in the very land he had given them to the honor and benefit of Spain, and where now he was refused shelter and protection for his life. But with his prudence and good judgment he maintained himself with his fleet until the next day, when with the tempest increasing and the night coming on very black, three vessels broke away, each going her own way. All their men were in great danger and each thought the others were lost; but those who suffered most were on board the vessel *Santo*.¹⁵ She, to save the boat in which Captain Terreros had gone ashore, towed it astern with the painter, capsized; but at length were obliged to cast it adrift and lose it to save themselves.

Caravel *Bermuda* was in much greater peril, for she, running out to sea, was swept from bow to stern. Thus it was made manifest that the Admiral was right in endeavoring to exchange her. And all men were satisfied that, under God, his brother the Adelantado was the saving of her through his wisdom and resolution; for in matters of the sea, as we have said above, there was no man more expert in

those days than he. So, after all ships except the Admiral's had been through great travail, it pleased God to bring them again together the following Sunday in the harbor of Azua, on the south side of Hispaniola,¹⁶ where, everyone giving an account of his misfortunes, they concluded that the Adelantado's good fortune came through fleeing from the land as an expert seaman, and that the Admiral had escaped danger by laying close to the shore because, being a wise astrologer, he knew whence the danger would come.¹⁷

These events gave grounds to his enemies for attacking him, saying that he had raised the hurricane by magic art, in order to take revenge on Bobadilla and his other enemies in the same company. For, not only were none of the four ships of his own fleet lost, but of the 28 which had set out with Bobadilla, only one called *Aguja* which was one among the worse of the lot, had held on her course for Castile where she finally arrived safe, having aboard 4,000 pesos d'oro, which the Admiral's factor¹⁸ was sending him as his due. The other three which escaped the tempest returned to Santo Domingo shattered and damaged.

1. Obviously a mistake for 1502; cf. date of the Royal Instructions, above.

2. *Navigli da gabbia*, a literal translation of the Castilian *naos de gavia*, ships with round-tops, the circular platforms or crows' nests on the mastheads. As a round-top implied a topmast and topsail, I have used the English phrase "topsail vessels." All were caravels. Illustration in J. F. Guillén Tato *La Parla Marinera de Cristóbal Colón* 71.

3. Although the Italian *botta* was smaller than the Castilian *tonelero* or ton (for discussion of what that means, see Morison *A.O.S.* I 170), I assume that translator Ulloa used the same figures as were in the original ms. for *toneleros*. See previous document for the fleet and the crew.

4. The fort at the entrance to the Bay of Cadiz, where there is a small harbor of refuge.

5. In Morocco, about 50 miles south of Cape Spartel. It was then a Portuguese possession, and as Spain and Portugal were close allies, Columbus had probably been requested by the Spanish authorities to call there and bear a hand.

6. The islet which makes Puerto de la Luz, the harbor of Las Palmas, Grand Canary.

7. Maspalomas is at the extreme southern end of the Grand Canary. Wood was as necessary for a transatlantic voyage as water, because no other fuel for cooking was available. Correct date for the departure from Maspalomas was 25 May; see Morison *A.O.S.* II 329 n. 9.

8. The probable place of their anchorage was Fort de France Bay. This passage of 21 days from the Canaries to the West Indies was an excellent one for sailing vessels, and the fastest transatlantic passage made by Columbus.

9. Puerto Rico.

10. This was the *Santiago* or *Bermuda*; she was evidently crank, but she outlasted two of the other caravels.

11. Spaniards commonly called the Caribbean *El Golfo*.

12. Don Nicolas de Ovando (1470-1511), knight commander of Lares in the Alcantaros order of chivalry, had been sent to the Indies as Governor of Hispaniola in succession to Bobadilla. He brought with him a fleet of about 30 sail, most of which were ready to set forth on the homeward passage when Columbus's fleet arrived off Santo Domingo. The Sovereigns in their Instructions (§1, above) had ordered Columbus not to call at Hispaniola on his outward passage, fearing lest his presence make trouble for Ovando; but the Admiral had a good excuse.

13. Don Juan de Fonseca, who had superintended the

outfitting of Columbus's Second and Third Voyages. He had since been promoted bishop.

14. See Morison *A.O.S.* II 325 (one-vol. ed. 590) for account of this hurricane, in which 23 to 25 ships, hundreds of lives, and a vast quantity of gold were lost.

15. The official name of *Gallego*.

16. The harbor where they took refuge is now called Puerto Viejo de Azua, or Puerto Escondido; Las Casas calls it Puerto Hermoso. A very pretty little landlocked harbor.

17. By "astrologer" Ferdinand meant "astronomer" or "celestial navigator"; the Admiral knew by experience the behavior of West Indian hurricanes, and sought shelter where he knew that the wind would blow offshore. The others broke away because their ground tackle was not strong enough.

18. Alonso Sánchez de Carvajal, captain of a caravel on the Third Voyage.

CHAPTER 89. *How the Admiral departed from Hispaniola, and pursuing his Voyage Discovered the Island of Bonacca*

In the meantime, the Admiral, in the port of Azua with his vessels, gave his people a chance to rest from the travail suffered during the tempest. And, since fishing is one of the diversions afforded by the sea when there is nothing else to do, I still remember two fish among many other kinds which were taken there, one as an amusement and the other as a marvel. The first was a fish called *schivina*,¹ as big as half a bed, which when lying asleep upon the water was struck with a harpoon from a boat of *Vizcatna*, which held the fish so fast that it could not break loose, but, secured by a long stout line to the cross-beam of the boat, drew it hither and yon in the harbor as swift as lightning, so that those aboard the vessels, who could not guess the reason, seeing the boat running back and forth without oars, were amazed. Finally the fish sank and was drawn to the vessel's side and then hauled on board with those tackles which

are used to lift heavy things. The other fish was taken through another device; the Indians call it the *manati*, and there are none of that kind in Europe. It is as big as a calf, resembling one both in color and flavor, except that perhaps it is somewhat better and fatter. Therefore, those who declare that there are in the sea all sorts of creatures which live on land, say that these fishes are real calves, since inside they are nothing like a fish, and feed only on the grass they find along shore.²

To return to our history. As soon as he saw his people to be somewhat rested and the vessels repaired, the Admiral left the harbor of Azua, and proceeded to that of *Brasil* which the Indians call *Yaquimo*,³ to avoid another tail-end of the tempest that was bound to come. Thence he departed on 14 July and was so becalmed that he was unable to hold the course he wished, and the many currents carried him away to some islands near Jamaica,

which are very small and sandy. He called them *Los Poros*⁴ because, not finding water, many wells were dug in the sand, from which we drew up water for the vessels' use. Then we sailed on a southerly course toward the mainland and came to certain islands, though we went ashore only upon the biggest, called Bonacca,⁵ by which name makers of sea charts call all these Islands of *Guanari* which are almost 12 leagues from the continent, near the province now called Cape of Honduras. But at the time the Admiral called that land *Punta Caxinas*.⁶ Those fellows who make such charts without going about in the world have in this case committed a great error; and, since it now crosses my bows I am going to tell about it, though it breaks the thread of my story. Here it is:—

These same islands and the mainland are by them set down twice on their charts of navigation as if in effect distant lands; and whereas Cape Gracias á Dios and what they call Cape . . .⁷ are but one and the same, they make two of it. The reason for this mistake is that after the Admiral had discovered these regions, one Juan Dias de Solis (from whom the Rio de la Plata, which means river of silver, was named Rio de Solis, because he was killed there by the Indians) and one Vicente Yáñez (who was captain of our vessel on the First Voyage, when the Admiral discovered the Indies), set out together to make discoveries in the year 1508, intending to follow westward along the land which the Admiral had discovered on the Veragua voyage. Following almost that same course, they came upon the coast of Cariai and passed beyond Cape Gracias á Dios as far as Punta Caxinas, which they called Cape of Honduras; and the afore-

said islands they called *Guanari*, taking for them all the name of the most important. Thence they proceeded further, refusing to admit that the Admiral had been in any of those parts, in order to take the credit for that discovery and to have it believed they had found a great country, in spite of the fact that one of their pilots, Pedro de Ledesma, who had formerly been with the Admiral on his Veragua voyage, told them that he knew those regions, in the discovery of which he had taken part with the Admiral. It was from him that I learned this. Right reason and the design of the charts plainly demonstrate it; for the same thing is set down twice and the island is of the same shape, and at the same distance, they having on their return brought a correct sketch of that country, only saying it lay beyond that which the Admiral had discovered. Hence the same land is twice described on the chart; which, please God, will be shown up when more people sail along that coast, for they will not run across a land of that description more than once.

Now to return to our discovery. Having come to the island of Bonacca, the Admiral ordered the Adelantado his brother, D. Bartholomew Columbus, to go ashore with two boats, where they found people like those of the other islands, but not of such broad foreheads.⁸ They saw also an abundance of pine trees and pieces of mineral called calcide with which copper is smelted. Some seamen took this for gold and kept it hidden a long time.⁹ While the Adelantado was ashore on that island, desiring to learn its secrets, by good luck there put in a canoe as long as a galley and eight feet wide, all of one tree and like the others in shape, loaded with commodities which came

from the westward regions near Mexico.¹⁰ Within it and amidships was a shelter made of palm leaves, not unlike those of the Venetian gondolas (the Venetians call them *felzi*) which sheltered everything under it in such manner that neither rain nor tempest could wet anything inside. Under this shelter were the children, the women and all the cargo and trading truck. The men who handled the canoe, although 25 in number, had not the pluck to defend themselves against the boats that pursued them. The canoe, thus captured by us without any resistance, was conducted to the vessels, where the Admiral thanked God for having shown him in a moment samples of all the goods of that country without exertion or exposing his men to any danger. He ordered such things to be taken as he judged most handsome and valuable, such as some quilts and sleeveless shirts of cotton, embroidered and dyed in several colors and designs, and some small cloths of the same workmanship with which the natives covered their genitals, and sheets in which the Indian women aboard the canoe wrapped themselves, like the Moorish women of Granada; and long wooden swords with a groove on each side where the edge should be, in which cutting edges of flint were fixed with thread and bitumen (these swords cut naked men as if they were of steel); and hatchets to chop wood like those of stone the other Indians use, but these were made of good copper. They carried triangular-shaped bells of the same metal together with crucibles to melt them afterwards. For their provisions they had such roots and grains as are eaten in Hispaniola, and a sort of wine made of maize which resembled English beer;¹¹ and many of those nuts which in Mexico

are used for money.¹² They seemed to hold these nuts at a great price; for when they were brought on board the ship together with their goods, I observed that when any of these nuts fell, they all stooped to pick it up, as if an eye had fallen from their heads. At that moment they seemed to feel no concern for themselves, being brought prisoners out of their canoe on board the ship, among such strange and fierce people, as we are to them. Yet so great is avarice in mankind that we should not be surprised if those Indians put it above the fear and danger in which they were. I also add, that we should admire their sense of modesty and shame; for if in taking them on board it happened that some of the cloths with which they covered their genitals were displaced, the Indian would instantly cover himself with his hands and never lift them off, and the women would cover their faces and wrap themselves up, as we have said the Moorish women do in Granada. This moved the Admiral to treat them well and to restore their canoe, and give them some things in exchange for those that had been taken from them as samples. Nor did he keep any of the people except an old man named *Guimbe*,¹³ who seemed to have greatest authority and wisdom, in order to learn about the condition of the land, and that he might invite others to deal with the Christians. This he did readily and faithfully while we sailed along where his language was understood. Therefore, as a reward for this service, when we came where he was not understood, the Admiral made him some gifts, and sent him home very well pleased. This was before we came to Cape Gracias á Dios on the Costa de las Orejas.

1. Undoubtedly one of the immense rays that are often found basking on the surface of the Caribbean.
2. Ferdinand was right, the manatee or sea-cow is a mammal. Cf. Columbus's Journal for 9 January 1493.
3. Jacmel, Haiti.
4. "The Wells." These were the Morant Cays. Cf. Morison *A.O.S.* II 327-8 (one-vol. ed. 593).
5. One of the Bay Islands of Honduras. Ferdinand omits to say that the fleet first touched at an island off Cuba, probably one of those near the Isle of Pines, before steering south for Honduras.
6. This was the name that Columbus gave to Cape Honduras or Punta del Castillo, near Trujillo.
7. Lapsus in the text; he must have meant to say Honduras. By the time Ferdinand wrote this there had been many voyages to the Caribbean, illustrated by numerous charts, whose inaccuracy aroused his indignation.
8. The Indians of the mainland did not flatten their

skulls artificially like the Arawaks.

9. Dr. Samuel K. Lothrop, an authority on the Jicaque culture of this coast, believes that it was gold, for the Indians all along the coast from Panama to Yucatan knew the art of smelting gold and copper to make an alloy called *guanin*. See Las Casas's account of the Third Voyage, above. For this part of the Fourth Voyage see Morison *A.O.S.* II 330-49 (one-vol. ed. 594-608).
10. The description of this canoe and its commodities proves that it was Honduran, not Mayan. The Maya of Yucatan had no such large canoes.
11. See note on *chicha*, to Las Casas's account of the Third Voyage, in July 1498.
12. Cacao beans were used as currency all along this coast, even into the last century.
13. Various spelled *Imube*, *Imibe*, *Jumbe* and *Yumbero*, in other accounts. He was evidently of the Jicaque nation.

CHAPTER 90. *How the Admiral would not go to NUEVA ESPAÑA,¹ but turned Eastward to search for Veragua and the Strait in the Continent*

Although from that canoe the Admiral had heard about the great wealth, civilization and industry among the people of the western regions of Nueva España, he thought that since those countries lay to leeward, he could sail thither from Cuba whenever he chose.² He therefore decided not to go that way but held to his plan of discovering the Strait in the continent to open navigation into the South Sea, which was required in order to discover the Lands of Spices. Thus by way of trial he decided to sail eastward towards Veragua and Nombre de Dios where he guessed and believed the said Strait to be, as in effect it was. But he was mistaken in his guess, in that he did not think it to be a Strait made of narrowing lands as others are, but of narrowing seas, running like a channel from sea to sea. This mistake probably proceeded from the likeness of the names.³ For when it was said: "The strait of this continent is at Veragua and Nombre de Dios" one

might understand a strait either of water or of land; and he took it in the most usual sense, and according to his great wish. Even though the strait is land, it was and is the gate through which such mighty seas are ruled, and such immense riches have been conveyed and discovered. For it was God's will that an achievement of such vast importance should not be otherwise attained, and it was from that canoe that the first information concerning Nueva España was obtained.⁴ For these reasons, there being nothing of value in that island of Guanari, he sailed without further delay towards the continent to a point which he called Caxinas, because of the abundance of trees there that bear a sort of small apple, rough on the surface and with a spongy stone. They are good to eat, especially when cooked. The Indians of Hispaniola call this fruit *caxina*.⁵ There appearing to be nothing worth while in that entire country, the Admiral decided not to lose time in entering the great gulf which

the land makes there, but held on his course eastward along that coast which runs in the same direction to Cape Gracias á Dios. The coast is very low and the beach level.

The people near Cape Caxinas wore those painted shirts before mentioned, and clouts over their genitals; and they make small cotton jerkins from cotton yarn which are solid enough to protect them against their weapons and even to resist the shots of some of our arms. But the people more to the eastward, up to Cape Gracias á Dios, are almost black, of brutish aspect, go stark naked and are very savage; and, as the impressed Indian related, eat men's flesh and fish raw as it is killed. They have such large holes bored in their ears that a hen's egg may pass through them. This made the Admiral call it La Costa de las Orejas.⁶

There on Sunday morning, 14 August 1502, the Adelantado went ashore with the banners and the captains and many of the fleet, to hear Mass.⁷ On the following Wednesday, when the boats went ashore to take possession of the country on behalf of the Catholic Sovereigns, our Lords, above a hundred people ran down to the beach to welcome the boats. They were laden with provisions which they offered to the Adelantado as soon as the boats touched the shore, and they suddenly withdrew without speaking a single word. The Adelantado then ordered them to be given hawk's bells, beads and other little things; and with gestures he inquired through the above-mentioned interpreter, about the characteristic features of that region. The interpreter, having been but a short time with us, did not understand the Christians; although the distance of his land from Hispaniola, where several men aboard the

vessels had learned the Indian language, is not long; nor did the interpreter understand those Indians. But, being pleased with what had been given them, above two hundred came next day to the same place, laden with several kinds of provisions such as native fowls (which are better than ours), geese, roasted fish, red and white beans like our kidney beans, and other things not differing from those of Hispaniola. The country was green and fair, although low. There were in it plenty of pines, oaks, palm trees of seven kinds and myrobolans the sort that in Hispaniola are called *hobi*;⁸ and almost all the other sorts of fruits and foodstuffs which are to be found in Hispaniola. In addition there were many leopards, deer and gazelles,⁹ as well as plenty of those fish that are found in the islands but do not exist in Castile.

The people of this country are much like those of the other islands, but their foreheads are not so broad, nor do they seem to have any religion. There are among them several languages, and for the most part they go naked, but cover their genitals. Some wear short sleeveless shirts like our own, reaching to the navel. Their arms and bodies are painted with fire¹⁰ with figures in the Moorish style; which make them look strange. Some have lions painted on their bodies, others deer, and others castles with towers, and others various pictures. Instead of caps, the nobles among them wear red and white cloths of cotton; and some have locks of hair hanging on their foreheads. But if they dress up for a celebration some color their faces black, and others red; others draw streaks of various colors, and others put on their noses something resembling the beaks of ostriches, others put black

paint around their eyes. Thus they adorn themselves to appear beautiful, but actually they look like the devil.

1. *Spagnuola*; an obvious translator's error for *Nueva España*, i.e. Mexico. Ferdinand wrote this as much as ten years after the conquest of Mexico by Cortés.
2. Much has been made of Columbus's alleged stupidity or bad luck in refusing this opportunity to sail westward and discover Yucatan; but he showed good judgment in not letting his fleet go further to leeward, and the trading canoe he had encountered was not Mayan but Honduran. Certain other early evidence relied upon to prove the contrary is in Bartholomew's *Informacione* of 1505 (see Introduction to Part V), which (as printed in Harriette *Bibl. Am. Vet.* 473) states that they encountered a canoe "veniva da una cierta provintia chamata Maïam vel Iuncatam." Samuel K. Lothrop, who examined the ms., reports that the last two words are a later interpolation; and it is certain that Maia, or Mayapan, then included Honduras as well as Yucatan, although the Jicaque culture of Honduras differed from the Mayan.
3. *Stretto* in Italian and *estreito* in Castilian can mean any geographical narrowness, such as a mountain pass, isthmus or sea channel. The Indians doubtless tried to convey the Isthmus of Panama by gestures, and Columbus thought that they meant a channel. Similar false expectations were raised among the French and

English explorers of the early seventeenth century.

4. Possibly it did give a hint of this to others, and E. Roukema in *Imago Mundi* XIII (1956) 29 argues that the mysterious triangular land west of Cuba on the Cantino, Caverio and other early charts records an otherwise unknown voyage to Yucatan by some English or Portuguese discoverer. But it is generally assumed that the first knowledge of Yucatan was obtained by Juan de Grijalva in 1518.
5. The fruit of *Chrysobalanus icaco*. See Columbus's Journal for 17 November 1492, note 3. For Punta Caxinas see chap. 89, note 6.
6. "The Coast of Ears." The ear ornaments that he observed are shaped somewhat like hour glasses, the thin part going through the ears. All these Indians were of the Jicaque or Xicaque culture.
7. This is the only reference we have in any account of this voyage to Brother Alexander conducting a religious ceremony. Probably this was the first mass ever celebrated on the American continent, for there is no record of a priest accompanying Columbus, or any of the Spanish, Portuguese or English explorers of the continent, before 1502. The place must have been near the mouth of the Rio Romano, Honduras; cf. Morrison *A.O.S.* II 336 (one-vol. ed. 597).
8. *Hobo*, the wild plum *Spondias mombin* L.
9. Jaguars, deer and the little *Hippocamelus pandora*, which still exist along the Honduran coast and are hunted by the natives.
10. tattooed.

CHAPTER 91. *How the Admiral passed along the Coast of Ears towards Cape Gracias á Dios and Came to Cariai, and What he Saw and Did There*

The Admiral sailed along the said Costa de las Orejas eastward to Cape Gracias á Dios, which was so called because, though there were but 60 leagues thither from Punta Caxinas, we labored 70 days to attain it beating to windward, by reason of the contrary winds and currents. We had to tack out to sea for a while and then come about toward the shore, sometimes gaining and sometimes losing ground, according as the wind was favorable, or scant,¹ on the leg we were making. Indeed, had not the coast afforded such good anchorage, we should have been even more delayed in passing along it; but it was clear of obstructions, and two fathom of water half a league from the shore, and two more

at every additional league's distance. Thus we had a good chance to anchor at night or when wind was very light, so that the course was navigable only by reason of the good holding ground, though difficult. When on 14 September we reached the said cape, we saw that the land fell away to the southward and that now we could comfortably continue our voyage with those prevailing easterly winds which had been so contrary for us hitherto. We all gave thanks to God, in memory of which the Admiral called it Gracias á Dios.²

A little beyond it we passed some dangerous shoals that ran out to sea as far as the eye could reach. And because it was necessary to take on wood and water, on Sat-

urday 16 September the Admiral sent the boats to a river, that seemed to be deep and to have a good entrance. But the coming out proved not so; for the sea breeze blew up strong and the waves ran high against the current of the river, so strongly assaulting the boats that one of them was lost with all hands. Therefore the Admiral called it the *Río de la Desastre*.³ In this river and around it there were canes as thick as a man's thigh. On Sunday 25 September, running southward, we came to an anchor near an islet called Quirivi and a village on the mainland called Cariai, where we found the best people, country and situation up to this point; for the land was lofty, full of rivers and abounding in very tall trees, as also on the islet where they grew thick as basil, and full of very lofty groves of trees, like palms and myrobolans, as well as many other kinds. For this reason the Admiral called it *La Huerta*.⁴ This little island is a short league from the Indian village called Cariai, a place which is near a great river. There an immense multitude of people assembled from the nearby country, many with bows and arrows, and others with small palm-tree spears black as tar and hard as a bone, pointed with certain bones of animals or sharp fish bones; others were armed with clubs or big sticks. They had come together to show they meant to defend their country. The men had their hair braided and wound about their heads; the women wore theirs short like ours.

When they realized that we were peaceful people, they showed great eagerness to barter their commodities for ours, theirs being arms, cotton quilts and those cotton shirts above mentioned and eagles of *guanín* (a very base gold), which they wear hanging from their necks, as we do

an Agnus Dei or other relics.⁵ All these things they carried swimming to our boats, for the Christians did not land that day or the next. And the Admiral did not allow anything of theirs to be seized, that we might not be taken for men who coveted their belongings; on the contrary he caused them to be given many of our things. The result was that the less they saw us value trade the more eager for it were they; making sundry signs from land, displaying their quilts like flags, and inviting us to come ashore. At last, seeing that nobody went ashore, they took all the things that had been given them, without keeping any, and left them well tied together in the same place where our boats had first come to meet them; and there our men found them on the following Wednesday, when they landed. The Indians around there, thinking that the trouble was that the Christians did not trust them, sent to our ships an old man of dignified presence and with a flag mounted on a staff, and two little girls, the one about 8, the other about 14 years



of age. He put them into his boat and made signs that the Christians might safely land. Upon their request, the Christians went ashore to take on water, the Indians taking great care not to make any move or do anything that might alarm them; and when they saw them returning to their vessels, they made signs to them to take along the young girls, with *guanín* ornaments around their necks. So we complied at the request of the old man who conducted them and took them aboard. Wherein those people showed more ingenuity than we had yet seen, and the girls showed great fortitude, for despite the Christians being complete strangers to them in appearance, manners and race, they gave no signs of grief or fear, but always looked cheerful and modest. So the Admiral showed them good usage; he had them clothed and fed, and then ordered them to be set ashore, at a place where there were 50 men; and the old man who had delivered them received them again with much rejoicing.

Going ashore in the boats that same day, they found the same people with the little girls, and these and the Indians returned to the Christians all they had given them, not wanting to keep anything. The next day, when the Adelantado went ashore to learn something of those people two of the most important men came to his boat, took him by the arms between them, and seated him on the grass. He asked some questions and ordered the scribes of the ship to write down their answers. But the Indians, seeing the paper and ink-horn, took such fright that most of them ran away; which, as far as we could make out, was through fear of being bewitched with words or signs. As a matter of fact they seemed to us to be sor-

cerers, and not without reason; because, when they came near the Christians, they cast before them in the air a certain powder, and by burning some perfume and throwing the same powder into it they endeavored to make the smoke go toward the Christians.⁶ Besides, refusing to keep anything of ours and giving everything back proved that they were suspicious; for, as the saying is, "the thief thinks every man has his same thoughts."

Having stayed there longer than was convenient for the speed of our voyage, and after repairing the ships and providing all we wanted, on Sunday 2 October the Admiral ordered the Adelantado to go ashore with some men to observe that Indian village and their manners and customs and the lay of the land. The most remarkable thing they saw was a great wooden palace covered with canes, in which they had tombs, in one of which there was a corpse dried up and embalmed, and in another two, but without any bad odor, wrapped up in cotton sheets; and over these tombs was a board, with the figures of beasts carved on it; and on some of them was the image of the person there buried, adorned with much *guanín* jewelry, strings of beads, and other things they value most.⁷ These being the most intelligent Indians we had found in all those parts, the Admiral ordered some to be taken in order to learn the secrets of that country. Of seven who were captured two outstanding ones were selected and the rest sent away with gifts and kind entertainment, so that the country might not be stirred up. We told them that they were to serve as guides along that coast, and then be set at liberty. But the natives thought their men had been taken out of greed and for the sake of the

profit to be obtained by ransoming them for jewels and merchandise. So next day many came down to the shore and sent four men as their ambassadors on board the flagship to dicker about the ransom. They offered several things and made a gift of two little pigs of the country which, though small, are very savage.⁸ The Admiral, observing the wisdom of those people, was the more eager to be acquainted with them, and would not depart without taking an interpreter from among them. But he would not receive their offerings; on the contrary he ordered some trifles to be given to the ambassadors, that they might not go away dissatisfied, and that they should be paid for their pigs, concerning which occurred a fight, as follows.

Among the other creatures of that country there are monkeys of a greyish color, as big as a small greyhound but with a tail that is much longer and so strong that when they clasp it around something it might have been tied with a rope. These monkeys run about in the trees like squirrels, leaping from one to

another; and when they jump they catch hold of a branch not only with their hands, but also with their tail, by which they often hang, either to rest or in sport. It happened that a crossbowman brought one of these monkeys out of the forest. He had knocked it out of a tree with one of his bolts, and not daring to approach it, because even when grounded it showed great ferocity, he cut off one of the fore legs with his cutlass and carried the wounded animal on board. It terrified a fine dog we had aboard; but aroused much greater fear in one of the pigs which had been brought to us, and which at first sight of the monkey ran away, showing extreme fear. We were astonished by this, because, before the monkey's arrival, the pig charged at everyone, and gave the dog no peace on deck. The Admiral ordered the pig to be put close to the monkey, which wound its tail around the pig's snout, and with its remaining foreleg fastened on his head to bite it, while the pig grunted violently for fear. By this we understood that these monkeys must hunt like wolves or hounds of Spain.

1. *Vento scarso* (*viento escaso* in Castilian) is literally translated "scant wind" in old nautical English; it means a wind almost or completely contrary to your course, and has no reference to its strength. Guillén *La parla marinera de Colón* 66.

2. "Thanks be to God." It's still so called.

3. Either the Rio Grande or Bluefields, Nicaragua. A river bar with wind and sea making up against the current is about the most dangerous place for a boat. But, according to Porras's payroll (above), only two people were lost in that fatal search for water.

4. "The Garden." Cariai was that part of Costa Rica near the modern Puerto Limón, and the islet *Quirivi* was Uva Island which partially shelters the anchorage of that important place, terminus of the railway to San José.

5. For *guanín*, see Las Casas on the Third Voyage, above. Examples of the *aquiles*, "eagles," as the Spaniards always called these gold and *guanín* animals that the natives of the mainland wore, are in all museums of early American art. Why Columbus refused to trade for these objects is a mystery, because some are indistinguishable from pure gold and the gold content in all is high.

6. Probably powdered cocoa.

7. A corpse awaiting the final funeral rites and burial. Some of the stone mortuary images are preserved in museums, but the wooden tablets have disintegrated.

8. These pigs were native peccaries; the monkey, the native spider monkey of Costa Rica, which is still hunted and eaten by the Indians.

CHAPTER 92. *How the Admiral left Cariai and went to Cerabaro and Veragua, continuing until he reached Puerto Bello, the whole Voyage being along a very Fruitful Coast*

On Wednesday 5 October the Admiral made sail and arrived at the channel of Cerabaro,¹ which is six leagues in length and above three in width, in which there are many small islands and three or four entrances, very handy to enter or clear in any wind. Within these islets the vessels sail as it were in streets between one island and another, and the leaves of the trees strike against their rigging.² As soon as we anchored in this channel the boats went to one of those islets where 20 canoes were beached, and the people nearby on the shore were all naked as they had come out of their mothers' wombs, and they had only a gold mirror³ about the neck, and some an eagle of *guanín*. These, without showing any fear (the two Indians of Cariai being our interpreters), immediately gave a gold mirror which weighed ten ducats⁴ in exchange for three hawk's bells, and they said there was a large quantity of that metal and it was gathered on the mainland at a very small distance. Next day, 7 October, the boats went ashore to the mainland where they met 15 canoes full of people, but they did not care to exchange mirrors for our stuff; wherefore two of the chiefs were captured, so that the Admiral might gather information from them by means of the two interpreters. The gold mirror one of them wore weighed 14 ducats and the eagle of the other, 22. These Indians said that in a journey of a day or two up into the land, an abundance of gold could be collected in certain places which they named. In that channel there were an infi-

nite number of fish to be caught, and on the land, plenty of those animals which were in *Canaria*,⁵ and plenty of what they ate, namely roots, grains and fruit. The men here are painted in different colors: white, black and red both in the face and in the body. They also go naked, only covering their genitals with a narrow cotton clout.

From this channel of Cerabaro we went to another adjoining which is called *Aburema*⁶ and is in every respect similar to the other. Then, on the 17th of the month, we put out to sea to continue our voyage. When we came to *Guaiga*, which is a river 12 leagues from Aburema, the Admiral commanded the boats to go ashore.⁷ While they were under way, they saw over a hundred Indians on the shore who assaulted them furiously, entering the water up to their waists, brandishing their spears, blowing horns and beating a drum in warlike manner, to defend their country, and they threw salt water towards the Christians and chewed herbs, spitting towards them. But our men were not perturbed and tried to calm them down, and succeeded, so that at last they drew near to barter the gold mirrors they had about their necks, some for two and others for three hawk's bells. In this way we acquired 16 mirrors of pure gold worth 150 ducats. The following day, being Friday 21 October, the boats went ashore again to trade. Before any Christian disembarked they called some Indians who were near the bank, under some shelters they had made during the night to defend the land, out of fear the



Christians might land to do them wrong. In spite of the Christians calling to them several times, none of them would come out; nor would the Christians land without first knowing in what mind they were; for, as afterwards appeared, they were waiting in order to attack them as soon as they landed. When they saw that the Christians were not getting out of their boats, they blew horns and beat drums and with great shouts leaped into the water, as on the previous day, and went on till they almost reached the boats, indicating that they would hurl spears if the Christians did not return to their ships.

The Christians were displeased by this reception, and to prevent them from becoming bold and contemptuous they wounded one with an arrow in the arm, and fired a lombard, at which they were so frightened that they all fled to land with confusion. Then four Christians landed and called them back, putting aside their weapons. So they came toward our people with great confidence and exchanged three mirrors, saying they had no more, since they had come equipped not for trading but for fighting.

All the Admiral wanted in this journey was to get samples of what they had.

Therefore, without further delay, shortening the way, he went to *Cativa*⁸ and dropped anchor in the mouth of a great river. The people of that land were seen calling one another by horns and drums and gathering together; then they sent to the ships a canoe with two men. These, having talked with the Indians taken in Cariai, presently came aboard the flagship without any fear, and by the advice of the above-mentioned Indian made a gift to the Admiral of two gold mirrors which they bore around their necks, and the Admiral presented them with some trifles of ours. When they had gone ashore, another canoe came with three men wearing their mirrors hanging at their necks, who did as the first two had done. Thus amity was confirmed and our men went ashore and found many people there with their king who differed in no respect from the rest, save that he was covered with a leaf of a tree because it was then raining hard. This king, to make an example to his subjects, bartered a mirror and told them that they also should barter theirs, which were 19 in all of pure gold. Here for the first time in the Indies we saw traces of a building, in the form of a great block of stucco, which seemed to be built of stone and lime. The Admiral ordered a piece of it to be brought away as a memorial of that antiquity.⁹

1. Various spelled Caravaro, Cerabora, Zerabaro, etc.; this is Almirante Bay, Republic of Panama, which is entered by two narrow passages, of which the westernmost, Boca del Toro, was probably used by Columbus.
2. The only channel of which this is true today, as I ascertained in January 1940, is Split Hill Passage, between Almirante Bay and Chiriqui Lagoon. Although only deep enough now for a motor boat, it had plenty of water for ships prior to a hurricane in the last century, as an old pilot there informed me. All other narrow passages thereabouts are lined with mangroves, which do not grow tall enough to brush rigging. See

He departed eastward and got to *Co-brava*, whose villages lie near the rivers of that coast. Since none came down to the shore and the wind was very brisk, he held his course and passed five villages of great trade, among which was *Veragua*, where the Indians said the gold was gathered and the mirrors made. Next day he came to a village called *Cubiga* where, according to what the Indian of Cariai said, the trading country ended, which had begun at *Cerabaro* and stretched as far as *Cubiga*; that is to say, some 50 leagues of coast. The Admiral, without tarrying, continued until he entered *Puerto Bello*, giving it this name because it is very large and beautiful and well populated and surrounded by extensive cultivated country. He entered this place on 2 November, passing between two small islands. Within ships may lay close aboard the shore and depart in a hurry if they wish.¹⁰ The country about this harbor and higher up is not very rough, but tilled and full of houses, distant a stone's throw or a crossbow shot one from the other; and it looks like a painting, the prettiest that was ever seen.¹¹ During the seven days that we stayed there on account of rain and foul weather, canoes continually came from the whole countryside to sell their foodstuffs and skeins of fine spun cotton, which they exchanged for some trifles of brass such as pins and lacepoints.

Morison *A.O.S.* II 343-5 (one-vol. ed. 605-6).

3. Gold disks, pierced for a string, were described by the Spaniards as mirrors. These were the most valuable gold objects that Columbus had yet encountered on any of his voyages. The manner of wearing them is described in Chapter 96, below. The Indians here were the Guaymi.

4. Ten ducats were worth over \$23 in gold—a pretty good bargain for three hawk's bells worth about 10 cents.

5. A misprint either for Cariai or Caxinas, in both of which animals were mentioned.

6. Chiriqui Lagoon.
7. The mouth of Rio Chiriqui, or of the Rio Chutara.
8. *Catiba* (Las Casas); *Acatéba* (Peter Martyr). This was the shore of the Golfo de los Mosquitos near the Escudo de Veragua, and the river was probably the Chiriqui.
9. The nature of this edifice is an insoluble mystery. The Mayas never ranged that far east, and no other mainland natives used stone or plaster in building.
10. Puerto Bello, still so called, became the Caribbean

terminus of the trans-Isthmian mule track in the late sixteenth century, and the seat of an annual fair. Its ruins are still impressive. The tradewind generally blows out of the harbor, enabling sailing vessels to make a quick departure.

11. Striking testimony to the intensive cultivation and dense population of the Cuna-Cuna or San Blas Indians before the Spaniards came. Ferdinand, before he wrote this, had travelled extensively in Italy and was familiar with Italian landscape painting.

CHAPTER 93. *How the Admiral came to Puerto de Bastimentos and to Nombre de Dios and continued up Along the Coast until he Put into Retrete*

On Wednesday, 9 November, we left Puerto Bello and sailed 8 leagues to the eastward; but next day we were forced back 4 leagues by foul weather, and put in among the small islands near the mainland where Nombre de Dios is. And because all those countrysides and islets were full of maize fields the Admiral called the place *Puerto de Bastimentos*, i.e. of Provisions.¹ In this place a well-furnished boat was trying to hail a canoe, but the Indians, thinking that our people were trying to do them harm, and seeing that the boat had come within a stone's throw, all threw themselves into the water to swim away, as in fact they did. Although the boat rowed hard, it could not in half a league (the pursuit stretching that far) overtake any one of them; and, if it reached one, he would dive like a waterfowl and come up again a bow-shot or two in a different direction. This chase was indeed a great diversion, watching the boat labor in vain; finally it came back empty.

Here we stayed until 23 November, repairing the ships and mending our casks. On that day we sailed eastward to a land called Guigua, the same name as another land between Veragua and Cerabaro.²

The boats upon landing found on shore above 300 persons willing to barter foodstuffs and some small gold ornaments hanging from their ears and noses.

Without making any stay here, on Saturday 26 November we put into a small harbor which we called *Retrete* (i.e., secluded place) because it could not contain more than 5 or 6 ships together and its entrance was through a mouth 15 or 20 *pasos* wide, and on either hand there were rocks appearing above water sharp as diamond points. The channel in between was so deep that by favoring one side you could jump ashore.³ This was the main reason why the ships did not perish through the straitness of that harbor; and if this had happened the guilt would have been with those who went in boats to sound it before the vessels entered. They returned with a lie because they wanted to land, wishing to trade with the Indians, and the Indians were willing, and because the vessels could lay up to the shore. In this harbor we stayed 9 days with unsettled weather. At first the Indians came very amiably to barter some of their small things, but when they realized that the Christians were underhandedly coming ashore they retired to

their houses, because the seamen, like covetous and dissolute people, committed a thousand outrages.⁴ They so incensed the Indians that the peace with them was broken and some fights occurred between the two parties. And, as the Indians increased in number every day, they took courage to come up to the vessels which, as we have said, lay alongside the shore, intending to do mischief. And their design might not have failed had not the Admiral always endeavored to appease them with patience and civility. But at last, seeing their insolence increasing, he decided to give them a fright and gave orders to discharge some of our artillery. They answered this noise with shouts, thrashing the branches of the trees with sticks, making great threats and showing that they were not afraid of such noise, for they thought it was nothing but thunder intended to frighten them. Therefore, and to reduce their insolence, lest they conceive contempt for the Christians, the Admiral caused a gun to be fired at a group

of four who had assembled on a little hillock; and when the ball fell in their midst they realized that the joke threw a thunderbolt as well as thunder. They did not again venture to appear even except from behind the mountains.

The people of this land were the most handsome we had seen yet among the Indians, for they were tall and spare without any fatness in the belly, and fair of face.⁵ The land was covered with short grass and a few trees, and in the harbor there were very huge lizards or crocodiles which go ashore to stay and sleep and spread an odor as if all the musk in the world were there. They are so carnivorous and cruel that if they catch a man sleeping ashore they drag him to the water to devour him, though they are timid and flee away when they are attacked. Such lizards are found also in many other parts of the mainland, and some affirm that they are the same as the crocodiles of the Nile.⁶

1. This harbor was renamed *Nombre de Dios* by Nicuesa in 1508 for much the same reason that Columbus named *Cape Gracias á Dios*. It is still so called.

2. Probably the mouth of the *Rio Culebra*.

3. The Harvard Columbus Expedition spent some time identifying *Retrete* and concluded that it was *Puerto Escribanos*, which however is much larger than as described by Ferdinand. See Morison, *A.O.S.* II 355-8 (one-vol. ed. 614-7).

4. This explains why Columbus on this voyage always kept his men on board, or allowed only well-conducted liberty parties ashore. At *Retrete* he could not prevent their sneaking off into the bush to rob and

trade because the vessels lay alongside the bank. The boat party conspired to get the vessels inside because *Retrete* was so small that there was no anchorage in the middle.

5. This description sounds as though the natives of *Retrete* were not *Cuna-Cuna*, who from the earliest times have been described as short and stocky, with broad chests and legs attenuated by too much living in canoes.

6. Peter Martyr identified these with the American alligator, since he had been in Egypt and remembered the odor of the crocodile.

CHAPTER 94. *How, Forced by Tempests, the Admiral returned Westward to Inquire about the Mines and get Information about Veragua*

On Monday 5 December the Admiral, seeing that the violent E and NE winds did not abate and that he could not

trade with those people, resolved to turn back to ascertain the truth of what the Indians said concerning the mines of Ve-

ragua. Therefore that day he proceeded to sleep at Puerto Bello, 10 leagues westward. Continuing his course next day he was assaulted by a W wind, which was contrary to his new plan, but favorable to what he had had for the past three months.¹ However, he did not believe that this wind would last long, so he decided not to change his plan but beat against the wind for a few days because the weather was unsettled. When a little fair weather came, fair for going to Veragua, a new contrary wind arose and drove us back to Puerto Bello. But just when we were most hopeful of making the harbor the wind changed again, against our plan, and with so much thunder and lightning that the people did not dare to open their eyes; and it seemed as if the ships were sinking and the sky coming down on them. Sometimes the thunder was so long drawn out that we thought certain that some ship of the fleet was firing guns in distress. Another time the weather would turn to such heavy rain that for two or three days it poured incessantly so that it seemed like a new universal deluge. As a consequence everyone on board was in

terrible distress and almost desperate, since one could not rest even for half an hour and was continually drenched, tacking sometimes one way, sometimes another, struggling against all the elements and dreading them all. For in such dreadful storms one dreads the fire for lightning and thunderbolts, the air because of its fury, the water for the waves, and the earth for the rocks and shoals of that unknown coast. Such rocks and shoals are sometimes found near the harbor where one hopes to find refuge, but one is not acquainted and does not know the entrance well enough, and therefore prefers to fight with the other elements with which he is less familiar.² And besides all these various terrors there occurred another no less dangerous and astonishing, a waterspout which on Tuesday 13 December passed among the ships, which, had they not cut by saying the Gospel according to St. John,³ there is no doubt that whomsoever it fell upon would have been drowned. For it draws the water up to the clouds in the form of a pillar thicker than a hogshead, twisting it about like a whirlwind.



That same night we lost sight of the vessel *Vizcaína*, but fortunately, at the end of three very dark days she saw us again although she had lost her boat. She had been in great danger because near the shore she let go her anchor, which was lost as they were forced to cut the cable. And then we understood that the currents of that coast conformed to the storms, which then were going eastward following the wind, and turned the contrary way toward the west when the easterly winds prevailed; because the water seems to follow in that part the course of the wind which blows the strongest.⁴

When the contrariety of wind and sea had battered the fleet so violently that it had almost come apart, and nobody could bear a hand from exhaustion, one or two days of light airs gave us some respite. At the same time so many sharks came about the ships, that we were frightened, especially those among us who pay attention to signs and omens; for some believe it to be true of the sharks what they say of the ravens, that they foretell when there is a dead body and can detect it by the odor at a distance of several leagues. They get hold of the leg or arm of a person with their teeth and cut it like a razor, as they have two rows of teeth in the shape of a saw. We made such a slaughter of these sharks with hook and chain that we were unable to kill any more, and they went floating upon the water. They are so voracious that not only they bite at carrion but they may be taken with a red rag on the hook.⁵ And I have seen taken from the belly of one of these sharks a turtle which afterwards lived aboard the ship; and from another was taken the whole head of one of his fellows which we had cut off and thrown into the water as not

good to eat (no more than they are themselves) and which that shark had swallowed; and to us it seemed beyond reason that one creature should swallow the head of another of its own size. However, it is not to be wondered at, since they have a mouth extending almost up to the belly, and their heads are shaped like an olive. Now, although some of the crew looked upon them as a bad omen, and others as a bad fish, yet all of us made much of them because we were short of provisions, having by that time been 8 months at sea, so that we had consumed all the meat and fish we had brought from Spain. What with the heat and the damp sea, the biscuit had become so full of maggots that, God help me, I saw many men wait until nightfall to eat their porridge⁶ so as not to see the maggots in it; others were so used to it that they did not even take the trouble to throw the maggots away when they saw them, since in so doing they might have lost their supper.

On Saturday the 17th of the month, the Admiral put into a harbor three leagues east of Peñon which the Indians called *Huiva*.⁷ It was like a great channel, where we rested three days. Going ashore we saw the inhabitants living in the tops of trees like birds. They had laid sticks across from branch to branch and there built cabins, a name more appropriate than houses. Although we did not know the reason for this strange custom, yet we guessed that it was done out of fear of the griffons⁸ that are in that country, or of enemies; because all along that coast the people at a distance of a league are great enemies to one another.

We sailed from this harbor on the 20th of the same month [December] with fair but unsettled weather. In fact, as soon

as we were out to sea, the winds and the tempest began to harass us again so that we were forced into another harbor, whence we departed on the third day, with weather that seemed to be on the mend, but which, like an enemy that lies in wait for a man, assaulted us again, and forced us to Peñon. There, when we were hoping to enter the harbor where we had first found refuge, and right at the entrance of the same port, the wind, as if it were tormenting us, started up so violently that it was a favor that it permitted us to make that same harbor where we had been on Thursday the 12th⁹ of the same month, out of whose mouth it had first pulled us. There we remained from the second day of the Nativity¹⁰ until 3 January of the following year 1503; when, having repaired the vessel *Gallego* and taken on a large quantity of maize, water and wood, we turned back again towards Veragua with very wretched and foul weather, which in fact had so changed just as the Admiral altered his course. And this was so unusual and unheard of a thing that I would not have related so many changes if not only I had been present, but I have also seen it written by Diego Méndez, who sailed with the Jamaican canoes, of which I shall speak later. He also wrote an account of this voyage.¹¹ And in the letter which the Admiral sent through him to the Catholic Sovereigns, which has been printed,¹² the reader may learn our sufferings and how ill fortune persecutes him whom she should favor most.

To return to the changes and contrarities of the weather and of the course, which put us to so much trouble between Veragua and Puerto Bello that this coast was called *La Costa de los Contrastes*, I

say that on Thursday, being the day of Epiphany we anchored near a river which the Indians call *Gieura* and the Admiral named Belén, because we reached that place on the day of the Three Magi.¹³ He immediately ordered the mouth of that river to be sounded, and that of another river more to the westward, which the Indians call Veragua, and he found that the entrance was very shoal and that in the Rio Belén there were four *braccia* of water with high tide.¹⁴ Our boats entered this river of Belén and up-stream reached a village where they were told that the gold mines were in Veragua. At the beginning not only did the Indians not want to talk, but they gathered together under arms to prevent the Christians from landing. The following day our boats going to the Rio de Veragua, the Indians of that village did exactly what the others had done; and not only on land but on water also prepared for defense with their canoes. But there had come with the Christians one Indian of that coast, who could make himself understood a little, and he told them that we were good people and that we did not want anything we would not pay for. So they quieted down somewhat, and exchanged 20 gold mirrors and some bracelets and some nuggets of gold never melted, the which to value the more highly they said had been collected afar off in rough mountains; and that when they collected it they would not eat or take women along. This was also said by the people of Hispaniola when it was first discovered.

1. Columbus had been sailing eastward since leaving Veragua in the hope of covering the unexplored section of the coast between there and Venezuela, which he had seen on the Third Voyage. The long spell of unsettled and easterly weather thwarted this plan and

caused him to steer down-wind to Veragua and found a trading post in that gold-bearing region. The winter of 1502-3 seems to have been remarkable for strong and variable winds along that coast.

2. In Columbus's day there were supposed to be only four elements in nature: fire, air, water and earth.

3. John vi 17-20, ending *Ego sum, nolite timere*, "Fear not, for it is I." Herrera (*Historia general de las Indias* I lib. v ch. 3) describes, perhaps from imagination but possibly from oral tradition, how Columbus exorcised the waterspout by reading these verses and describing with his sword a circle in the air around his feet.

4. Ferdinand's observation on the currents is correct.

5. The same tackle and bait is still used at sea to catch sharks.

6. *Mazzamora*, in modern Italian *mazzamurro*, a cold porridge made by breaking biscuit into a pannikin of water.

7. Peñon was the name Columbus gave to the rocky peninsula at the mouth of the Rio Chagres, where the old San Lorenzo fort now stands. Huiva was evidently Limon Bay, the northern entrance to the Panama Canal. The fleet probably anchored on the Colon side, off the United States naval base of Cocosolo. Here Columbus came closest to the Strait of his seeking, even though it was a "strait of land" as Ferdinand said

above, and not a strait of water. He might have gone up the Chagres in dugouts and marched twelve to fifteen miles overland to the Pacific. But he had no interpreter here who could converse with the Indians, and heard no rumor of the narrow isthmus, the discovery of which would have been the crowning glory of his career.

8. The "griffons," tracks of which were reported in Cuba on the Second Voyage, were probably jaguars here, whatever they may have been there.

9. "XII," either a misprint for XVII, when the fleet lay in Huiva, or for XXII when it left the unnamed harbor. The fleet was at sea on 12 December.

10. 26 December.

11. Diego Méndez's account is printed below. Ferdinand means that he would have distrusted his own memory, unless corroborated by Diego's.

12. The *Lettera Rarissima*; see Introduction to the translation of it, below.

13. 6 January 1503. Belén is Spanish for Bethlehem. The Indian name of the river probably got corrupted in translation; Las Casas and Méndez give it as *Yebra*.

14. It would seem that Ferdinand's translator was here using the Italian *braccio* of about 2½ feet and not the Spanish *braza* (fathom) of about 5½ feet, because Columbus in his *Lettera rarissima* says that there were 10 *palmos* (90 inches) of water over the bar.

CHAPTER 95. *How the Admiral with his Vessels entered the Rio Belén, and Resolved there to Establish a Settlement and leave therein his Brother the Adelantado*

On Monday 9 January we entered into the Rio Belén with *Capitana* and *Vizcaína*.¹ The Indians came presently to barter what goods they had, especially fish which at certain times of the year come up those rivers from the sea, which seems incredible to anyone who does not see it. They also bartered some little gold [things] for pins, and gave what was more valuable for beads or hawk's bells. Next day the other two vessels came in. They did not enter before because there was but little water at the mouth of the river and they had to wait for the high tide. The sea never rises or falls there more than half a *braccio*.² And since Veragua was very

famous for its mines and great wealth, on the third day after our arrival, the Adelantado went by sea with the boats in order to enter the river and reach the village of the Quibián,³ which is the name the Indians give to their king. This one, when he heard of the Adelantado's arrival, came down river with his canoes to receive him. They met in a very courteous and friendly manner and bartered one with the other such things as they valued most; and having discoursed together for a long time, each went his own way quietly and peaceably.

On the following day the above mentioned Quibián came to the vessels

to visit the Admiral, and they discoursed together for over an hour; the Admiral gave him some things, and his men bartered a certain amount of gold for hawk's bells, and so he returned without any ceremony in the same way he came. While we were very happy and secure, on Tuesday 23 January suddenly the Rio de Belén rose so high that we could do nothing against it, nor carry our cables ashore. The fury of the flood pressed so violently against the flagship that she broke out one of her two anchors, and drove her with such force against the *Gallego*, which lay astern, that it broke the bonaventure mizzen.⁴ Then the two ships, one striking against the other, were carried hither and yon so furiously that they were in great danger of perishing, with the whole fleet. Some thought the cause of this great flood to be the heavy and continual rains, which had fallen all winter in that country without stopping for a single day. But, had that been it, the flood would have swelled little by little, and would not have come with such fury or so unexpectedly.⁵ That is why some of us suspected that the flood had been caused by some great storm which had fallen over the mountains of Veragua, which the Admiral called the St. Christopher Mountains, because the top of the highest of them was above that region of the air where meteorological phenomena⁶ are bred; for no cloud is ever seen on it and all the clouds are below it. That summit looks like an hermitage.⁷ It lies at least 20 leagues within the country in the midst of many forested mountains. There, we believed, had been generated the flood which made such an assault on us that the lesser peril, it would seem, was to ride the flood out in the open sea, half a league below us; yet the tempest was so

cruel outside that we would have been broken up as soon as we were out of the river mouth.

This tempest lasted so many days that we had time to secure and moor the ships. The waves broke so furiously at the mouth of the river that the boats were not allowed to go outside to row along the coast, reconnoiter the country, learn where the mines were located and choose the best place to build a village. For the Admiral had resolved to leave the Adelantado here with the majority of his people, so that they might inhabit and subdue that country while he went to Castile to procure supplies of men and provisions.

With this in mind on Monday 6 February, the weather being fair, he sent the Adelantado with 58 men by sea to the mouth of the Rio Veragua, which is a league westward from the Belén. They ascended the river another league and a half up to the village of the cacique, where they stopped a day inquiring the way to the mines. The following Wednesday they travelled $4\frac{1}{2}$ leagues and slept near a river which they crossed 43 times. Next day they advanced a league and a half towards the mines which were pointed to them by the Indians whom the Quibián had given them as guides. In a space of two hours after their arrival each of them had collected gold from around the roots of trees, which are very thick in that country, and high as Heaven. The sample of that gold was much esteemed because none of those who went there carried any tools to dig with, nor had they ever collected gold before. Since the purpose of their journey was merely to get information about the mines, they returned very merry the same day to sleep at Veragua, and the day after to the ships.

To tell the truth, these were not the mines of Veragua, which were afterwards ascertained to be much nearer, but the mines of Urirá, an enemy people. Since there was war between them and Ve-

ragua, the Quibián gave orders that the Christians be guided thither, hoping to get them into trouble and so leave his country alone.

1. For a description of the bar off the Rio Belén, and the basin and navigable reach inside, see Morison *A.O.S.* II 366-9 (one-vol. ed. 622-6).

2. The extreme range of tides given by Bowditch along this coast is 12 inches, but the depth of water in these river bars along the Golfo de los Mosquitos is regulated more by the volume of water coming down the rivers than by the tides. For *braccio* see chap. 94, n. 14.

3. *El Quibián* (Las Casas and Diego Méndez). This appears to have been a title of the cacique rather than his name.

4. A small fourth mast stepped on the poop deck near the after rail.

5. The tradewind clouds precipitate so much rain on the Caribbean coast of Veragua that the forested mountain slopes are in a continual state of saturation. Consequently it does not take a heavy rain to start a

freshet, and these frequent freshets have baffled every attempt to exploit the gold deposits of that region.

6. *Le impressioni*, meaning "meteors" in the Aristotelian sense of any phenomenon that comes from the sky or belongs in the air. Thus, in Charles Morton's *Compendium Physicae*, the textbook used at Harvard and Yale in the early eighteenth century, all winds, clouds, rain, snow, hail, dew, rainbows, lightning, thunder, will o' the wisps and shooting stars are classed as meteors. Apparently the connection with Columbus's patron saint is that St. Christopher was a giant.

7. The landmark for Rio Veragua is a curious double-peaked mountain that resembles a fox's ears, and the landmark for Rio Belén is a double-headed mountain called the Saddle of Veragua; I could see nothing on any mountains in this region that resembled a hermitage.

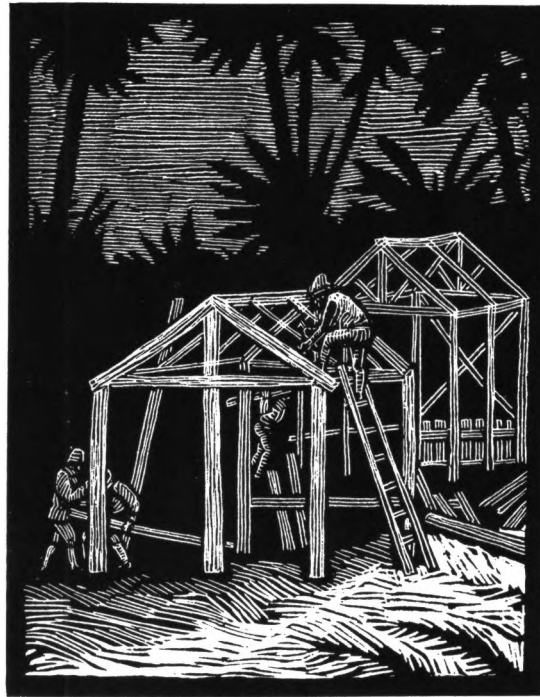
CHAPTER 96. *How the Adelantado went to visit some Villages in that Province, and the Manners and Customs of the Natives of that Country*

On Thursday 16 February 1503, the Adelantado went up into the country with 59 men, and 14 went by sea in one boat. Next morning they came to the Rio Urirá which is about 4 leagues westward of Belén.¹ About a league from a village the cacique came to meet him with 20 men and presented him with many of those things that they eat, and bartered some gold mirrors. While they were there the cacique and the principal men never stopped chewing a certain dry herb which they stuck in their mouths, and sometimes they added to that herb a sort of powder which they were carrying. This seemed a very nasty habit.² After a while the Indians and Christians proceeded to the village, where a big crowd of people came to meet them and assigned them a large house where they lodged, and gave

them plenty to eat. Shortly after, arrived the cacique of Urirá, another nearby village, with many Indians, who also brought some mirrors to barter. From these Indians and the others we learned that up-country there were many caciques who had heaps of gold, and people armed like ourselves. The following day the Adelantado ordered most of his people to return to the ships by land, and with 30 men continued his way in the direction of Cobraba, where the land for over six leagues was cultivated with maize which looked like fields of wheat. Thence he went to Cateba, another village.³ At both places he was well received, and was given plenty to eat, bartering also for some gold mirrors. These, we have said, are like the patens of a chalice, some big and some small, weighing 12 ducats more or less.

They wear them hanging from their necks with a string in the same manner that we wear an *Agnus Dei* or other scapular. The Adelantado had now gone very far from the ships without discovering any harbor or river bigger than that of Belén where he could make his settlement. Therefore, on 24 February he returned the same way with over . . .⁴ ducats in gold obtained by barter.

As soon as he was back, careful plans were made and carried out for his settlement. By groups of ten more or less, as the 80 people who had to remain there decided, they began to build houses on the bank of the Rio de Belén about a lombard shot from the mouth, beyond a gully which lies on the starboard hand as you enter the river, and at the mouth of which is a hillock.⁵ Beside these houses, which were of wood and covered with leaves of the palm trees which grow along shore, another large house was built to serve as storehouse and magazine, in which were collected several pieces of cannon, powder and provisions, and other like munitions to maintain the settlers. But the most indispensable necessities, such as wine, biscuit, garlic, vinegar, cheese and many beans and peas (because there was nothing else to eat); all these were left more secure in the vessel *Gallega*, which was assigned to the Adelantado with her entire equipment of nets, hooks, and other fishing tackle, so that he might employ her at sea or ashore. For in that country there is an infinite number of fish in every river, in which, and along the seashore, schools of fish run at certain seasons as if they were going places. All the people of that country feed more on fish than on flesh, and although some kinds of animals are found there, they are insufficient for their



ordinary food.

The manners of these Indians are pretty much like those of Hispaniola and the neighboring islands. But the people of Veragua and the region around about, turn their backs when they converse with one another; and when they eat they continually chew a certain herb, which we believe is the reason why they have rotten and decayed teeth. Their food is fish, which they catch with nets and bone hooks made of tortoiseshell which they cut out with a thread as if they were sawing something; throughout the islands they do the like. They have another implement to catch certain very tiny fish like spawn which in Hispaniola they call *titi*. This fish, at certain seasons when the rains fall, swim shoreward, where they are so pursued by the bigger fish that they are forced up to the surface of the water. Here the Indians take as many as they like in little baskets and small nets; they wrap

them in leaves as the apothecaries do with their electuaries,⁶ roast them in an oven and keep them a long time. They also catch pilchards⁷ in the same manner, because these fish at certain seasons flee from bigger fish with such speed and fear that they leap out of the water two or three paces up the beach; so that the only effort required to catch them is to pick them up. These pilchards they also take in another manner. Down the middle of their canoes they set up from stem to stern a screen of palm leaves three fathoms⁸ high; then, moving along the river they make a noise by beating their gunwales with the paddles; the sardines to save themselves from other fish jump into the canoe, strike the screen and fall inside, and thus they catch as many as they want. Also jurel, shad and skate⁹ come here in due season, and many other kinds of fish. It is really marvellous to watch what happens along these rivers at the season when the fish are running, and which they catch in large quantities, and preserve roasted for a long time.

They also have for food large quantities of maize, a grain which, like millet, grows on a spike or ear, whereof they make white and red wine as beer is made in England. They mix it with their spittle¹⁰ as they please, and it has a pleasant flavor like that of a sharp or dry wine. They also make another sort of wine out

of trees which look like palms, and I do believe they are of the same kind, only they do not have trunks smooth like other trees, but covered with spines like those of the porcupine. From the pith of these palm trees, which resemble palmettos, by grating and squeezing it, they draw out the juice of which they make wine, boiling it with water and with their own spices; and they consider it very good and precious. They make another wine out of a fruit which was found in the island of Guadeloupe, like a great pine cone.¹¹ Its plant is sown in extensive fields from the sprout which grows at the top of that very pine cone, as we do at home with cabbage or lettuce. The plant lasts three or four years, continually bearing fruit. They make wine also of other kinds of fruit, particularly of one which grows on very tall trees like cedars, and they are like big lemons. Each fruit has two, three or four stones like nuts, not round but in the shape of a garlic clove or chestnut. The skin of this fruit is like the pomegranate, and at first sight when it is taken from the tree, it looks very much like a pomegranate, except that it has no little crown on top; and it tastes like a peach or a good pear. Some of them are better than others, the same as with every other kind of fruit. They are found also in the islands, and the Indians call them *mammei*.¹²

1. Rio Culobefora today.

2. Coca leaves were probably the basis of this mastication.

3. The shore line below these villages (the Guaymi never settled right on the coast) had already been visited by the fleet in October 1502; see chap. 92, above.

4. Lacuna in text; Las Casas says "a great quantity."

5. *monticello*. This hillock I identified on 12 January 1940, after swimming ashore, as the bar to the Rio Belén was breaking all across and my dinghy swamped in the surf off the nearby beach. The hillock stands out clearly, but is commanded by higher wooded hills.

6. *confezioni*, a literal translation of the Spanish *con-*

fecciones, a paste in which drugs are compounded with honey or syrup to make them more palatable.

7. *sardelle*, some small herring-like fish.

8. *tre braccia*; three Italian fathoms, about 7½ feet.

9. *surri, lacchie e lice*; this translation is Keen's. One may speculate endlessly as to what native fish the Spaniards actually saw.

10. *specie*, by which he means spittle, not spices. The fermentation of *chicha* is started by chewing, as also with native beverages in Polynesia.

11. The pineapple.

12. The mammee apple.

CHAPTER 97. *How for the Security of the Christian Settlement the Quibián and several Chiefs were Arrested, and how out of Carelessness he made his Escape*

Everything for the settlement was already in order, 10 or 12 houses with thatched roofs had been built, and the Admiral was ready to depart for Castile, when the river which before had endangered us by its flood water, now put us in even greater peril for want of it. This happened because, what with fair weather and the end of the January rains, the river mouth and bar shoaled to such an extent that where we had entered with four *braccia* of water, which was little enough for our needs, there was not more than half a *braccio* when we wanted to leave.¹ Thus, we were shut in, and there was nothing we could do about it. To drag the ships over the bar was impossible; even had we had the gear to do it, the sea is never so calm but that its smallest wave coming toward the shore would not break the ships;² especially ours which were at this time like honeycombs, all eaten by teredos. Thus we had nothing left but to commend ourselves to God and pray for rain, as before we had prayed for fair weather; because we knew that if it rained the river would bring down more water and the mouth would open up, as usually happens in these rivers.

At that time we learned from the interpreter that the Quibián or cacique of Veragua had resolved secretly to set fire to the houses and kill the Christians, because all the Indians much resented their settling on that river. So, it seemed that to punish him, set an example, and frighten his neighbors, the best thing was to take him prisoner with all his chief men, and to

send them to Castile; and that his village should remain to serve the Christians. For this purpose, on 30 March, the Adelantado with 74 men went to the village of Veragua. And when I say village, I must tell you that the houses are not grouped together in that country but they live as in Vizcaia, a considerable space apart from one another. When the Quibián heard that the Adelantado approached, he sent to warn him not to come up to his house which was on the top of a hill, above the Rio de Veragua. The Adelantado, to prevent his running away out of fear, decided to go with only five men, but gave orders to those he left behind to follow him two by two at some distance apart; and when they heard a shot they should surround the house so that none might escape. When he had approached the house, the Quibián sent him another messenger forbidding him to enter, for he would come out to talk to him, as he was wounded by an arrow. This they do so that no one may see their women, of whom they are inordinately jealous. Accordingly, he came to the door and sat down on the threshold, bidding only the Adelantado to approach him, which he did, commanding the others to attack as soon as he had got hold of the fellow's arm. As he approached the cacique he inquired about his complaint, and other matters of the country through an Indian we had captured over three months earlier not far from there. The Indian had become very friendly to us, and at that moment was very much frightened on our

account because he knew that the Quibián wished to kill the Christians; and because he did not yet know our strength, he thought the Quibián might easily succeed because of the multitude of people in that province. The Adelantado paid no attention to the man's fears, and, pretending to look into the cacique's wound, he seized him by an arm; and though they were both very strong, the Adelantado took such firm hold that four [of his guard] had time to come up; and, this done, the other fellow fired his arquebus, all the Christians ran out of ambush, and surrounded the house, in which were 50 persons great and small. Most of them were captured and none wounded; for when they saw that their king was a prisoner they made no resistance. Among those people were women and children of the Quibián, and others were chief men, who made promises of great riches, saying that in the neighboring forest there was a great treasure, the whole of which they would give as ransom. The Adelantado, paying no attention to that promise, and before the countryside was aroused, wished to send the Quibián to the ship, with women, children, and chief men; he with most of his men staying behind to deal with the Indians who had fled.

Next, after discussing with the captains and reliable men who should take charge of the prisoners and conduct them to the mouth of the river, he consigned them to Juan Sánchez of Cadiz, a pilot and a man of good reputation, because he had volunteered. The Adelantado delivered the cacique bound hand and foot and told his keeper to take special care that he should not escape. Sánchez, who offered to let his beard be pulled out if the cacique escaped,

took charge of him, and together they went down the Rio de Veragua. They had come within half a league of the mouth when the Quibián complained that his hands were bound too tight. Juan Sánchez out of compassion set him free from the thwart of the boat to which he was tied, and held him by the rope. A little later the Quibián, observing his keeper to be somewhat absent minded, flung himself into the water, and Juan Sánchez let go the rope so that he would not be dragged after him; and as night had fallen and the men in the boat made such a noise, they could neither see nor hear where the fellow went ashore, and he disappeared like a stone cast into the water. Then, lest the same thing happen with the other prisoners, they continued on their way toward the ships, very shamefaced over their carelessness and oversight.

Next day, which was 1 March, the Adelantado realized that as the country was very mountainous and thickly forested, and there were no regular villages but only scattered houses on hill-tops, it would be very difficult to chase Indians from place to place. So he decided to return to the vessels with his men, none of them dead or wounded. He presented the Admiral with the plunder which had been taken in the Quibián's house, about 300 ducats' worth of gold mirrors, eagles, little gold cylinders which they string and wear on their arms and legs, and twisted gold cords which they wear on their heads like coronets. All these things, deducting only the fifth part for the Catholic Sovereigns, he divided among members of the expedition; and to the Adelantado, in token of victory, was given one of those coronets that I have just described.

1. See Chapter 94, note 15. Half a *braccio*, if I have interpreted it rightly, was 15 inches, about what there is over the Belén river bar today, when it breaks all across with the slightest sea.

2. He means that even if it were possible to lighten the ships over the bar by pontoons, the waves would make them pound on the bar and stave their bottoms.

CHAPTER 98. *How after the Admiral's departure from Belén to go to Castile, the Quibián attacked the Christian Settlement, in which Battle there were many Killed and Wounded*

Since everything necessary for the support of the settlers had now been provided, and the decisions and laws for its government had been made by the Admiral,¹ it pleased God to send so much rain that the river flooded and its mouth opened up again. Taking advantage of that opportunity, the Admiral decided to leave at once for Hispaniola with three vessels, in order to send speedy help to those who remained behind. So, as soon as there was a fair calm, so that the sea would not break or beat on the river bar, we got those vessels out, towing them by the barges which were sent ahead. Yet no ship came out so clean that her keel did not scrape the bottom, and, had there not been shifting sands, there would have been great danger in spite of the calm. When this had been done, with great haste, we brought out to the vessels everything that had been sent ashore in order to lighten them when crossing the bar. And while we were anchored in an open roadstead about a league from the mouth of the river, awaiting a fair wind to depart, it pleased God miraculously to give us an occasion to send the *Capitana's* barge ashore for water and other necessities. For, through the loss of this boat, both those ashore and in the roadstead were saved. Here is what happened.

When the Indians and the Quibián saw that the vessels were off shore and

could not help those left behind, they attacked the Christian settlement at the very moment when the barge touched ashore. Because of the dense forest they had not been seen; and, at about ten paces from our people's houses, they fell on them with loud whoops, hurling spears at those who were visible, and even at the houses, which being covered with palm leaves were easily pierced, so that some within were wounded. Thus our men were caught unawares and unexpectedly, and before they could rally to resist, four or five were wounded. However, the Adelantado was a man of high courage. He withstood the enemy with a spear, encouraging his men, and with seven or eight men with him, energetically attacking the Indians. In this manner he forced them back to the forest which was not far from the houses. From there the Indians counter-attacked in skirmishes, hurling their spears and then withdrawing as the Spaniards used to do in mock battles.² Finally, when many Christians had rallied, the Indians, punished by the sword's edge and by a dog which fiercely pursued them, had to take flight, leaving one Christian dead and seven wounded. One of these was the Adelantado, who was hit in the chest by a spear.

From this peril two Christians preserved themselves. I shall relate their story to show the merry conceit of one, an

Italian and a Lombard, and the gravity of the other, a Castilian. Here it is. To the Lombard named Bastiano,³ while running away full tilt to hide himself in a house, Diego Méndez cried: "About face, Bastiano, where are you going?" The other answered at once: "Let me go, you devil! I'm going to save my skin!" The Spaniard was Captain Diego Tristán, whom the Admiral had sent ashore with his barge. He never left the barge with his people, in spite of the fact that she was up-river near where the fight took place. When later reproached by some [of his crew] for not going to help the Christians, he answered: "I did that to prevent those ashore retreating to the barge from fear, [as they would have done] had I closed the shore; in that case we would all have perished, for had the barge been lost the Admiral out at sea would be in greater danger." So he decided merely to carry out his orders to get water, unless he saw there was need of his assistance. In order promptly to obtain the water and lighter it out, and bring the Admiral an account of what was going on, he decided to row well upstream where the water was fresh and not mixed with the salt; and this despite some of his men protesting because of great danger from the Indians and their canoes. To them he answered that they were not to fear this danger, since they had come ashore for that purpose and were under orders from the Admiral. Accordingly he continued up the river, which is very deep in the middle, but both sides overhung by trees reaching almost to the water, and so thick that scarcely anyone can land, save in some spots where the fishermen's paths end, and where they hide their canoes.

As soon as the Indians saw him al-

most a league upstream from the settlement, they came out in their canoes from both banks of the river where the trees are thickest, whooping and blowing horns, and attacked him boldly from all sides. They had a great advantage because their canoes are very light and one man is enough to manoeuvre it as he wills, especially the small ones belonging to the fishermen. In each canoe there were three or four men, one of whom paddled and the rest hurled spears and arrows against the men in the barge. And I call their javelins "arrows" and "spears"⁴ because of their size, although they have no iron points, only fish bones or teeth. There being but seven or eight oarsmen in our barge, and the captain with two or three men to fight, they could not protect themselves against the multitude of spears that the others hurled at them, so they had to quit their oars and take up their round shields. But there was such a multitude of these Indians, who poured in from every side, that by attacking and retiring at will they skillfully wounded most of the Christians, especially the Captain, who was hit in many places. He stood immovably all the time encouraging his men, but it availed him naught, for he was beset on every side and could neither move nor make use of his firearms, until at length they struck a spear in one of his eyes and he fell down dead. All the rest came to the same end, except one cooper from Seville named Juan de Noja,⁵ who by good luck fell overboard in the midst of the fray and by swimming under water reached the bank without anybody seeing him. He then made for the settlement through the thick jungle to bring news of what had happened.

Our men realized they were but a

few, and most of them wounded, and some of their companions dead, and the Admiral out at sea without a boat and in danger of being unable to return to a place whence he might send them relief. They were so frightened that they decided not to stay there; in fact they would have left at once disobediently and without orders had they not been prevented by the mouth of the river which, because of foul weather, had closed again, so that the vessel which had been left within could not get out. And, since the sea was breaking heavily outside, no boat or person could get out to bring news to the Admiral.

He himself ran no less danger in the open roadstead where he had anchored near the shore without a boat and but few people on board, since so many had been killed. So that he and all on board were in the same anxiety and confusion as those

1. This code of laws for Santa Maria de Belén, as Columbus named the inchoate settlement, unfortunately has not survived.

2. He probably means jousting in tournaments.

3. No such name appears on the payroll (No. 1 above). Perhaps he was Bartolomé de Milan, gunner of *Santiago*, who is the only man listed as a Lombard. It will be observed that Ferdinand, who was half Italian himself, had views on certain national characteristics

ashore. They knew the result of the past battle, and saw those killed on the barge floating down the river covered with wounds and followed by ravens which flew over them, croaking; and they looked upon all these signs as of ill omen and were fearful they should come to the same end; especially since they saw the Indians had become so insolent by their victory that they would give them no respite on account of the poor situation of the settlement. Certainly all would have suffered the same fate had they not decided for their defense to move to an open stretch of beach eastward of the river, where they built a stockade with the casks and other things they had, and planted the cannon in places convenient for defense, the Indians not daring to come out of the forest because of the great havoc caused among them by the cannon balls.

that are not altogether imperceptible in the twentieth century.

4. *dardi e lancia*. See also what the Admiral and Diego Méndez say about the Battle of Belén in the translations that follow this.

5. This sole survivor, who is on the official payroll for *Santiago*, must have been the source of Diego Tristán's explanation of why he persisted in carrying out his mission.

CHAPTER 99. *How the Indians kept Prisoner on board Ship Escaped, and the Admiral learned the Defeat of those Ashore*

While these events were going on ashore ten days elapsed, and the Admiral was worrying and dreading what might have happened, waiting from hour to hour for the weather to moderate so he might send another small boat to learn the reason for the other's detention.¹ But fortune thwarted us in everything and did not let us communicate with one another. To add to our afflictions, it happened that the

sons and relations of the Quibián whom we kept prisoners on board *Bermuda* to bring them to Castile, found the way to liberty as follows. At night they were clapped under the hatches, whose cover was so high that they could not reach it. The watch forgot to fasten it down from the outside with chains, because seamen were sleeping on top of it; hence the prisoners made their escape. Very quietly

they collected right under the hatch cover all the stones that were in the ship's hold, and made a pile of them; and then one night, all pushing together with their shoulders from below, they forced open the hatch, tumbling off those that slept on it, and some of the principal [prisoners] leaped out and jumped overboard. But the seamen ran up at the noise, and not many of the prisoners were able to escape. Our men, having secured the hatch cover with its chain, now kept better watch. But those Indians who remained, when they realized that they could not save themselves with their companions, lost hope and hanged themselves with such ropes as they could lay hands on, and so they were found the next morning, their feet and knees dragging on the bottom of the hold, headroom not being sufficient for them to stretch out. So all the prisoners on board that ship either escaped or died. This loss was no great harm to the ships, but it was feared it might result in worse danger for those ashore, in addition to their escape or death increasing the misfortune. The Quibián would willingly have made peace with our people ashore to get back his children; but, now that we had no hostages, there was cause to fear that he would wage even more cruel war against the Christians.

While we were thus afflicted amidst so many troubles and disasters, at the mercy of the cables by which we were anchored, and without any news from shore, some started to say that since those Indians had ventured to leap into the sea over a league from the land only to save their lives, they to save themselves and so many more people would dare to go overboard and swim if the one boat which was left would take them beyond the breakers'

line. I say the one remaining boat, which was that of the vessel *Bermuda*, since *Vizcaina's* boat had been lost in the fight; so the three vessels had but that one boat for their needs. When the Admiral saw the good disposition of these seamen, he accepted their offer. So the boat carried them within an arquebus shot from land, being unable to go nearer without great danger because of the waves breaking on the beach. There, one Pedro de Ledesma, a pilot of Seville, jumped alone into the water and with great courage, sometimes on the crest and sometimes under the breaking waves, at last got ashore. He learned the condition of our men and how they were all of one mind on no account to remain there forlorn and helpless as they were; therefore they begged the Admiral not to sail without taking them off; for to leave them there meant a death sentence for all, the more certain because already there were seditions among them, and they no longer obeyed either the Adelantado or the captains. All their care was to be ready whenever there was a break in the weather, and then to lay hold of some canoes and embark; for the only boat they had left was not big enough to take all; and if the Admiral would not receive them on board the fleet which he still had, they would endeavor to save their lives and trust to luck rather than suffer whatever form of death those Indians, like cruel executioners, might select for them. With an answer of this kind Pedro de Ledesma swam back to the boat which was waiting for him and thence came to the vessels, where he told the Admiral how things stood.

1. Sea-going vessels in those days generally carried only one large boat, the barge, and one small one. In Columbus's fleet, only one barge, belonging to *Santiago*

(*Bermuda*) was now left. *Gallega* (now inside the bar) had lost her barge in the hurricane off Hispaniola, but apparently had a small boat; *Vizcaína's* had been carried away in the December gale between Puerto Bello and the Canal Zone, and replaced by the flagship's, and that had just been captured by the Indians. Thus, *Capitana*, *Santiago* and *Vizcaína* in the open

roadstead, undermanned and in imminent peril of dragging anchors in a sudden sea-turn of the wind, had only one boat between them. There is usually a heavy sea running off that coast, and the Admiral's situation was indeed perilous; he admits his almost frenzied anxiety in his *Lettera Rarissima*, below.

CHAPTER 100. *How the Admiral took on board the People he had left at Belén, and how he crossed over to Jamaica*

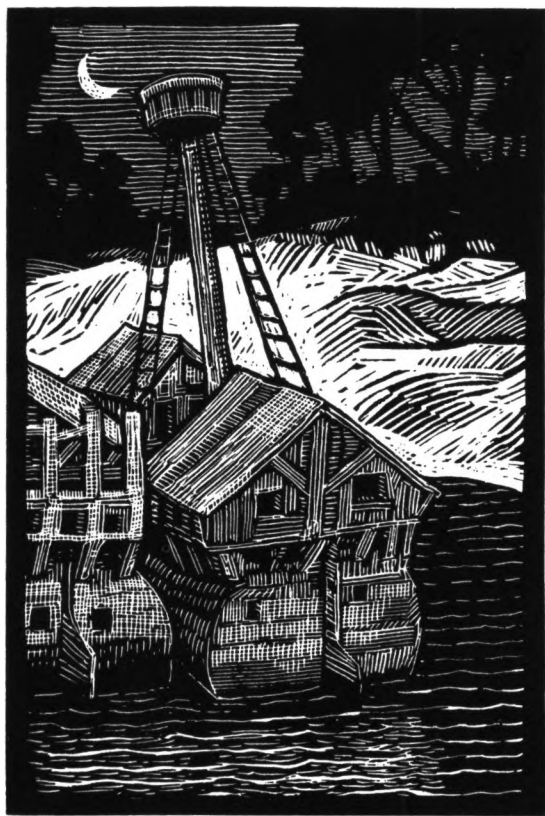
When the Admiral heard of the defeat, the confusion and the despair of those people, he decided to wait and take them on board, though he could not do so without great danger because his vessels were off the beach without shelter or means of saving himself or them, had the weather turned worse. But it pleased Our Lord that, after eight days that he stayed there at the mercy of his bower cables, the weather mended so that the people on shore, with their boat and with big canoes lashed together so they would not capsize, began to collect their effects. Everyone was striving not to be the last, and they made such haste that within two days nothing was left ashore but the hulk of the vessel, which by reason of the teredos was unseaworthy. Thus, rejoicing that we were all together again, we made sail eastward up the coast.¹

All the pilots were of the opinion that, by setting a northerly course, we might make Santo Domingo; only the Admiral and his brother the Adelantado knew it was necessary to push a good long distance along the coast before we could cross that gulf which is between the mainland and Hispaniola.² Our folk were very sore about this, because they imagined that the Admiral was planning to go directly to Castile without proper ships or sufficient provisions for the voyage. But

he knew best what was fit to be done, and we held our course until we reached Puerto Bello, where we were forced to abandon the vessel *Vizcaína* because she was waterlogged, her hull pierced through and through by the teredos.

Following along the coast we passed beyond the harbor of Retrete, and reached a country off which were many little islands, which the Admiral called Las Barbas; but the Indians and the pilots call all that region the land of the cacique Pocorosa.³ Thence, passing many others, we sighted a mainland which he called *Marmoro*,⁴ some ten leagues beyond Las Barbas. Afterwards on Monday 1 May 1503, we stood to the northward with winds and currents from the east, because of which we struggled continually to lay up as close to the wind as we could. And although all the pilots said that we would pass to the eastward of the Caribbee Islands, the Admiral feared he could not make Hispaniola.⁵ And this proved to be correct. For on Wednesday 10 May we were in sight of two very small and low islands, full of turtles; all the sea about there was so full of them that they looked like little rocks, and for this reason those islands were called Las Tortugas.⁶ Sailing on northward, on the following Friday toward evening, 30 leagues from those islands, we reached the Jardín de la Reina,

which is a multitude of islets lying south of Cuba. We were here⁷ at anchor, 10 leagues far from Cuba, in great hunger and travail, because there was nothing left to eat but biscuit, a little oil and vinegar; and we had to work day and night with three pumps to clear the bilges; because the vessels were so worm-eaten that they were on the point of foundering. And at night a great tempest arose, in which the *Bermuda* was unable to ride at anchor and dragged afoul of us and stove our stern; she also suffered somewhat in the clash, breaking her stern to the helm. With much labor, because of the heavy rain, sea and wind, it pleased God that the two ships got clear of one another. We let go all the anchors and cables we had, but none would hold save the sheet anchor, whose cable when day broke we



found holding by one strand, and that also would have parted if the night had lasted an hour longer. And as all that place was full of rocks we could not have failed fetching up on some of those that were astern of us. But it pleased God to deliver us here as He had done in many other dangers.

Sailing hence with much toil, we came to an Indian village on the coast of Cuba called Macaca.⁸ Here we obtained some refreshment and we departed towards Jamaica; for the east winds and the great currents which set westward would not permit us to go to Hispaniola, especially as the vessels were so worm-eaten that day and night we never stopped work at the three pumps; and if any one of the pumps broke down, we were forced while it was being repaired to supply the want with kettles to do the work of the pumps. In spite of all this, the night before the Eve of St. John our ship made so much water that there was no way to overcome it, for it reached almost to the deck; yet we kept her afloat with the most inconceivable exhaustion until daybreak, when we put into a harbor of Jamaica called Puerto Bueno. This harbor though good enough to shelter ships from a storm had no water nor any village near by.⁹ However, making the best of this on the day after St. John's Day, we set out for another harbor to the eastward called Santa Gloria, which is protected by reefs. Having got in, and no longer able to keep the ships afloat, we ran them ashore as far in as we could, grounding them close together, board to board, and shoring them up on both sides, so they could not budge.¹⁰ In this position the tide rose almost to the decks. Upon these, and the fore and stern castles, cabins were built

where the people might lodge, intending to make them so strong that the Indians might do us no harm; for the island at that time was not inhabited by or subject to Christians.

1. The date, we gather from Columbus's letter, was Easter Even, 16 April 1503. In 1509, when Nicuesa was governor of Veragua, he found *Gallega's* hull and anchor at Belén, and also saw the remains of *Vizcaina* at Puerto Bello.

2. One more instance of the inefficiency of the pilots of that day. Of course the Admiral was right; with prevailing easterly trades and a westerly set of current, there was no use trying to cross the Caribbean to Hispaniola from any point west of Cabo de Vela, whence Hojeda had done it twice. It may seem strange that, after so many demonstrations by the Columbus brothers of their superiority in navigation, the pilots and seamen would set themselves up against their commanding officer's judgment, and argue for a course that was based on nothing better than wishful thinking. But seamen are like that; and a good many other people, too.

3. This was the Archipelago de las Mulatas, which begins off the Gulf of San Blas and extends many miles to the eastward. Pocorosa was still cacique of the Cuna Cuna or San Blas Indians when Vasco Núñez de Balboa came there, in 1513.

4. Probably the Cabo de Tiburón, Colombia; see discussion in Morison *A.O.S.* II 380, 385. A few miles to the northwestward, near Caledonian Harbor, Balboa began his famous march across the Isthmus.

5. Columbus, according to his own statement, wished to hug the shore much further eastward before crossing the Caribbean, but was overruled by the opposition of his pilots and men.

6. Little Cayman and Cayman Brac, which are called *Las Tortugas* on some early 16th century charts, but were afterwards renamed the Caymans. They have been dependencies of Jamaica since about 1660, and are still inhabited by a fine, self-reliant people, who build vessels out of native hardwood, and follow the sea as fishermen and sailors.

7. Probably the harbor of Cayo Bretón, off Cuba; see Morison *A.O.S.* II 382.

8. Columbus in 1494 reported this to be the native name of the southern part of Oriente province. My guess is that this harbor was Puerto Pilón, a few miles east of Cape Cruz.

9. This statement proves that they did not make the Puerto Bueno (now Rio Bueno) of the Second Voyage, but the similarly shaped Dry Harbor a few miles to the eastward. St. John's Day is 24 June.

10. Santa Gloria, so named by Columbus in 1494, was St. Ann's Bay, Jamaica. *Capitana* and *Santiago* were run ashore in the western half of this bay, on the shore where the Spaniards founded their first Jamaican settlement, Sevilla Nueva. See discussion in Morison *A.O.S.* II 404; one-vol. ed. 639-41. Early histories of Jamaica stated that Don Christopher's Cove to the eastward was the place, but that was named after D. Cristóbal Ysassi, the last Spanish governor. Mr. Charles Cotter has helped me in this identification of the locality, which is now generally accepted; and I had the honor to speak at the dedication of a monument to Columbus on 4 November 1958, erected at a point on the main road whence a lane runs down to the spot of Columbus's Jamaican sojourn.

CHAPTER 101. *How the Admiral sent Canoes from Jamaica to Hispaniola to give Notice that he was Abandoned there with his People*

While we were thus entrenched in our ships about a crossbow shot from land, the Indians, who were good and amiable people, soon came in their canoes to sell their stuff and some provisions, which they wished to barter for our truck.¹ To make sure that no clash occurred between Christians and Indians over the barter, and that we got no more than was just and the others received their due, the Admiral appointed two men to take care of buying or bartering whatever the In-

dians brought in and to see that whatever had been procured should daily be divided by lot among the people of the marooned vessels. This was necessary as there was no subsistence left on board, because we had eaten most of the food, and the rest had spoiled, and as much again had been lost when the men came on board at the Rio de Belén, where the haste and confusion of embarkation prevented us from taking on as much as we wished.

It pleased Our Lord to direct us to

that island abundant in food so that we might be supplied. It is thickly inhabited by Indians willing to trade with us, for which they came from all parts to barter whatever they had. For this reason and to prevent the Christians from roving about the island the Admiral resolved to entrench himself on the edge of the sea and not set up any camp on shore. For, since we are by nature disobedient, no punishment or command would have kept the men from running about the country and entering the Indians' cabins to help themselves to whatever they could find. Thus they would have angered their wives and children, and this would have caused quarrels and brawls, and we would have become enemies; so the taking of provisions by force would have caused great want and hunger. This did not happen because the men stayed on board the vessels, which they could not leave without giving their names and obtaining permission. The Indians also were pleased, and for trifles brought us whatever we needed. If they brought one or two hutías, which are little creatures like rabbits, we gave them in exchange lace points; if they brought rounds of the bread which they call cassava,² made with grated roots of a plant, we gave them two or three green or yellow rosary beads; if they brought a large quantity of anything, they got a hawk's bell; and sometimes we gave the kings or chief men a little mirror, a red cap or a pair of scissors to make them happy. This good order of barter kept our men plentifully supplied with everything they needed, and the Indians were not troubled by our company or our being so near.

It was necessary, however, for us to find means to return to Castile. The Admiral several times called a meeting of the

captains and the men of great authority to discuss with them the way to get out of that prison and go at least as far as Hispaniola. For to stay there in the hope that some ship might come by was useless and senseless;³ and to build new vessels there was unthinkable because we had neither tools nor workmen fit to do a good job, unless in a very long time, or [to build] a craft which would be able to sail against the winds and the currents which prevail among those islands and which all trend to the westward.⁴ This would have resulted in loss of time and in our utter ruin rather than bringing us any relief. So, after much consultation, the Admiral decided to send to Hispaniola to make known that he was lost in that island, and to ask that a ship be sent to him with munitions and provisions. To this purpose he chose two men whom he fully trusted to carry out this task with complete loyalty and great courage; with great courage, I say, because the passage from one island to the other seemed rash and impossible in canoes, as it was necessary it should be done. Canoes are boats made of one single hollow log, and so built that when loaded they are not a *palm* above water. Moreover, it was necessary for that passage to have medium-sized ones, because the small canoes would be even more dangerous, and the big ones by their weight were unfit for a long voyage, and could not have accomplished what was desired.

When two canoes had been selected for what we wanted, the Admiral in the month of July 1503 ordered that Diego Méndez de Segura, chief secretary of the fleet,⁵ should go in one with six Christians and ten Indians to paddle, and in the other he sent Bartolomeo Fieschi, a Genoese gentleman, with the same num-

ber of men.⁶ As soon as Diego Méndez got over to Hispaniola he was supposed to pursue his journey to Santo Domingo, which was 250 leagues from the place where we were, and Fieschi should return to bring news that the other had arrived safely, so that we might not be left in doubt and fear lest some disaster had befallen him. This was much to be feared, considering the slight resistance a canoe can offer to the smallest disturbance at sea, especially when there were Christians aboard. Had there been only Indians, the danger would have not been so great, because if the canoe capsizes half seas over, they recover it by swimming and get aboard. However, honor and necessity oblige men to undertake more dangerous things than this.

These men set their course eastward along the coast of Jamaica until they came to the easternmost point of the island which the Indians call *Aomaquique* after a cacique of that province. This point is 33 leagues from Maima⁷ where we had

1. Ferdinand omits the diplomatic negotiations of Diego Méndez to obtain this food, as Méndez relates in the last document of this volume. An unsolved mystery is the question, why were the Spaniards so helpless; why couldn't they have caught fish, or grown maize, etc., ashore?

2. *zabi* in the Italian; see Columbus's Journal for 26 December 1492, note 1.

3. Except for a visit of Hojeda to the south coast in 1502, there is no record of any ship having sailed to Jamaica since Columbus discovered it in 1494; the reason being that he reported no gold in the island.

4. Note below the time it took the rescue ship to reach

fortified ourselves. The passage from one island to another is 30 leagues, and on the way there is but a small island or rock⁸ some 8 leagues distant from Hispaniola. Therefore to cross such a wide gulf with that kind of vessel it was necessary for them to wait for fair, calm weather, which it pleased Our Lord to send them shortly.

When every Indian had put on board his calabash of water and some of their various kinds of food and cassava, and when the Christians had come on board with only their swords and shields and the provisions they needed, they put out to sea; and the Adelantado who had gone with them as far as the cape of Jamaica to prevent the Indians of that island bothering them in any way, remained there until, with night coming on, he lost sight of them. Then by easy stages he returned to our vessels, on his way persuading the Indians of that country to receive our friendship and trade.

Hispaniola. *Capitana* still had her "chips," Diego Francés, on board, but no raft or home-made boat was likely to make headway against the prevailing winds and currents.

5. Diego Méndez, whose account of this canoe voyage is printed below, appears on Porras's payroll (above) with the rating of gentleman, but he had been promoted flag captain after the death of Diego Tristán.

6. For Captain Fieschi, of the abandoned *Vizcaina*, see note to his name in the Payroll, above.

7. The name of the Indian village at St. Ann's Bay where the vessels had grounded.

8. Navassa Island.

CHAPTER 102. *How the Porras brothers with a large Number of the People mutinied against the Admiral, declaring that they were going to Castile*

When the canoes had departed for Hispaniola the people left on board the vessels began to fall ill by reason of the

hardships endured during the voyage and their change of diet; for no longer were they eating as in Castile, nor drank they

any wine, nor could they get meat, save for a few hutías which every little while they could get by barter. Consequently the healthy ones thought it was a hard life to remain so long confined, and began grumbling in corners among themselves, saying that the Admiral never wanted to return to Spain because the Catholic Sovereigns had banished him; nor could he even go to Hispaniola, where he had been refused admittance on that voyage after leaving Castile; and that he had sent those in the canoes to Spain to take care of his own business there, and not to bring ships or other help; and that while they were dealing with the Catholic Sovereigns he intended to remain there in obedience to his banishment; and had it been otherwise, Bartolomeo Fieschi would have been back by this time, as was given out he was to do. Besides, they had no way of knowing whether he and Diego Méndez had not been drowned in the crossing; if by any chance this had happened they would never be relieved or helped unless they took care to help themselves, since the Admiral did not seem disposed to embark upon such a course, for the above-mentioned reasons, and because of the arthritis¹ which had so seized all his limbs that he could scarcely stir in his bunk and much less undergo the hardship and danger of going over to Hispaniola in a canoe. For all these reasons it was necessary for them to take a strong line while they were healthy, and before they fell sick with the rest. The Admiral had no power to prevent them from doing it. Once in Hispaniola, the greater the danger in which they left him, the better would they be received, because of the hatred and enmity toward him felt by the Comendador of Lares, then governor

of that island. When they went to Castile they would there find the Bishop D. Juan de Fonseca who would favor them; and also the treasurer Morales, who kept as mistress a sister of those Porras brothers who were the ringleaders of the mutineers and the chief fomenters of sedition; and they did not doubt that they should be well received by the Catholic Sovereigns, before whom all the blame would be laid upon the Admiral, as had happened before in the Roldán business of Hispaniola; and they [the Sovereigns] would rather seize an excuse to take all he had left, than be obliged to observe the Capitulations between him and them.

With these and other like arguments among themselves and with the support and sedition of those brothers, one of whom was captain of the ship *Bermuda* and the other Comptroller of the fleet, 48 men joined in the conspiracy, taking Porras for their captain. Everyone provided the most indispensable things against the day and hour appointed. When they were ready with their arms, on 2 January [1504] in the morning, Captain Francisco de Porras came up on the quarterdeck of the ship where the Admiral was and said, "Sir, what's wrong that you won't go to Castile and why does it please you to keep us here to perish?" The Admiral, hearing such insolent words, and not in his usual manner of speaking, surmised what was up. So, without betraying himself, he answered quietly that he did not see how he could leave until those who were gone in the canoes should send a ship in which they could sail; that he more than any other wanted to leave for his own particular benefit, as for the good of them all, for whom he was accountable; but if there was any other point of view, he

would again call a meeting of the captains and the principal men among them, so that Porras might bring forward what ought to be done, and this he would do more than once to discuss the matter thoroughly. Porras replied there was no time for such talk, he should either embark instantly or remain there with God. And, turning his back, he cried aloud: "I'm for Castile with those that will follow me!" All his followers who were present began to shout: "We're with him! We're with him!" and some running in one direction and some in another, they got possession of the castle and the round-top, with weapons in their hands, and with no order or plan, some shouting: "Kill them!"; others, "To Castile! To Castile!" and others, "Señor Captain, what shall we do next?" The Admiral at that time was in bed, so lame with arthritis that he could not stand on his feet. Yet he could not forbear rising and tottering out at this noise. But three or four of the most respectable of his servants embraced him, so that the mutineers might not kill him, and with difficulty got him back in his bunk. Then they ran to the Adelantado who with brave spirit had withstood them with a lance in hand, and wresting it from him they put him in with his brother, begging Captain Porras to go his own way with God and not to be the cause of evil for them all; it ought to satisfy him that none opposed or resisted his going, but if he caused the death of the Admiral, he could not but expect severe punishment, without hope of getting any advantage.

When the tumult subsided somewhat the mutineers took ten canoes that were tied up near the ships, which the Admiral had sought out all over the island and purchased, both to take them from the Indians in case they intended to offer any

violence to the Christians, as well as to use them himself for necessary business. The mutineers went on board the canoes as merrily as if they were landing in some port of Castile. Thereupon many more who had not shared in the treachery became desperate from being left behind and abandoned, as they thought, since the majority and the most healthy were leaving with their belongings. So they too joined those in the canoes, to the great sorrow and affliction of the few loyal servants who stayed with the Admiral, and of the many sick men who remained. These all thought they were lost forever, and without any hope of escape. There is no doubt that if all the people had been well, not twenty men would have remained with the Admiral.

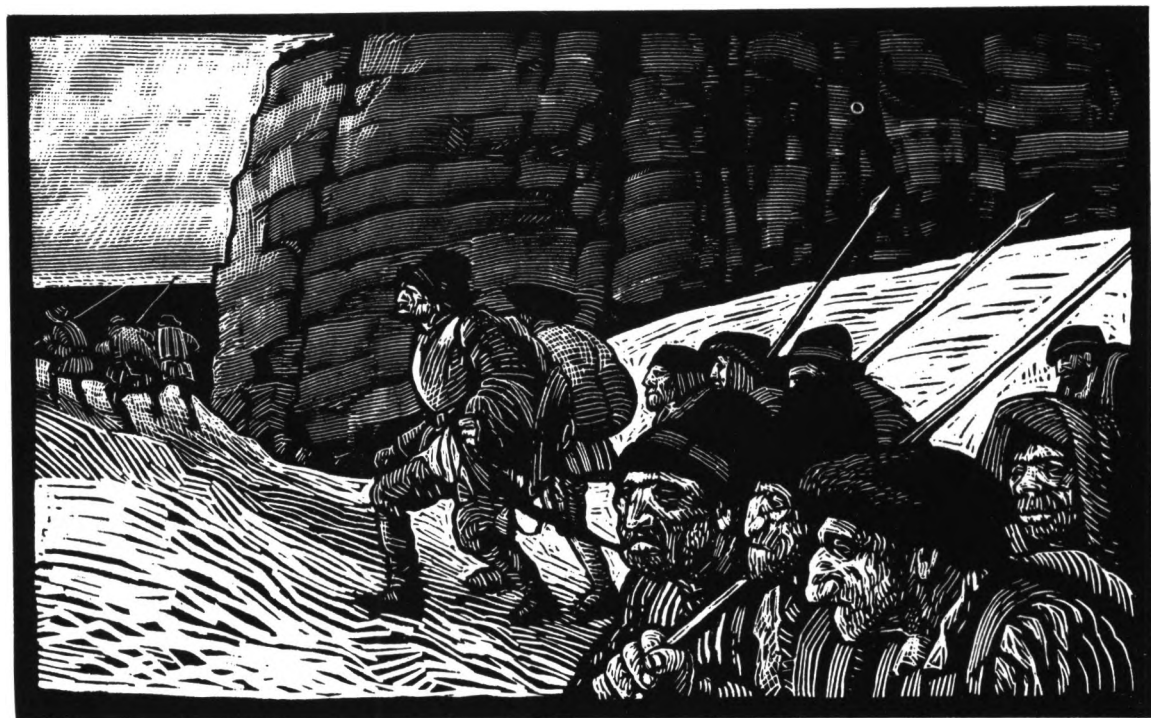
He endeavored to comfort his people with the fairest words he could muster in such a crisis in such state of affairs; and the mutineers with their captain Francisco de Porras went away in their canoes to the eastern point whence Diego Méndez and Fieschi had crossed over to Hispaniola. Wherever they went, they offered innumerable insults to the Indians, taking their provisions and whatever else they pleased by force, telling them to go to the Admiral and he would pay them; if he did not pay, they might kill him if they would, and that was the best thing for them to do, because not only the Christians hated him, but he had been the cause of all the damage suffered by the Indians of the other island; and he would do the same to them if they did not protect themselves by his death, since he stayed with the design of colonizing the island.

Thus they proceeded to the easternmost point of Jamaica, and at the first fair

and calm weather they began the passage to Hispaniola, taking with them in each canoe some Indians to paddle. But the weather was not settled, their canoes were overloaded, and they made little headway. When they were not four leagues out to sea the wind turned contrary, frightening them so that they decided to go back to Jamaica. And, not being skilful in managing the canoes, it happened that they shipped a little water. As a remedy for this they decided to lighten their canoes by jettisoning everything they carried, so that nothing was left but their arms and as much provision as was necessary for returning. Yet the wind was freshening, and they thought they were in danger, so in order to lighten the canoes still more they decided to throw the Indians into the sea, after killing them all with their daggers. This they did with some; others from fear of death, trusting

in their powers of swimming, leaped overboard, but being very tired they would hang onto the gunwales to rest a little, when Porras's men cut off their hands and beat them; so that they killed 18 of them, leaving only a few alive to manage the canoes, because they did not know how to do so. In fact, if this need had not restrained them, they would have carried out the greatest deed of cruelty imaginable; they would have left not one of them alive after by deceitful entreaties having obtained their assistance in that dangerous voyage.

When they came ashore they quarrelled about what to do. Some thought it would be better to go to Cuba, and that from the place where they now were they could take the east winds and currents on the quarter and so run over quickly and without any trouble to Hispaniola, crossing from one land to the next; they did not



know that they [Cuba and Jamaica] were 17 leagues apart. Others said it was better to return to the ships and make their peace with the Admiral, or take from him by force what arms and trading truck he had left. Others were of the opinion that before attempting any of these things they should wait there for fair weather or calm, and again try the same passage. This was thought the best advice, and they stayed in that village of Aomaquique over a month waiting for fair weather,

1. *la gotta*, "the gout." Modern physicians diagnose this as arthritis, brought on Columbus by his unsleeping vigilance and the hardships of the sea. He first complained of it during the Second Voyage, and it came on

and destroying the country. Then, when it fell calm, they embarked again twice, but they could make nothing of it, with contrary winds. When they finally lost hope of making the passage they set out westerly, going from one village to another in an evil mood, without canoes and without any relief, sometime eating what they found, and otherwise pillaging at will, according to their strength or the resistance of the caciques through whose territory they passed.

again during the fair weather of the Third; but on this voyage he had suffered more exposure, drenching, exhaustion and ill nourishment than on any other. It was this disease of which he died in 1506, in his 55th year.

CHAPTER 103. *What the Admiral did after the Mutineers had left for Hispaniola, and his Device to take Advantage of an Eclipse*

To return to what the Admiral did after the mutineers had gone, I say that he ordered that the sick people, who stayed with him, should have everything needed for their recovery, and that the Indians should be so well treated that from friendliness and desire to have our trading truck they would not stop bringing us provisions. These affairs were so well managed and with such care that in a short time the Christians were cured and the Indians continued for some days to provide us plentifully. But, being a people who make little effort to cultivate vast lands, and we eating in one day more than they in twenty, and their desire for our goods being satisfied, they began to take slight account of us, and almost embraced the advice of the mutineers. They observed that a great part of our men were against us, and cared no longer to provide us with as much food as we required. This

brought us to great distress. If we should decide to take things from them by force, the greater part of us would have to undertake acts of war, leaving the Admiral, who was very ill with arthritis, in great danger on the ships. On the other hand, to wait for them to provide us willingly meant suffering miseries and giving them ten times as much as before, because they knew very well how to bargain with us, and that they had the advantage over us. So we did not know which way to turn.

But God, who never forsakes those who commend themselves to Him (as did the Admiral), advised him how he could obtain everything he needed, which was as follows. He bethought himself that within three days there would be an eclipse of the moon in the early night. He ordered that an Indian of Hispaniola who was with us,¹ should be sent to summon the principal Indians of that province, say-

ing that he wanted to talk with them at a party he had decided to give them. When they came, the day before the eclipse was due, he asked the interpreter to tell them that we were Christians and believed in God, who lived in Heaven and whose subjects we were, who protected the good and punished the wicked; he, having observed the mutiny of the Christians, had not permitted them to pass to Hispaniola as Diego Méndez and Fieschi had done, but had made them suffer all those hardships and danger that the whole island had heard about. As for the Indians, God seeing how negligent they were in bringing us foodstuffs for our pay and barter, was very angry with them and had decreed to punish them with a mighty famine and pestilence. Perhaps they would not believe this. Thus God wished to give them a manifest token of it in the sky, that they might plainly know the punishment was coming from His own hand. Therefore he bade them that night watch the moon appear; they will see her rise angry and enflamed to indicate the evil that God would inflict on them. When he finished his discourse the Indians went away; some scared, others thinking it was an idle story.

At the rising of the moon the eclipse began, and the higher the moon rose the more the eclipse increased. The Indians observed it, and were so frightened that with cries and lamentations they ran from every side to the ships, carrying provi-

sions, and begged the Admiral by all means to intercede for them with God that he might not make them feel the effects of his wrath, and promised for the future, diligently to bring all he had need of. The Admiral answered that he wished to speak for a while with God, and shut himself up while the eclipse increased, they meanwhile shouting lustily to him to assist them. When the Admiral saw the eclipse had reached totality and that the moon would soon reappear, he came out of his cabin and said that he had implored his God and prayed for them and promised in their behalf that they would be good in the future and treat the Christians well, bringing them foodstuffs and whatever else they needed; God forgave them, and, as a token of His forgiveness they would see His anger and the inflammation of the moon pass off. This happened just as he said, so they rendered the Admiral many thanks and praised his God and stayed there until the eclipse was past. From that time forward they always took care to provide us with all that was necessary, ever praising the God of the Christians. They believed the eclipses they had seen at other times had occurred to their damage, not knowing the cause thereof, and that it was a thing which happened at certain times; not believing it was possible to predict on earth what would occur in the heavens. Therefore they were most certain that the God of the Christians had revealed it to the Admiral.²

1. Who was this Indian, not on the Payroll and not elsewhere mentioned? He must have been picked up at Azua or Jacmel on the outward passage.

2. In Caddeo's edition of the *Historie* (II 277) a page of the Regiomontanus Almanac that Columbus had with him is reproduced. It was from this that he was able to predict the eclipse for 29 February 1504. The same is in Thacher II 630. Columbus also tried to work

out the longitude of Jamaica by timing the eclipse at Santa Gloria, in comparison with the time that Regiomontanus gave for it at Nuremberg, and worked it out as about 115° W, the correct longitude being 77° 12' W. See Morison *A.O.S.* II 402-6 (one-vol. ed. 654-5). Mark Twain used this eclipse episode in his *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*.

CHAPTER 104. *How among those who had Remained with the Admiral another Mutiny arose, which was Quelled by the Arrival of a little Caravel from Hispaniola*

By that time eight months had elapsed since Diego Méndez and Bartolomeo Fieschi had departed, and there was no news of them. The Admiral's people were much worried and feared the worst. Some said they were lost at sea, others that they had been killed by the Indians in Hispaniola, and others that they had died en route of sickness and hardship; for from the nearest point of Jamaica to Santo Domingo where they had to go for help, there was 100 leagues of very rough mountains by land, and the worst kind of navigation by sea, owing to the many currents and the contrary winds which always prevailed along the coast. To confirm them further in their suspicions, some Indians assured them that they had seen a vessel capsized and carried by the currents down the coast of Jamaica. Likely this rumor had been spread by the mutineers to make the Admiral's men lose all hope of escaping. And so, by this time they held it almost certain that no relief would come, and one Maestre Bernal, apothecary of Valencia, with two companions named Camacho and Villatoro,¹ and most of those who had been sick, secretly conspired together to do the same as the others before. But Our Lord seeing the great danger to the Admiral from this second mutiny, was pleased to help by the coming of a tiny caravelon² sent by the Governor of Hispaniola.

This vessel late one evening came to an anchor near the ships that were aground. Her captain, whose name was Diego de

Escobar, came in his barge to visit the Admiral and told him that the Comendador of Lares, now Governor of Hispaniola, sent his compliments and service; and as it was impossible to send a ship fit to carry off all those people immediately, he had been sent to call on him in his name. He presented him with a cask of wine and a side of salt pork, returned to his caravel, and, without accepting any letter from anyone, departed that very night.

The people were much comforted by his coming and kept their mutiny secret. But, observing the speed and secrecy with which the tiny caravel had returned, they were still suspicious and uneasy, and thought it likely that the Comendador did not want the Admiral to go to Hispaniola. The Admiral, realizing what they were thinking, told them that he himself had so willed it because he would not leave without taking them all, and that caravel was not big enough; nor did he wish its stay to cause other disorders or inconveniences because of the mutineers. As a matter of fact the Comendador was afraid that if the Admiral returned to Castile, the Catholic Sovereigns would restore his governorship, and so he would be out of a job. For this reason he would not provide the Admiral's passage to Hispaniola as he might easily have done, and had sent that tiny caravel to spy out the condition the Admiral was in, and to find whether he could contrive to have him destroyed. This the Admiral knew by what had hap-

pened to Diego Méndez, who sent an account of his voyage in writing by the tiny caravel; it had been as follows.

1. Maestre Bernal, entered as physician in Porras's payroll, appears to have been a seagoing apothecary who had made trouble at Isabela in 1494 and was sent

home by Columbus. Gonzalo Camacho is on the roll of *Gallego*, and Pedro de Villatoro as a grummet in *Santiago*. Camacho later made so much trouble for Columbus at Seville that the Admiral swore a warrant against him; Camacho then sought asylum in a church and had to spend the Christmas holidays of 1504 therein, or else go to jail. See *A.O.S.* II 414-15.
2. *caravellone*.

CHAPTER 105. *How it was Learned what had Happened to Diego Méndez and to Fieschi on their Voyage*

Diego Méndez and Fieschi left Jamaica in their canoes that day they found the weather fair and calm. They travelled until evening jollying and cheering the Indians to speed up with those paddles they use instead of oars; and as the heat was very intense they would sometimes leap into the water and swim for relief and return again fresh to paddle. Thus, holding their course over a calm sea, at sunset they lost sight of land. At night the Christians alternated with the Indians in paddling and keeping watch, so that the Indians could not prove treacherous. They made good time all that night so that when day broke all were very weary. The captains encouraged their men and sometimes rowed themselves, eating to recover strength and vigor after the bad night past, returning to their labor, seeing nothing but water and sky. And, as if this were not enough to give them great affliction, yet we may say of them what was said about Tantalus, who having water within a palm of his mouth could not quench his thirst. The same happened to them and caused them great distress; for, through the Indians' bad planning they drank up all their water in the great heat of the preceding day and night, without any regard to the future. Heat and labor being insupportable [without the water], heat and thirst so increased with the ris-

ing sun on the second day out, that by noon they were thoroughly exhausted. In such circumstances the special care and watchfulness of the commander must supply want of hands and feet, and by good luck the captains found two runlets of water from which now and then they relieved the Indians with a few sips of water; thus they kept going until the cool of the evening, cheering on the men and declaring they would soon be near an islet called Navassa,¹ which lay on their course eight leagues distant from Hispaniola. Besides the great distress induced by thirst and paddling for two days and a night, they lost heart thinking they had missed the way, since according to their reckoning they had run 20 leagues and they ought by now be in sight of that island. But weariness and exhaustion deceived them. Neither boat nor canoe can make over ten leagues, running day and night. Moreover the currents between Jamaica and Hispaniola run contrary to their course, and you always think your work greater than it actually is, when you are suffering. Thus, by nightfall they had thrown overboard one Indian who died of thirst, and with others stretched out on the bottom of the canoe, they were so discouraged, exhausted and spent, that they made scarcely any headway. Yet, little by little, occasionally holding sea

water in their mouths to refresh them, which we may say was the comfort given to Our Lord when he said, "I thirst," they went on as well as they could until the second night fell without sight of land. But because they were messengers of him whom God wished to save, He gave them such grace in time of dire need that Diego Méndez, when the moon began to rise, perceived that the moon was rising over land, for a little island covered the moon like an eclipse. Nor could he have sighted the land in any other way at that hour, because it was tiny. Cheerily he encouraged them, pointed out the land, and heartened them, relieving their great thirst with a little water from the runlet, and they paddled so briskly that next morning they found themselves near the islet called Navassa, which was eight leagues from Hispaniola.

This they found was all hard rock and about half a league in circumference. They landed where best they could and all thanked God for that succor, but no spring of sweet water or trees, only stones were there. So they went from rock to rock scooping up in calabashes such rain water as they could find, of which God gave them sufficient to fill their bellies and the casks. Some Indians then drank immoderately and died, despite being warned by those who knew better to use moderation in drinking; and others made themselves very sick. They rested all that day until evening, recovering and eating such things as they found on the seashore (for Diego Méndez had brought with him implements to strike fire), and rejoicing to be in sight of Hispaniola. Before any foul weather could blow up, they made ready to conclude their voyage. Accordingly at sunset, in the cool of the evening,

they set out towards Cabo San Miguel,² the nearest point of Hispaniola, where they arrived next morning, being the fourth day after their departure. There they rested two days. Bartolomeo Fieschi, a gentleman who stood upon his honor, wished to return with his canoe as the Admiral had commanded. But the crew, who were Indians and seamen, were so exhausted and indisposed from their labors and the sea water they had drunk, that nobody would go with him. They felt that God had delivered them out of the whale's belly, their three days and nights corresponding to those of the prophet Jonah. Diego Méndez in great haste had already started along the coast of Hispaniola in his canoe, although he was suffering from a quartan ague caused by all he had been through on land and sea. In that condition and travelling over mountains and bad roads he came to Xaragua, a province in the west of Hispaniola, where the Governor then was. He showed pleasure at his coming, but for the above-mentioned reasons he was very slow indeed to provide for him. After much importunity they agreed that the Governor should give Diego Méndez leave to go to Santo Domingo, buy a vessel and fit her out from the funds that the Admiral had there. This vessel, ready and equipped, was sent by him to Jamaica at the end of May 1504, whilst he [Méndez] made his way to Spain as the Admiral ordered, to tell the Catholic Sovereigns the results of his voyage.

1. Navassa is still an important mark in the Windward Passage, with a tall lighthouse that is maintained by the United States.

2. So named by Columbus in 1494 because it was sighted by Michele de Cuneo. The Spaniards later changed its name to Cabo Tiburón.

CHAPTER 106. *How the Mutineers turned against the Admiral, nor would they Consent to any Agreement*

Now to return to the Admiral, he with his companions were somewhat comforted with hope and certainty of rescue from the letter of Diego Méndez and the arrival of the tiny caravel. He thought fit to make known the whole story to the mutineers so their suspicions might subside and they return to obedience. Therefore he sent two men of authority who had friends among them, and knowing they would not believe in the coming of the caravel, or that they would deny it, he sent to them part of that side of salt pork which the captain had given him. When the two men came to where Captain Porras was, with his particular cronies, he came out to meet them. Figuring out that the Admiral was sending a general pardon, he did not wish them to move or to repent of the crimes they had committed. Yet he could not keep his people from hearing the news of the caravel's coming or of the good health and condition of those with the Admiral, or the offers he made them. After many debates they had among themselves and with their leaders, this was what they decided. They would not trust the safe conduct and pardon which the Admiral sent them; but offered to leave that island quietly if he would promise them a vessel in which they could leave, provided two came; if only one came he should hand over half of her to them. In the meantime, as they had lost at sea all their clothes and trading truck, he should share with them whatever he had. The envoys replied that those

were not reasonable proposals, and they interrupted saying that, what was not granted them for love, they would get by force and when they chose. Thus they dismissed the Admiral's envoys, misinterpreting his offer and telling their followers that he was a cruel and vindictive man; for themselves they feared naught, since the Admiral would never dare to touch them, seeing what influence they had at court, but there was good reason to fear lest he take revenge on the others, under the guise of punishment. That was why Roldán and his fellows in Hispaniola had not trusted him [Columbus] or his offers; and they had so well succeeded and been so favored that they managed to send him in irons to Castile, and there was no less hope of their doing the same. And in order to prevent the people from being impressed by the coming of the caravel with news of Diego Méndez, they gave out that she was not a real caravel but a phantom ship made by magic art of which the Admiral knew much; had she been real, her people would have had more intercourse with the Admiral's men, nor was it credible that if she had been a real caravel the Admiral himself with his son and his brother would not have embarked in her. With these and other words to the same purpose they again confirmed the [mutineers] in their rebellion, and persuaded them to go back to the vessels and take by force what they found there and to make the Admiral prisoner.

CHAPTER 107. *How when the Mutineers approached the Ships and the Adelantado went out to Fight, he Overcame them, and Porrás their Captain was Taken*

The mutineers persevering in their wicked attitude and resolve, came to an Indian settlement about a quarter league from the ships, called Maima, and where later on the Christians built a town they called Seville.¹ When the Admiral heard of this and knew the purpose of their coming, he decided to send the Adelantado his brother to meet them, and endeavor with fair words to reduce them to sanity and repentance; but the Adelantado should have a retinue fit to offer resistance if they attempted to harm him. According to this plan, the Adelantado took 50 men well armed and ready to fight, and ready for any emergency. When these came to a small hill a bow-shot distant from the village where the rebels were, they sent ahead those two who had gone on the embassy again to offer them peace and ask their leaders to come and confer quietly. But the rebels were no fewer in number nor less strong than the other side (for almost all were seamen), and they were confident that the Adelantado's men were weak fellows who would not fight. So they would not let the messengers talk, but advancing as one company with naked swords and spears, they assaulted the Adelantado's company, shouting "Kill! Kill!" Six of the mutineers who were reckoned the most daring had previously sworn to stick together and attack the Adelantado, for with him dead the rest would be easy to handle.

All this it pleased God to turn against them. They were so well received that in

the first encounter five or six fell, being most of those that were aiming for the Adelantado, who fell upon his enemies to such good purpose that shortly Juan Sánchez of Cadiz (from whom the Quibián escaped) was killed, and Juan Barba² who was the first whom I saw draw his sword at the time of the mutiny, and some others, fell badly wounded and their leader Francisco Porrás was taken prisoner. When they found themselves roughly handled, like cowards and rebels they turned their backs and ran as fast as they could. The Adelantado wished to pursue them but some of the leaders who were with him prevented him from so doing, saying that it was right to punish but not too severely; and if he killed many it might occur to the Indians to fall upon the victors; one could see them in arms awaiting the event of the fight without taking sides. Appreciating this good advice, the Adelantado returned to the vessels carrying the leader and a few other prisoners. There he was well received by the Admiral his brother and the rest of the men who had stayed with him, all thanking our Lord God for such a victory, which they attributed to Him; for in that battle the proud and guilty ones, though stronger, had got their punishment and lost their pride; while on our side nobody had been wounded but the Adelantado in his hand, and a steward of the Admiral who died of a spear wound in his hip.

To return to the mutineers, Pedro de Ledesma, that pilot who went with Vi-

cente Yáñes to Honduras and who swam ashore at Belén, fell down a certain cliff and lay hidden that day and the next until evening without anyone but the Indians knowing about it or giving him aid. The Indians, now knowing how our swords cut, were amazed; and with little sticks opened his wounds, one of which was on his head and through which one could see his brains, and another on his shoulder so large that his arm hung loose; in addition one leg was cut almost to the bone down to the ankle, and one foot was sliced from heel to toe like the sole of a slipper. Notwithstanding all these wounds, when the Indians bothered him he would cry: "Let me be, or when I get up I'll fix you!" and at these words they would flee in great terror. When this was known on board the ships he was carried into a thatched hut near by, where the dampness and the mosquitoes would have been enough to finish him off. Here, instead of turpentine, which was the proper thing, they cauterized his wounds with oil, and his wounds were so numerous that the surgeon who dressed them swore that every day he went over him he found

1. Sevilla Nueva, the first Spanish settlement on Jamaica, whose ruins have been partially excavated.

2. *Capitana's* gunner in Porras's payroll. The date there given of his death, 20 May 1504, shows that he was mortally wounded, because the fight took place on 17 May. See Las Casas *Historia* lib. II chap. 35 (1951 ed. II

new ones. Yet at length he recovered, while the steward, whose wound nobody thought to be serious, died.³

The day after, which was Monday 20 May, all who had survived sent the Admiral a petition, humbly begging him to be merciful, for they repented what they had done and wished to make their submission. The Admiral granted their request and issued a general pardon, on condition that their leader should remain in irons, as he already was, and this to prevent him from provoking some new brawl. But they could not have rest and quiet in the ships, lest there arise some provoking words of the vulgar sort, for these fellows easily make disturbances and rub up old or hidden sores, which cause fresh argument and brawling. Besides, it was difficult to quarter so many people decently and maintain them with provisions which were already scarce for the few. Therefore he resolved to send them a captain with goods to barter, who could go about the island with them, maintain order until such time as the vessels came, which he expected from day to day.

318-21) for other details of this "Battle of Maima." It was fought with *l'arme blanche*, cold steel, as the Spaniards had long since exhausted their arquebus and pistol ammunition.

3. Pedro de Terreros, who had been on all four of Columbus's voyages.

CHAPTER 108 AND LAST. *How the Admiral went over to Hispaniola and thence to Castile, where in Valladolid it pleased Our Lord to take him into His Holy Glory*

When all the Christians had again returned to their duties, and the Indians for this very reason were more careful to supply them in exchange for their truck,

a few days more than a year had elapsed since we came to Jamaica. At that time the ship arrived which Diego Méndez had bought and fitted out at Santo Do-

mingo with the Admiral's money. Friends and enemies went on board, and making sail on 28 June navigated with much difficulty, winds and currents being always contrary to the return passage from Jamaica to Santo Domingo.¹ We entered this harbor and city, with considerable desire for rest, on 13 August 1504. The Governor made a great fuss over the Admiral, giving him his own house to lodge in; but this was only the peace of the scorpion, for on the other hand he set at liberty Porras who had been the leader of the mutiny, and tried to punish those who had a hand in capturing him, and attempted to pass judgment on other matters and crimes which belonged only to the Catholic Sovereigns who had appointed the Admiral Captain General of their fleet.² With such like endearments he treated the Admiral with deceitful smiles and dissimulated in his presence. This lasted until our ship was refitted and another chartered, on which the Admiral, his kindred and servants embarked; but most of the other people remained in Hispaniola.

Making sail on 12 September we passed beyond the river two leagues out at sea, where the mast of the vessel split down to the deck; wherefore the Admiral ordered her back, and we in the ship held our course for Castile. On which, having enjoyed fair weather about one-third of the way across, we were assaulted one day by so terrible a tempest that the ship was in great danger. And next day, Saturday 9 October, the weather being fair and we easy, the mast broke in four pieces. But the courage of the Adelantado and ingenuity of the Admiral though he could not rise from his bed from arthritis, found a remedy. They made a jury-mast out of

a yard and fished the middle of it with lines and bits of board off the fore and stern castles, which we had to take apart. Then in another tempest our bonaventure mizzen broke; but at last it pleased God that we should sail thus for 700 leagues, at the end of which we made the harbor of Sanlúcar de Barrameda, and thence up to Seville, where the Admiral rested somewhat after the hardships he had suffered.

Then in the month of May of 1505 he left for the Catholic King's Court; since the glorious Queen Isabella had passed to a better life the preceding year. For her the Admiral showed great sorrow, because she had always been the one who had supported and favored him, whilst he had always found the King somewhat cold and unfriendly to his affairs.

This clearly appeared in the reception that he gave him. In appearance he showed him a favorable countenance and pretended to restore him in his estate; yet, he would have deprived him completely had not he been prevented by shame, which has great strength over noble souls. His Highness himself and the Most Serene Queen had sent him on the voyage we have described. But already the affairs of the Indies showed signs of future promise, and the King knowing the large share in them belonging to the Admiral by virtue of the Capitulations, strove to secure the absolute dominion of them for himself and to dispose of all those offices appertaining to the Admiral according to his own will and pleasure. So he began to propose new terms of compensation, which God did not allow. Just then the Most Serene King Philip I came to reign in Spain; and at the time the Catholic King³ left Valladolid to meet him, the Admiral, much oppressed with his arthri-

tis and full of grief to see his possessions gone, and harassed by other troubles, gave up his soul to God on the day of the Ascension, 20 May 1506 at Valladolid,⁴ having devoutly received all the sacraments of the Church and spoken these last

words: *In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum.*

And we do not doubt that God through His infinite mercy and goodness received him into His glory: *Ad quam nos cum eo perducatur. AMEN.*⁵

1. This vessel had only reached Beata Island, Hispaniola, by 3 August, the place and date of a letter to Ovando that Columbus sent overland.

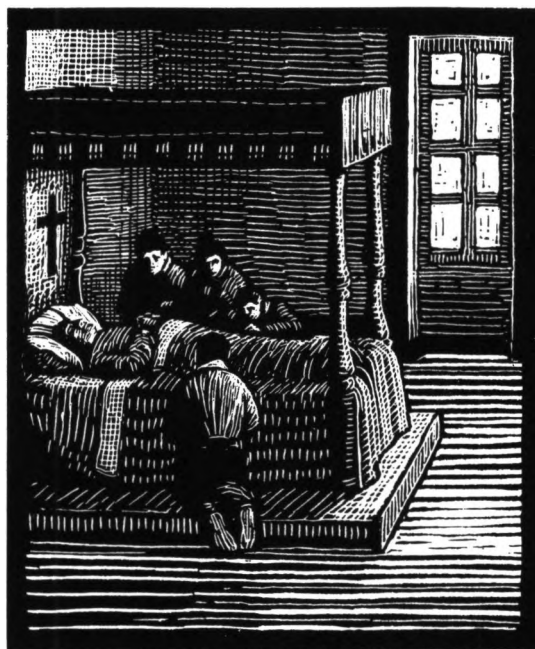
2. Columbus rightly maintained that everything which had occurred on the voyage at sea or ashore belonged to his jurisdiction as Admiral of the Indies, which Ovando in effect usurped.

3. Ferdinand. He was trying, after Isabella's death, to retain her throne of Castile, to which D. Juana, who

had married Philip of Austria, was the rightful heir.

4. This was Wednesday, the vigil of the Ascension; the date of Columbus's death, 20 May, is confirmed by a local chronicle (Caddeo II 302).

5. "With these simple and solemn words the manuscript of the *Historie* must have ended." (Caddeo II 303). In the printed text, however, there is an additional paragraph giving so inaccurate an account of the Admiral's burial as to raise the suspicion that the translator wrote it.



Columbus's *Lettera Rarissima* to the Sovereigns, 7 July 1503

COLUMBUS ENTRUSTED THIS LETTER TO DIEGO MÉNDEZ, who took it in the canoe to Hispaniola and delivered it in Spain more than a year later, not long before the Admiral himself arrived. The language, naturally, was Spanish; but the earliest extant authority for the text is an Italian translation published by Simone de Lovere at Venice, 7 May 1505, under the title *Copia de la lettera per Columbo mandata a li Serenissimi Re e Regina di Spagna: de le insule et luoghi per lui trovate* (Copy of the letter by Columbus sent to the Most Serene King and Queen of Spain, concerning the Islands and Places by him Discovered). Only one copy of this imprint is known to exist, in the Biblioteca Marciana, Venice.¹ A librarian of St. Mark's reprinted it in 1810 under the title *Lettera Rarissima*, by which it is generally known.

One Constantino Bayuera of Brescia states, in the introduction to the 1505 imprint, that he obtained a copy of the Letter in Spain, and had it translated and printed "for the sake of the wonderful things it contains." It gave the European public its first news of the Fourth Voyage.

Ferdinand Columbus refers to this Letter in Chapter 94 of his *Historie*, which we have translated above; and his statement "which has been printed" had led some authorities to assume that, like Columbus's Letter on his First Voyage, there was an original Spanish edition; but of that no copy has been found, and as Ferdinand wrote the *Historie* long after 1505, it seems to me that both this mention, and that of "Epistola ad reges Hispaniarum data 7 iulii 1503," which appears in his ms. catalogue of his own library, refers to the Italian imprint.²

Be that as it may, the only known Spanish text of the Letter is a ms. of the latter half of the 17th century, in the Library of the Royal Palace at Madrid. There is a photostat of this ms. in the Library of Congress. It was printed, rather inaccurately, in Navarrete

I 445-60. The Spanish ms. was the work of an extremely careless scribe, whose garblings were so many and preposterous that nobody could make much of it until DeLollis printed a fresh text, disinfected (as it were) by a study of the Italian translation, in *Raccolta* I ii 175-205. This is also in Jane II 73-111.

There is internal evidence (see note 3 to Section on Veragua) that, except for the opening sentences which he says he wrote off Dominica, Columbus began writing this Letter at Belén, in Lent, and threw it together hastily at Santa Gloria, Jamaica, during the twelve very busy days between his arrival there and 7 July 1503, the date of the letter's subscription. Columbus never had much concern with rules of rhetoric, as his earlier letters to the Sovereigns prove; but this one is positively incoherent. He gives a straightforward account of a storm at sea, then lapses into dreams and visions; he indulges in geographical conceits, but gives a factual description of the Veragua coast; he makes sound observations on the difficulty of sailing eastward in the Caribbean; then launches into a woeful narrative of his wrongs, calculated to draw tears from a compassionate queen. A plea that his men be paid promptly is sandwiched between an offer to sail a Christian mission to China, and an excuse for not getting more gold. It must be remembered that, with such writing materials as he had in *La Capitana*, it took a long time to write a letter of this length; and he probably did it by fits and starts whenever he could spare a few minutes from more pressing duties. He was also suffering from arthritis, and possibly dictated the whole thing.³

The following translation from both Italian imprint and Spanish text was made by Dr. Milton Anastos, with an occasional "assist" from the editor.⁴ I have not liberally annotated it with identification of places and dates, because these questions may generally be resolved by referring to Ferdinand's narrative, above. Obvious mistakes such as an ocean passage of 16 instead of 26 days, are simply indicated by [*sic*]. I have provided sub-headings to break what is at best an incoherent narrative and make things easier for the reader.

1. HARRISSE *Bibliotheca Americana Vetustissima*, No. 36, and *Additiones* (Carlos Sanz ed., Madrid, 1958, No. 17). A facsimile of the imprint is in Señor Sanz's *Ultimas Adiciones* I (1960) 346-59.

2. Evidence about this may be found in the Caddeo ed. of the *Historie* II 227, and, collected by De Lollis, in *Raccolta* I ii p. lxxxii.

3. Some historians have concluded that Columbus, when he wrote the Letter, was mentally deranged; or, as Justin Winsor expressed it in his *Columbus* (1891) 459, that it is "a sorrowful index of his wandering rea-

son." With more cogency Winsor says that "in parts it is the merest jumble of hurrying thoughts." The confusion I believe to be due to hasty and interrupted composition.

4. The translation of this Letter presents unusual difficulties, owing to the garbling of both texts. Edward G. Bourne wrestled nobly with the problems involved, in his *Northmen, Columbus and Cabot* (1906) and produced an intelligible translation with long critical notes (pp. 389-418). Cecil Jane's annotated translation of the Spanish text is in his *Select Documents* II 72-111.



Copy of the letter which *Don Cristóbal Colón*, Viceroy and Admiral of the Indies, wrote to the Most Christian and Most Mighty King and Queen of Spain, our Sovereigns, in which

he informs them of what befell him on his voyage; of lands, provinces, cities, rivers, and other marvels; of places in which there is gold in great abundance; and of other things of great richness and value.

a. *From Hispaniola to Panama*

Most Serene and Very Mighty and Exalted Princes, the King and Queen, our Sovereigns:

From Cadiz I passed to the Canaries in 4 [*sic*] days and from there to the Indies in 16 [*sic*], whence I wrote that my purpose was to hasten my voyage, inasmuch as I had sound vessels, people and provisions, and that my course was to the island of Jamaica. I wrote this in the island of Dominica.¹ Up to that point I had the weather I wanted. The night that I made port there, a furious storm hit me, and foul weather pursued me ever after. When I arrived off Hispaniola, I sent ashore a packet of letters and a request that I be permitted to obtain a vessel at my own expense, since one that I had with me was unseaworthy and could not carry sail. They took the letters, and You will know whether they delivered them to You. As for me the answer was that in Your Name I was forbidden to land or go ashore. The people who were sailing with me lost heart, fearing lest I take them far out. They said that, if some calamity overtook them, they would get no help from that place, but would suffer some great disaster instead. Moreover, whoever pleased the said Comendador was to have the government of the lands I might win. The tempest was terrible and separated me from my [other] vessels that night, putting every one of them in desperate straits, with nothing to look forward to but death. Each was certain the others had been destroyed. What man ever born, not excepting Job, who would not have died of despair, when in such weather seeking safety for my son, my brother, shipmates, and myself, we were forbidden [access

to] the land and the harbors which I, by God's will and sweating blood, had won for Spain?

To return to the vessels which the storm had thus carried away from me, leaving me alone. Our Lord restored them to me, when it pleased Him. The unseaworthy vessel had put out to sea to get free of the land; *Gallega* lost her barge and we all lost a great part of our provisions. The Lord saved the one in which I sailed, though she was terribly buffeted, and she suffered no damage at all. My brother was in the unseaworthy vessel, and he, next to God, was her salvation. I crept along with great difficulty while the storm raged, and thus made Jamaica. There we had a change from heavy seas to calm, and a strong current carried me to the Jardín de la Reina, without taking me in sight of land. Thence, when I was able, I headed for the mainland. The wind and a terrible current beat against me all the way. I fought them for 60 [*sic*] days and in the end did not succeed in making more than 70 leagues. I did not enter a harbor in all this time nor could I. The storm in the heavens gave me no rest; rain, thunder and lightning continued without ceasing, so that it seemed like the end of the world.

I reached Cape Gracias á Dios and from there on Our Lord gave me favoring wind and current. This was on 12 September. For 88 days [*sic*] the terrifying hurricane had pursued me, so that I saw neither the sun nor the stars because of the sea.² The seams of the vessels spread, the sails were split, anchors, rigging, cables, boats and many of the stores lost; the people exhausted and so down in

the mouth that they were all the time making vows to be good, to go on pilgrimages and all that; yea, even hearing one another's confessions! Other tempests have I seen, but none that lasted so long or so grim as this. Many old hands whom we looked upon as stout fellows lost their courage. What griped me most were the sufferings of my son; to think that so young a lad, only thirteen, should undergo so much. But Our Lord lent him such courage that he even heartened the rest, and he worked as though he had been to sea all of a long life. That comforted me. I was sick and many times lay at death's door. I conned the ship from a "dog-house,"³ which the people clapped together for me on the poop deck. My brother was in the worst of the vessels, the most dangerous, and I felt terribly, having persuaded him to ship against his will.

To speak of myself, I had won little profit from my twenty years' service, rendered amid so many hardships and dangers. For today I have no roof over my head in Castile. If I wish to eat or sleep, I have no recourse except to an inn or tavern, and most of the time I have no money to pay the bill. Another sorrow rent my very heart. That was for Don Diego, my son, whom I had left in Spain, an orphan and dispossessed of my honor and my estate, although I was confident that, being just and grateful princes, you would restore everything to him and more, too.

I reached Cariai, where I tarried to repair the vessels, take on stores, and revive the people, who were quite exhausted. There I, who, as I have said, had many times come to the point of death, learned of the gold mines of the province of Ciamba, which I was seeking. Two In-

dians took me to Cerabaro where the people go naked and carry a gold mirror suspended from the neck. But they would not sell it or trade it. They named me many places on the seacoast where they said gold and mines were to be found. The last was Veragua, which was about 25 leagues away. I started out with the intention of looking into all of them. But when I had gone half way, I learned that there were some mines at a distance of two days' journey. I decided to send to examine them. On the eve of SS. Simon and Jude, for which their departure had been set, the sea and the wind rose so high that we had to run wherever they forced us. The Indian, our guide to the mines, stayed with me all the time.

Wherever I had been I found all that I had heard to be true; thus I was assured that this is so also in the province of Ciguare, which, according to them [who told me], lies nine days' journey by land to the west. In that place, they say, there is gold without limit. The people wear coral on their heads and huge bracelets of coral on their legs and arms, and they decorate and inlay chairs, chests and tables with coral.⁴ They said also that the women there had necklaces, which hung from their heads to their shoulders. All the people of these places agree about what I am saying and mention so much that I should be satisfied with a tenth of it. Moreover, they all knew of pepper. In Ciguare the people are accustomed to do business in fairs and markets. That is what these people say, and they described to me their modes and methods of barter. Furthermore, they say the ships carry cannon, bows and arrows, swords and shields. The people are clothed and there are horses in the land. They are accustomed

to warfare, wear rich clothing, and have fine houses. They tell me, too, that the sea encompasses Ciguare and that it is a journey of ten days to the Ganges River. It seems that these lands have the same bearing with regard to Veragua that Tortosa has to Fuenterrabia, or Pisa to Venice.⁵ When I left Cerabarú and came to the places I have mentioned, I found the peo-

1. His landfall on the outward passage was either Martinique or Guadeloupe, but he evidently called at Dominica.

2. In this and the preceding paragraph Columbus makes a sort of ellipsis of his experience in the hurricane off Hispaniola, and in the long, disheartening beat to windward from Cape Honduras to Cape Gracias á Dios.

3. *una camarilla*.

4. What led Columbus to believe that these Indians

ple had the same customs, except that anyone who had gold mirrors would trade one for three hawk's bells, though the mirrors weighed 10 or 15 ducats. They resemble the people of Hispaniola in all their habits. They collect gold by different methods, but these are all as nothing compared with those of the Christians. What I say is what I hear.

wore coral is anyone's guess, opportunities for misunderstanding were so great. Probably he showed an Indian some coral objects and was "yessed," as he was about the markets, the horses, and the ships armed with cannon. By Ciguare he meant the Pacific side of Costa Rica and Panama.

5. He means that the mountain range he saw along the Veragua coast was like the Apennines separating the Adriatic from the Ligurian sea, and this guess was correct. The Pacific Ocean was near—but not the Ganges.

b. Geographical Conceits and Winter Tempests

What I know is that in the year '94 I sailed on the 24th parallel westward to the longitude of 135°. I could not have made a mistake, because there were eclipses: the sun was in Libra and the moon in Aries. Moreover, what I learned orally I had known in detail from books. Ptolemy thought he had correctly rectified an error of Marinus, but Marinus's figure is now found to be very near the truth. Ptolemy places Catigara¹ 12 lines from his west, which he located two and a third degrees off Cape St. Vincent in Portugal.² Marinus gives the earth and its limits an extension of 15 lines [225°]. He extends Ethiopia beyond 24° south latitude, and now that the Portuguese have sailed there, they find that he is right. Ptolemy says the southernmost land is the original home of man, and that it is no more than 15½ degrees farther south. The world is small. The dry land covers six-sevenths of it, and only one seventh is covered with water.³ So experience has

already shown, and I have mentioned this in other letters, together with citations from Holy Scripture, and I have assigned to the terrestrial paradise the site approved by the Holy Church.⁴ I say the world is not so large as it is commonly said to be, and that a degree measured along the equator amounts to 56⅔ miles. This can readily be demonstrated with exactitude.⁵

I leave this subject, since it is not my purpose to discuss this matter but to give an account of my grim and arduous voyage, though it is most noble and profitable.

I say that on the eve of SS. Simon and Jude I was running before the wind and could not beat against it. For ten days I took shelter in a harbor from the great violence of sea and sky. There I decided not to return to the mines and counted them as already won. I departed to continue my voyage, when it was raining. I reached the port of Bastimientos,⁶ which I entered against my will. The storm and a powerful current detained me there 14

days. Then I left but without fair weather. After I had gone 15 leagues I was forced back by furious wind and current. While returning to the harbor from which I had started I came upon Retrete, where I put in for shelter at great peril and risk, all thoroughly exhausted, the ships and the people. I stayed there several days, so compelled by the cruel weather. When I thought [that stretch of foul weather] had ceased it had just begun. There I changed my mind and decided to return to the mines⁷ and get some work done until I got good weather for my voyage and putting to sea. But, when I had gone 4 leagues, the tempest returned and wearied me, so that I knew not where to turn; my old wound opened up, and for nine days I gave myself up as lost, without hope of life. Eyes never beheld the sea so



high, angry and covered with foam. The wind not only prevented our progress, but afforded no opportunity to run behind some headland for shelter; hence we were forced to keep out in that bloody ocean, seething like a pot on a hot fire. Never did the sky look more terrible: for one whole day and night it blazed like a furnace, and the lightning broke forth with such violence that each time I wondered if it had carried away my spars and sails; the flashes came with such fury and frightfulness that we all thought the ships would be blasted. All this time, water never ceased to fall from the sky. I wouldn't say it rained, because it was like a re-enactment of the Deluge! The people were so beaten down that they longed for death to end their misery.

The vessels had already twice lost boats, anchors, lines and lay exposed to the elements, under bare poles.

When it pleased Our Lord, I returned to *Puerto Gordo*,⁸ where I made repairs as best I could. I turned once more toward Veragua, but the wind and the currents were still wrong for my voyage, though I was all set to start. I landed about where I had been before, but once more the wind and the currents were contrary. So once again I put into the harbor, for I dared not await the opposition of Saturn with Mars when I was in such distress on a savage coast, since that usually brings a storm or heavy weather. That was on Christmas day at the hour of Mass.⁹

1. Catigara, according to Ptolemy, was in southeast China. The purpose of this wild geographical detail is to prove to the Sovereigns, as Columbus had already satisfied himself, that he had really reached the Orient. Ptolemy's "lines" were each 15° of longitude.

2. The story of prime meridians from which longitude was computed, prior to a general acceptance of that of Greenwich, is long and complicated. In Columbus's day Cape St. Vincent was supposed to be the westernmost

promontory of Europe, and so was often used as prime meridian. Ferro in the Canaries at 17° 54' W, westernmost of the Spanish islands, was also a favorite prime meridian from which to calculate longitude. Probably the printed edition of Ptolemy that Columbus read used a prime meridian 2° 20' off Cape St. Vincent.

3. Book of Esdras again; see notes to Letter on Third Voyage. One would think that by this time Columbus would have concluded that more than one-seventh of the globe's surface was water, he had seen so much of it.

4. A reference to the theologians whom he had quoted in his letter of 1498 to the Sovereigns (see Part IV) as supporting his notion of the Terrestrial Paradise being in Venezuela.

5. See Columbus's *Postille* to that effect in Part I.

6. Nombre de Dios.

7. *Las minas*. Columbus does not mean what one would by a "gold mine," but a gold-bearing country—Veragua.

8. The place that Ferdinand called *Huíva*. It was either Limon Bay, harbor of the Canal Zone port of Cristóbal, or the adjacent Manzanilla Bay, harbor for Colón in the Republic of Panama. Discussion in Morison *A.O.S.* II 361-2 and *Raccolta* I ii 187, note 4.

9. That opposition of the planets occurred on 29 December. Columbus passed Christmas and New Year's within sight of the present Panama Canal entrance; but as he was unable to converse with the Indians there, he never got a hint of how near he was to the Pacific.

c. Veragua

I returned again to the place whence I had set forth with such heavy labor; and with the coming of the New Year, troubles began again. For, although the weather was fair for my voyage, my vessels were unseaworthy and my people dead or sick. On the day of Epiphany I reached Veragua but the spirit had gone out of me. There Our Lord presented me with a river and a safe harbor, although there was only 10 *palmas* of water in the entrance. There I put in with difficulty, and next day the tempest returned. If it had found me outside, I should not have been able to get in because of the sandbar. It rained without let-up until 14 February, so there was no opportunity to go ashore or improve my situation. Just when I believed myself safe, on 24 January, the river suddenly rose very high and turbulent, parting my cables and breakfasts,¹ and all but carried my vessels away; certainly they were in greater danger than I had ever seen them before. Our Lord came to my aid, as He has always done. I know not if any other man has ever suffered more. On 6 February, in the rain, I sent 70 men into the country, and they found many mines at a distance of

five leagues. The Indians who accompanied them led them to a very high ridge. They pointed in every direction as far as the eye could reach and said that there was gold everywhere, and that the mines extended westward for 20 days' journey. They named the towns and villages, indicating where they were more or less numerous. I learned afterwards that the Quibián, who had provided these Indians, had ordered them to indicate the distant mines, which belonged to someone else, his enemy, and that within his own lands a man could in ten days collect a *mozada*² of gold, whenever he wished. I have with me some Indians, his servants, who can testify to this.³ The boats can go as far as the place where he has his village. My brother returned with these people, all with gold they had gathered in four hours, the length of their stay in that place. The quantity is great, in view of the fact that none of them had ever seen mines, and very few had seen gold; most of them were mariners, and almost all ship's boys. I had plenty of building material and an abundance of supplies; I built a village and made many gifts to the Quibián, as they call the lord of that land. But I knew

well that peace would not long endure. They are very wild, and our people very importunate, and I had sat down in his bailiwick. As soon as he saw the houses going up, and a lively trade going on, he decided to set fire to them and kill everyone. But his scheme miscarried. He was taken prisoner together with his women, his sons, and his servants, although his imprisonment was of short duration. The Quibián escaped from a trustworthy man into whose charge he had been given with a guard, and his sons escaped from a shipmaster to whose vessel they had been handed over for custody.⁴

In January the mouth of the river became obstructed. In April, the vessels were all worm-eaten, and I could not keep them above water. At this time the river cut a channel, by which I brought out three empty ships with considerable difficulty. The boats went back into the river for salt⁵ and water. The sea rose high and furious and would not let them out again. The Indians were many and united and attacked them and in the end killed them. My brother and all the rest of the people were living on board a vessel which lay inside. I was outside very much alone, on this rude coast, with a high fever and very fatigued. There was no hope of escape. In this state, I climbed painfully to the highest part of the ship and cried out for help with a fearful voice, weeping, to Your Highnesses' war captains, in every direction; but none replied. At length, groaning with exhaustion, I fell asleep, and heard a compassionate voice, saying, "O fool, and slow to believe and serve thy God, the God of every man! What more did He do for Moses or for David His servant than for thee? From thy birth He hath ever held thee in special charge.

When He saw thee at man's estate, marvelously did He cause thy name to resound over the earth. The Indies, so rich a portion of the world, He gave thee for thine own, and thou hast divided them as it pleased thee. Of those barriers of the Ocean Sea, which were closed with such mighty chains,⁶ He hath given thee the keys. Thou wast obeyed in so many lands, and thou hast won noble fame from Christendom. What more did He do for the people of Israel, when He carried them out of Egypt; or for David, whom from a shepherd He raised to be king over Judea? Turn thou to Him and acknowledge thy faults; His mercy is infinite; thine old age shall not hinder thee from performing mighty deeds, for many and vast heritages He holdeth. Abraham was past 100 when he begat Isaac, and Sarah was no young girl. Thou criest out for succor with a doubting heart. Reflect, who has afflicted thee so grievously and so often, God or the world? The privileges and promises which God bestows, He doth not revoke; nor doth He say, after having received service, that that was not His intention, and that it is to be understood differently. Nor doth He mete out suffering to make a show of His might. Whatever He promises He fulfils with interest; that is His way. Thus I have told thee what thy Creator hath done for thee and what He doth for all men. He hath now revealed to me a portion of the rewards for so many toils and dangers thou hast borne in the service of others."⁷

I heard all this as in a swoon, but I had no answer to give in definite words; so true, only to weep for my transgressions. Whoever he was he finished by saying, "Fear not, but have trust. All these tribulations are written on tablets of marble,

and not without cause."

I arose as soon as I could and at the end of nine days the weather turned fair, but not sufficient to move the ships out of the river. I rounded up the people who were on land and all the rest that I could, for there were not enough left both to remain on shore and to sail the vessels. I

1. *proeses*; Bourne has a good note on this in *Northmen, Columbus and Cabot* p. 401. The vessels inside the lagoon at Rio Belén had to run breakfasts ashore to trees in addition to being anchored.

2. Bourne, *op. cit.*, p. 402, thinks that this means "as much as a boy (*mozo*) could carry."

3. The fact that these captive Indians are never again mentioned, except in the story below that they all escaped or hanged themselves, suggests that Columbus wrote this part of the Letter off Belén, not at Jamaica.

4. To get these events straight, see Ferdinand, above. The Admiral, as elsewhere, folds two or three incidents into one.

5. Why salt? No salt deposits there.

6. The Voice was quoting part of the famous prophecy of Seneca in the *Medea*:

should like to have joined the others in keeping our village going if Your Highnesses had known about its existence, but fear that no vessels would ever put in there determined me, as well as the consideration that when it came to a question of providing succor, all hands should be taken care of.⁸

Venient annis

Secula seris, quibus Oceanus

Vincula rerum laxet, et ingens

Pateat telus . . .

and which Columbus always thought applied to him. See Morison *A.O.S.* I 69, 76 (one-vol. ed. 50, 54).

7. Hints to the Sovereigns, who had reneged on so many of their promises to the Admiral, and that they had better confer on him some signal mark of distinction, such as a patent of nobility, or at least membership in an order of chivalry. But they never did, although their court was swarming with comendadores, counts, marquesses and dukes.

8. Columbus carefully refrains from revealing that the Indians had forced the Spaniards out of Veragua.

d. Passage to Jamaica

I departed Easter night in the name of the Holy Trinity, with vessels that were decayed, worm-eaten, and full of holes. There in Belén I left one vessel and many stores; I did likewise in Puerto Bello. I had only two left, in the same condition as the others, and without boats or supplies, to traverse 6,000 miles of watery sea or to perish on the voyage with my son and brother and so many people.

Let us hear now from those who are full of blaming and finding fault, while they sit safely ashore, "Why did you not do thus and so?" I wish they were on this voyage; I well believe that another voyage of a different kind awaits them, or our faith is naught.

On 13 May I reached the province of *Mago*, which borders upon the province

of Cathay.¹ Thence I set sail for Hispaniola. I sailed two days with fair weather; after that it was unfavorable. The course I was following was set to avoid the numerous islands, so that I might not be caught in the shoals surrounding them. The raging sea rose up in fury against me, and I had to turn back without sails; I anchored off an island² and there lost three anchors one after another. At midnight, when I thought the world was coming to an end, the cables of the other vessel gave way and she bore down upon me so forcibly that it was a wonder we were not dashed to pieces. The anchor that I had left, was what saved me, after Our Lord. At the end of six days when fair weather returned, I resumed my course, though I had lost all my tackle and though the vessels were more riddled with holes than a

honeycomb, and the people were sick with fear and exhaustion. I passed somewhat beyond the point I had previously reached when the storm pushed me back. I dropped anchor in a safer harbor on the same island. At the end of a week I proceeded on my voyage and got to Jamaica at the end of June, always in the face of contrary winds and with the vessels constantly deteriorating. Even with all hands busy with three pumps, and buckets and kettles, it was impossible to get the better of the water leaking in, nor was there any other remedy for the damage done by the teredos. I took the course that would take me as close as possible to Hispaniola, which was 28 leagues away. I wished I had never started to do so. The other vessel was just barely afloat, and ran for port. I struggled to keep the sea despite the storm. My ship was sinking under me, but Our Lord by a miracle brought me to land.

Who will believe what I have written here? I declare I haven't told one hundredth of the story in this letter. Those who were with the Admiral can testify to this. If it please Your Highnesses to grant me the boon of assistance, one vessel of over 64 tons with 200 quintals of biscuit and some other stores will suffice to transport me and these people to Spain. I have said that Jamaica is hardly 28 leagues from Hispaniola, but I would not have gone to Hispaniola even had the vessels been able to make the voyage. I have already admitted that I had been ordered in the name of Your Highnesses not to go there. If this order has been of advantage, God knows. I am sending this letter by way of and at the hands of Indians. It will be a great wonder if it gets there.

1. Again the Marco Polian Chinese province of Mangi, which Columbus had consistently identified with Cuba.

2. Conjecturally at Cayo Bretón, off the Laberinto de Doze Leguas, Cuba.

e. Navigation and Miscellaneous Events

Concerning my voyage I report that I had 150 persons with me, including a goodly number qualified as pilots and excellent seamen. But no one can give an accurate account of where I went or came. The reason is obvious. I left Hispaniola from a point above Puerto del Brasil. The storm would not allow me to take the course I wished; it forced me to sail wherever the wind listed. At this time I fell gravely sick; no one had navigated in these waters. Then the wind and sea subsided, and the storm was succeeded by a calm and powerful currents. I made for port in an island which is called Los Poros,¹ and then set sail for the mainland. No one

can give a true account of this, for there is no adequate reckoning, inasmuch as we were driven by the current and were out of sight of land for so many days. I followed the coast of the mainland: this I determined by the compass and my seamanship. There is no one who could say under what part of the heavens we were, and when I set out from there, heading for Hispaniola, the pilots thought they were bound for San Juan, but we were in the vicinity of *Mango*, 400 leagues farther west than they thought. Let them speak out if they know where Veragua is situated. I maintain that they can give no other answer or particulars save that they

visited certain countries which are rich in gold, and this they can swear to. But they have no knowledge of the route thither. To go there it would be necessary to discover the place all over again.

There is a way and there is a method (an infallible one) based on astronomy.² If a man understands it, it will suffice him. This resembles the prophetic vision. If the ships of the Indies only sail downwind, it is not because they are poorly constructed or unmanageable. The strong currents that are met there, together with the wind, make it impossible for anyone to sail on a bowline. For they would lose in a single day what they might have gained in seven. Nor do I except a caravel, even a lateen-rigged Portuguese caravel. For this reason they do not [attempt to] sail unless they have the wind "on their tail,"³ and at times they remain six and eight months in port waiting for it. But this is nothing unusual, for the same thing frequently happens in Spain.

The people, country, and practices described by Pope Pius II have been found, but not the horses with breastplates and bridles of gold.⁴ But that is not surprising, for the coast lands in that region require only fishermen, and I did not tarry, since I was in a hurry.

In Cariai and the neighboring lands there are sorcerers. They would have given the world for me not to stay there an hour. As soon as I got there they sent right out two girls, all dressed up; the elder was hardly 11, the other 7, both behaving with such lack of modesty as to be no better than whores. They had magic powder concealed about them. As soon as they arrived, I gave orders that they be presented with some of our trading truck and sent them directly ashore.⁵

There, on a mountain, I saw a skilfully wrought tomb as large as a house, and inside the corpse exposed and anointed with myrrh. They made mention to me of other and greater works of art. There is a great abundance of animals, large and small, and very different from ours. At the time I had two pigs which an Irish wolfhound hadn't the pluck to face. An archer had wounded an animal which seemed to be a monkey, except that it was much larger and had the face of a man. He had pierced it with an arrow from breast to tail, and since it was ferocious, he had to cut off an arm and a leg. The pig, on seeing the monkey, bristled and fled. When I saw this, I ordered the *begare*,⁶ for that's what they call it, to be thrown to where the pig lay. When it got up to the pig, although more dead than alive and still wearing the arrow in its body, it coiled its tail about the hog's snout, took powerful hold, and with its remaining fore claw seized the boar by the head, as if an enemy. This novel and pretty sport inspired me to write you this.

There were many varieties of animals but they all die of the pip; many fowls of great size (having feathers like wool),⁷ lions,⁸ stags, does, and birds. At the time that I was laboriously traversing that sea, some of the people conceived the fancy that we had been bewitched and to this day they persist in that view. I came across another tribe which ate human flesh,⁹ which was betrayed by their brutish faces. There they tell of great mines of copper, of which they make hatchets and other things, both tooled, cast and smelted, and there were forges with crucibles and all the furniture of a goldsmith. The people there wore clothes, and in that province I saw large sheets of cotton,

very handsomely worked, and others very artistically painted by brushes in colors. They say that in the interior, toward Cathay, they have cloth of gold. It was no easy matter to get information about all these countries, and what they are like, for want of the language. Every village,

1. The Morant Cays. Columbus is now rehashing the voyage from Jacmel to Bonacca Island, and what he is driving at is this: he alone has kept sufficient track of the navigation to find Veragua again; no use the sovereigns' appointing someone else. Diego de Porras's Narrative (*Raccolta* I ii 211-17) was written, in part at least, to give the Sovereigns the hint that he and brother Francisco were equal to this; but as he gives the course from Jamaica to Honduras as W and NW it is not likely that they could have succeeded. Porras says that the Admiral impounded all the charts on board so that nobody else could know where they were. Since Alonso de Hojeda had stolen Columbus's chart of Paria and with it made a voyage to the Pearl Coast, this was a reasonable precaution.

2. Meaning, celestial navigation, in which Columbus was no better than the best of his day.

3. *con colla*. This statement is correct. It was almost impossible for a sailing vessel of that day to make headway against the easterly tradewind and equatorial current. Note how long it took the rescue caravel to sail from Jamaica to Santo Domingo in 1504. Las Casas states that it sometimes took ships several months to sail from the west point of Hispaniola to the capital.

4. Columbus noted on the margin of his copy of Pope Pius II's *Historia Rerum*, chap. xii, which describes the Massagetae, that they use gold bridles and girths and silver breastplates for their horses, and have no

though close together, has a different language—so very different that they cannot understand each other any more than do we and the Arabs. I believe that this condition prevails among the savage people on the sea coast but not in the interior.

iron but plenty of gold and copper.

5. Note the differing account of this episode in Ferdinand, chap. 91; according to him the girls were 14 and 8 years old, behaved modestly, and the only "magic" they carried was their sex.

6. The word from which our *peccary* is derived; Columbus confused the native name of the pig for that of the monkey. Modern readers will conclude that the Admiral's sense of humor was odd, to say the least, and that the incident was ill chosen for an official report. But in his day it was considered good sport in Europe to pit animals against each other; bear-baiting in England, for instance. He doubtless figured that this story would amuse the Sovereigns and carry the rest of the letter. One can imagine Ferdinand saying "What! another long, boring letter from your Admiral friend?" and Isabella replying "Here's something *you* will like, anyway."

7. The *pavón* (*Crax globriera* L.), which the Indians of Costa Rica domesticate. Note from Dr. Juvenal V. Rodríguez, Director of the National Museum of Costa Rica.

8. The puma.

9. This, as may be seen in the *Historie*, was one of the yarns told by the Indian interpreter. It was common in each American Indian nation to ascribe horrible practices to the nations next adjoining, with whom they fought; e.g., the Algonkian myths about the Iroquois.

f. *The Wealth of the Indies*

When I discovered the Indies, I said they were the world's wealthiest realm. I spoke of gold, pearls, precious stones, spices and of the markets and fairs. But, because not everything turned up at once, I was vilified. These reproaches constrain me now to say nothing but what I hear from the natives of the country. One thing I dare say, since there are so many witnesses, is that in this land of Veragua I saw more signs of gold in my first two days, than in Hispaniola in four years; and that the lands of this region could not be

more beautiful or better cultivated, or the people more cowardly.¹ Moreover, there is a fine harbor and a beautiful river, and [the whole is] easily defended against outsiders. All this means security for the Christians, certainty of dominion, and splendid prospects for the glory and increase of the Christian religion; and the voyage thither is about as short as to Hispaniola, since it will be down-wind.² Your Highnesses are as much sovereigns of this place as of Xerez or Toledo; Your vessels which will be sailing there, will be going

home, as it were. They will bring gold thence. In other lands, to get what there is, they will have to take it by force or return empty, and ashore they will have to entrust their persons to savages.

As for the rest, which I pass over in silence, I have already said why I restrained myself. I don't say it is true, nor do I reveal a sixth part of all I have ever said and written, or that I am at the fountain [of knowledge]. The Genoese, the Venetians and everyone who has pearls, precious stones and other things of value, they all carry them to the ends of the earth to barter and convert into gold. O, most excellent gold! Who has gold has a treasure with which he gets what he wants, imposes his will on the world, and even helps souls to paradise. When the lords of these lands in the region of Veragua die, they bury their gold with the corpse, so they say. On one voyage 674 quintals of gold were brought to Solomon, besides what the merchants and mariners took, and what was paid in Arabia. From this gold he made 200 lances and 300 shields, and he made the canopy which was to be above them of gold plates embellished by precious stones. He made many other objects out of gold, and many huge vessels richly embellished with precious stones. Josephus mentions this in his history, *de Antiquitatibus*. The matter is also described in Chronicles and in the Book of Kings.³ Josephus says that this gold was obtained in Aurea. If so, I declare that those mines of the Aurea are but a part of these in Veragua, which extend westward 20 days' journey and are at the same distance from the pole and the equator. Solomon bought all that gold, precious stones and silver; and you can give orders to collect it if you see fit. Da-

vid in his will left Solomon 3,000 quintals of gold from the Indies to aid in building the temple; and, according to Josephus, it was from these same lands. Jerusalem and the Mount of Zion are now to be rebuilt by Christian hands, and God through the mouth of the prophet in the fourteenth Psalm said so.⁴ The abbot Joachim said that this man was to come from Spain. Saint Jerome showed the way thither to the Holy Lady. The Emperor of Cathay some time since sent for wise men to teach him the religion of Christ.⁵ Who shall offer himself for this mission? If Our Lord takes me back to Spain, I vow in God's name I will undertake to convey them thither.

The people who came with me have gone through unbelievable perils and toils. I beseech Your Highnesses to order them to be paid immediately, since they are poor, and to reward each in accordance with his rank; for I assert that they are bearing the best tidings ever to reach Spain.

Although, according to report, the gold in the hands of the Quibián of Veragua and others in that region is abundant, I did not deem it prudent or of advantage to Your Highnesses to take it by force. Fair dealing will avoid scandal and ill fame and [eventually] will bring all the gold, not excepting one nugget, into your treasury. With a month of fair weather I could have completed my voyage; for lack of vessels I did not persist in hoping to resume it; and in all matters of Your service I put my trust in Him who created me, if He sees good.

1. Here, despite the stout fight that the Quibián's people put up at Belén, Columbus is indulging in his old cliché about all Indians being timid. And as for the fine harbor—there was none on the Veragua coast.

2. True enough for days of sail; if a ship after landfall at Dominica steered for the Isthmus instead of for Santo Domingo, it could have got there within three days.

3. 2 Chronicles ix: 13-14 and 1 Kings x: 14, 15—Columbus uses the Greek name *Paralipomenon* for Chronicles. Bourne in *Northmen, Columbus and Cabot* 412-13 reveals the series of blunders by which Josephus's "cups" became "canopies," and checks Columbus's other references to Josephus. The Aurea was the Golden Chersonese, the Malay Peninsula.

4. Columbus is alluding to one of his ambitions, to finance a new crusade; his reference is probably to

Psalm xiv: 8—"Who shall give salvation unto Israel out of Sion?" The Abbot Joachim, in his *Oraculum Turcicum*, a series of prophecies about the Popes, predicted that this man would be a Christian, not necessarily a Spaniard.

5. A reference to Kubla Khan's commission to the Polo brothers, or a later embassy to Eugenius IV, alluded to in Toscanelli's Letter (Part I, above) and in the Prologue to Columbus's Journal of the First Voyage. In Columbus's copy of the *Book of Ser Marco Polo* I vii he noted on the margin, "The Great Khan sent ambassadors to the Pope."

g. Ships, Privileges, and a Noble Complaint

I believe Your Highness will recall that I wished to give orders for a new style of construction for ships. But time was so short that there was no opportunity to do this, and I had foreseen how things would be.¹ I value this trade and these mines with this harbor and dominion more highly than everything else won in the Indies. This is no infant to be left to a stepmother to bring up. I never think of Hispaniola, Paria and the other lands without weeping. I used to think that their example was to serve for other situations like them. On the contrary, they are played out; though they don't die, the disease is incurable or very grave; let him who brought them to this state supply the cure if he can or knows how; they are all masters in destruction.² It was always the custom to bestow favors and preferment upon the man who put his body in jeopardy. It is not just that he who has opposed this enterprise enjoy the fruits thereof with his children. The men who ran away from the Indies, fleeing from danger and maligning the Indies and me, have returned with commissions. That's how things are now ordered in Veragua:³ an evil example and unprofitable for this enterprise and for the cause of justice in the world. Anxiety

about this and many other things which I clearly saw made me implore Your Highnesses, before I went to discover these islands and mainlands, to grant me leave to govern them in your royal name. You agreed; privilege and agreement were granted, sealed and sworn to, and you appointed me Viceroy, Admiral and Governor General of all. You fixed the boundary 100 leagues beyond the Azores and the Cape Verde Islands by a line which passes from pole to pole. This was to apply to all that was to be discovered, and you vested broad powers in me. The document states this with full details.

But the other most notorious matter, which cries aloud for redress, remains inexplicable to this moment. For seven years I was at your royal court, where all with whom this Enterprise was discussed pronounced it to be fantastic. Now even the tailors⁴ clamor for an opportunity to make discoveries. It is certain that they go for plunder, and this they are permitted to do. Their gains are made to the detriment of my reputation and with great damage to the enterprise. It is good to render unto God what is His and to Caesar what belongs to him. This is a just doctrine. The lands here which are now subject to Your

Highnesses are more vast than all others in Christian possession; they are rich, too. After I, by divine will, brought them under Your royal and mighty dominion, and was by way of making them yield a magnificent income; suddenly, when I, in great joy and security, was expecting the arrival of ships to take me to your royal presence, bearing triumph and great tidings of gold, I was arrested and cast into a ship with my two brothers, shackled with chains and naked in body. I suffered monstrous treatment, without being brought to trial or convicted. Who will believe that a poor foreigner would dare revolt against Your Highnesses in such a place without reason and without the aid of some other prince, standing alone in the midst of your vassals and subjects, while all my sons were at your royal court?⁵

I came to serve you at the age of 28 [*sic*] and now I have not a hair on me that is not white, and my body is infirm and exhausted. All that was left to me and my brothers has been taken away and sold, even to the cloak that I wore, without hearing or trial, to my great dishonor. It is believed that this was not done by your royal command. The restitution of my honor and losses, and the punishment of those who inflicted them, of those who plundered me of my pearls and infringed my admiral's privileges, will enhance the honor of your royal dignity; the highest

virtue, unexampled fame as grateful and just princes, will redound to Your Highnesses if you do this; and the glorious memory will survive for Spain. The honest purpose which I have always shown in Your Highnesses' service, coupled with such unmerited outrage, will not permit my soul to keep silent, even though I might so desire. I implore Your Highnesses' pardon. I am ruined, as I have said. Hitherto I have wept for others; now, Heaven have pity on me, and earth, weep for me! Of things material I have not a single *blanca* to offer; of things spiritual, I have even ceased observing the forms, here in the Indies. Alone, desolate, infirm, daily expecting death, surrounded by a million savages full of cruelty and our enemies, and thus deprived of the Holy Sacraments of Holy Church, how neglected will this soul be if here it part from the body! Weep for me, whoever has charity, truth and justice! I did not come on this voyage for gain, honor or wealth, that is certain; for then the hope of all such things was dead. I came to Your Highnesses with honest purpose and sincere zeal; and I do not lie. I humbly beseech Your Highnesses that, if it please God to remove me hence, you will help me to go to Rome and on other pilgrimages. May the Holy Trinity guard and increase Your lives and high estate.

Done in the Indies, in the Island of Jamaica, 7 July 1503.

1. From experience Columbus had worked out the proper design for light, weatherly vessels to traffic with these parts, but he had to take what he could get. Probably his designs were incorporated in the *bergantines*, the small, handy sailing vessels with an auxiliary bank of oars, which the Spaniards used for a century or more and many of which were built in the Indies. See Diego García de Palacio *Instrucción Náutica* (Mexico 1587), which was reprinted at Madrid in 1944.

2. Obviously meant for Bobadilla and Ovando.

3. This must be a misprint for *Spagnuola*, Hispaniola; for Columbus had not left a soul in Veragua.

4. A crack at Balthasar Calvo, a tailor who went with Peralonso Niño or Cristóbal Guerra on a voyage along the Spanish main. His testimony on Fourth Voyage is in *Pleitos de Colón* I 347-9.

5. Compare the Letter to Doña Juana, above. This is one more bit of evidence that Columbus was no Spaniard.

The Will of Diego Méndez

LENGTHY WILLS WERE NOT UNUSUAL IN THE 16TH AND 17TH CENTURIES; for when a notary was summoned, the person on the point of death was very apt to indulge in a confession of faith, and even tell the story of his life, before detailing his legacies. But the will of Diego Méndez, executed at Valladolid on 19 June 1536, passes all records. Fortunately for us, this valiant captain then undertook to give details of the memorable voyage in which he had taken a leading part, some 33 years earlier. His narrative, giving details not found in Ferdinand's *Historie* or the *Lettera Rarissima*, is one of the most vivid and arresting of the entire age of discovery. After the long raft voyages of survivors from torpedoings in World War II, the canoe passage of Diego from Jamaica to Hispaniola no longer seems such an outstanding example of human endurance; but for Spanish gravity, poise and the sheer courage that took men of that nation through the Andean jungles, I know nothing to match Diego's story of giving his companion a haircut amid hundreds of yelling savages thirsting for their blood.

Almost nothing is known of Diego Méndez's origin and early life, except that he came from Segura in Spain, and had been Columbus's major-domo ashore before he joined the fleet for the Fourth Voyage as *escudero*, gentleman volunteer. It is not likely that he was then over thirty years old. By the time the fleet reached Veragua, Columbus had signalled Diego's fine qualities and made him his secretary. It is not unlikely, indeed probable, that the original *Lettera Rarissima* was dictated by the arthritic Admiral to him, and written in his hand. After proceeding with the Letter to court, Méndez remained there for some time with the Admiral's son D. Diego to work for restitution of titles and privileges. He is frequently mentioned by the Admiral in his letters of this period to his son; these are printed in translation in Filson Young *Christopher Columbus* (3d ed. London 1911) 370-83. He was with the Admiral at his deathbed. Apparently D. Diego employed Méndez; a letter from him to D. Diego is printed in the Duchess of Berwick & Alba's *Autógrafos de Colón* (1892) 59. After partially succeeding in his endeavor for restitu-


tion, Méndez accompanied to Santo Domingo the "Second Admiral" (as D. Diego was generally called) and his noble wife, the Vicereine D. Maria de Colón y Toledo, in 1509. Although he did not, at least for some years, obtain the office of *alguacil mayor* (roughly equivalent to high sheriff) to which he aspired, he became a leading citizen of Santo Domingo, described by Oviedo as a "gentleman and man of honor." Devoted to the Columbus family, he continued to serve D. Maria after the death of D. Diego in 1526, and to give her what help he could to preserve the Columbian honors and titles for her worthless son D. Luis, the Third Admiral. Oviedo tells us that the Catholic King—whether Ferdinand or Charles is not clear—conferred favors on Méndez and granted him arms with a canoe as the principal blazon; but he is not described as "don" in the judicial process of his old age, for which see our final footnote to his will. Incidentally, the document there referred to indicates that Méndez did get the office of *alguacil mayor* of Hispaniola, which he craved. In his conduct of this office he was accused of taking small bribes, and was condemned on two counts by the Audiencia of this island. Evidently regarding this as an affront to his honor, even if the sum was small, he journeyed to Spain and appealed the sentence to the Council of the Indies; and although they let him off with a sentence to pay two ducats—less than five dollars in gold—he appealed that to the Sovereigns, who wiped the slate clean. This is how he happened to be at Valladolid in 1536, and to draw up his will there.

It is not known where and when he died. If his dearest wish, to have an Indian canoe carved on his tomb, was ever carried out, there is no trace of it today in the ruined church of San Francisco, Santo Domingo, where he directed his body to be buried near that of his mother "with honorable and moderate *pompa*." The manner of man that he was may be gathered not only from the following narrative, but from the little library he left to his sons. This included Aristotle's *Moral Philosophy*, Josephus on *The Wars of the Jews*, the *Imitatio Christi*, a "Book about the Holy Land," (probably the illustrated *Peregrinatio in Terram Sanctam*), and four works by Erasmus.

A complete copy of the Will remained in the hands of the Dukes of Veragua, descendants of D. Luis, until the present century, when it was presented to the Archives of the Indies in Seville. The Will was first printed in Navarrete *Colección de Viages*; the narrative part, which follows, was printed, with translation, in Thacher II 647-66 and Jane II 112-43; text of the bequests alone in *Raccolta* I ii 217-21.

Diego's Spanish is direct and rough, and the scribe who took down the will was not very literate; so the manuscript is difficult to read, and previous editors have taken liberties with it.

The text for the present translation was established by Dr. Milton Anastos from a microfilm of the ms. in the Archives of the Indies, Patronato, legajo 295, Doc. no. 90, ff 14-26. Dr. Anastos also made the translation. The subheadings are the editor's.

 Diego Méndez, inhabitant of the city of Santo Domingo in the isle Hispaniola, being in the town of

Valladolid, where Their Majesties were holding court,¹ wrote this Will on 6 June 1536, before Fernán Pérez, scribe of

Their Majesties and notary public in their Court and for all their Realms and Lordships.

[List of witnesses follows, and various legacies, after which he proceeds to the narrative.]

a. How I bearded the Cacique in his Seat at Veragua

That Very Illustrious Gentleman, the Admiral *D. Christóbal Colón* of glorious memory, and his son the Admiral *D. Diego Colón*, and his grandson the Admiral *D. Luis* (to whom may God grant abundance of days), and through them the Vicereine, my lady, the guardian and benefactress of *D. Luis*,² are indebted to me for the many great services which I performed in their behalf, for which I have consumed and expended the best part of my life up to its end in their service. Above all did I serve the Great Admiral *D. Christopher Columbus*, going with his lordship to discover islands and mainland and many times risking death in order to save his life and the lives of those who were with him, especially when we were shut up within the mouth of the river Belén or Yebra by the violence and fury of the sea and of the winds which piled up the sand and heaped it so high as to close off the entrance to the port. In the midst of his lordship's great affliction there, a monstrous regiment of Indians gathered on the shore so as to set fire to the ships and kill us all, though they pretended that they were going to wage war upon other Indians of the province of Cobraba and Ahurira, with whom they were at war. Although many of them passed through the port in which our ships were lying, no one in the fleet took heed of the matter except me. I went to the Admiral and said, "Sir, these people who have passed through here in armed array say they are going to join forces with these of Veragua to march

against those of Cobraba and Ahurira. I don't like the look of it; I believe, on the contrary, they are mustering to burn our ships and kill us all," as indeed they were. And when the Admiral asked me how this could be prevented, I told his lordship that I could go in a barge along the coast as far as Veragua to see where they were mustering. I had not gone half a league when I found nearby a thousand men armed to the teeth, with many provisions and stores. I went ashore alone amongst them, leaving my boat afloat, and spoke with them, so far as I could make myself understood, and I offered to join their campaign with that armed barge; but they wouldn't buy that, declaring vehemently that they had no need of it. Then, since I returned to my barge and stayed there all night, they decided that they could not get to the ships to burn and destroy them according to plan without my seeing them. So they changed their plans and that night all returned to Veragua,³ and I returned to the ships and made a full report to his lordship. He did not make light of it. And, after discussing with me as to how the enemy's intentions should be more clearly known, I offered to go to them with one companion; and I undertook this mission, although I had a better chance of death than of life.

When I had coasted along as far as the Rio Veragua, I found two canoes of strange Indians, who told me straight that those fellows were bent on burning our ships and killing the lot of us; that they

had changed their plans because of the barge which had come up there, but were still planning to accomplish their purpose two days later. I asked them to take me in their canoes to the upper river and offered them pay; but they refused, warning me under no circumstances to go there; when I got there the Indians would surely kill me and my companion. But, in spite of their advice, I persuaded them to take me in their canoes up the river as far as the Indians' villages. I found them all in battle array, and they would not let me go to the principal residence of the cacique. So I, pretending that I had come as a surgeon to cure him of a wound in his leg, and through dint of handing out gifts, they let me go to the royal residence, which stood on a flat-topped hill where there was a large plaza whose stockade was decorated with 300 heads of the men he had killed in battle. Then, after I had passed through the plaza and had reached the royal house, there was a great outcry from the women and boys standing at the door. They ran screaming into the palace and a son of the cacique came out in great rage, spitting out angry words in his own language. He laid hands on me and with one big push shoved me far from him. To calm him down I said I had come to heal his father's leg and showed him a curious ointment I had brought for this purpose. He replied that in no case could I enter where his father was. Seeing that I could not appease him that way, I whipped out a comb, a pair of scissors, and a mirror, and made Escobar,⁴ my companion, comb my hair and cut it. This really astonished him and the others who were there. I then got him [the cacique's son] to let Escobar comb his hair and cut it with the scissors; and I presented him with



the scissors, the comb and the brush, and that made him friendly. I then asked for some food. This they brought immediately, and we ate and drank in harmony and good fellowship like friends. Thereupon I left him and came to the ships and made a full report of all this to the Admiral, my lord, who took no little pleasure in learning of all these matters and the things which I had done. He ordered a large stock of provisions to be collected in the ships and in the straw huts we had erected there on the beach, intending that I stay there with some of the people to probe into and discover the secrets of the land.

1. Their Majesties at that time were D. Carlos (the Emperor Charles V) and D. Juana.

2. For D. Luis Colón, Third Admiral, see note at end of this document. Since his father's death in 1526 his mother had been Vicereine at Santo Domingo.

3. The Rio Veragua, on which the Quibían's headquarters were situated, is about two miles from the Rio Belén.

4. Rodrigo d'Escobar appears on *Vizcaina's* payroll.

*b. How I Captured the Quibián with his Family and Suite,
and how they Escaped, and how
they gave Battle to us at Santa Maria de Belén*

Next morning, his lordship summoned me to get my opinion on what we ought to do. My advice was to take that lord, and all his captains, for, once they were prisoners, the common people would surrender. His lordship was of the same opinion, and I outlined the manner and the means by which this could be done. His lordship then commanded the Adelantado, his brother, and myself with 80 men, to go carry out this plan. Our Lord gave us such good fortune in this mission that we captured the cacique and most of his captains, wives, sons and grandsons, together with all the chief men of his tribe.¹ But as these prisoners were being sent to the ships, the cacique freed himself from his guard's careless hold on him, which later caused us much damage.

At this instant it pleased God to send us heavy rains; a great flood opened up the harbor and the Admiral removed his vessels outside to return to Castile. But I remained ashore as His Highness's comptroller,² with 70 men and the greater part of the supplies of biscuit, wine, oil, and vinegar. The Admiral had hardly put out to sea, leaving me on land with some 20 men, for the rest had gone with the Admiral to help his departure,³ when suddenly many natives, there must have been more than 400 armed men, armed with bows, arrows and slings, descended upon me and deployed along the mountain in single file. They uttered a war-whoop, and another and again another; and thus by God's will warned me to battle and to defend myself against them. I was standing

on the beach among the huts I had erected, and they were on the mountain within a spear's range when they began to shoot arrows and darts as if they were goading a bull. The arrows and darts fell as thick and fast as hail, and some of them made a sortie in order to attack us with clubs,⁴ but none of them returned; they lay there dead, victims of our swords, with arms and legs cut off. As a result of this fight all were so terrified that they retired, after having killed seven of our twenty men in the battle; themselves lost nine or ten of the men who had been the boldest in attacking us. This battle lasted three long hours, and Our Lord miraculously gave us the victory, we being so few and they so many.

At the conclusion of this battle, Captain Diego Tristán came from the ships with their barges to go up-river to take on water for the voyage. And, disregarding that I advised and warned him not to go up the river, he refused to listen to me and went up with two barges and twelve men. There the people attacked him, did battle with him, and killed him and his whole company, except one man who escaped by swimming and brought us the news. And they [the Indians] took the barges and broke them, thus causing us great anxiety, since the Admiral was out to sea with his ships with no boats and we ashore had no means of getting out to him. At the same time the Indians never ceased attacking us, trumpets blaring and drums beating, and they whooping in the belief that they had beaten us. As a cure

for these people we had two very fine brass falconets,⁵ and plenty of powder and ball, with which we so terrified them that they dared not close us; and this went on for the space of four days.

During this time I had several sacks made out of the sails of the one ship which we still had, and in them I put all the hardtack we had left. Next I took two canoes, lashed them together with spars across

1. For details see Ferdinand, chap. 97, above.

2. *contador*; apparently Diego de Porras appointed him his deputy as had been provided for in the Royal Instructions, to keep a check on the gold collected.

3. *a despedir*; it is not clear whether he means to say good-bye to the Admiral, or to help him make sail; in any case, it would seem that Columbus must have had some men on board *Capitana*, and was not all alone, as he states in *Lettera Rarissima*, above.

4. *machadasmás*; probably war clubs made by lashing a stone to a stout stick.

them, loaded up with all the hardtack,⁶ the pipes of wine and the oil and vinegar, fastened them together with a hawser, and towed them out to sea, where it was calm, in seven trips back and forth, which brought all of us little by little out to the ships. I stayed to the last with five men on guard, and came out at night with the last boatload.

5. *falconetes*, small swivel-guns that could be mounted on the ship's bulwarks or the barge, or taken ashore. The trumpets were undoubtedly conch shells, which were not only used by the Indians as war trumpets (see *Bolletino Civico Istituto Colombiano* I (Genoa 1953) No. 1, p. 26); but as fog-horns by North American fishermen until recently.

6. *vizcocho*, ships' biscuit, baked ashore before the voyage began, as distinct from bread baked on board by rolling flour into dumplings and roasting them in hot ashes.

*c. How we Sailed, Sinking, from Veragua to Jamaica, and
how I assisted the Admiral by obtaining Provisions from the Natives
of that Island*

The Admiral, for the great service I had rendered him, not content with embracing me and kissing me on both cheeks, bade me take the captaincy of *La Capitana*, and the control of all the crew and of the voyage. I accepted in order to serve him, as it was a charge of great travail.

On the last day of April 1503, we departed Veragua with three vessels, thinking to make the return passage to Castile. But as the ships were all pierced and worm-eaten we could not keep them afloat, and after we had gone 30 leagues, we abandoned one of them,¹ though the two which we kept were in even worse condition than she, for not even the entire crew with pumps, kettles and pots were able to keep ahead of the water, which leaked in through the worm-holes. In this wise, not without the most terrific

labor and risk, and with our minds on reaching Castile, we sailed 35 days. And at the end of them we reached the island of Cuba, at its southernmost point, in the province of Homo,² at the site of the present town of Trinidad. But the result was that we were 300 leagues further from Castile than when we left Veragua on our way thither, and the vessels were in poor condition, unseaworthy, impossible to sail, and our provisions running short. It pleased God, Our Lord, we were able to make the island of Jamaica, where we ran the two vessels ashore and converted them into two straw-thatched cabins, in which we lived, not without grave danger from the people of that island, who had not been subdued or conquered, and who could easily have set fire to our dwellings at night, in spite of all our vigilance.

Here I gave out the last rations of hardtack and wine and then took my sword and three men and pressed on into the island, for no one else dared go in search of food for the Admiral and his men. And it pleased God that I found the people so kind that they did me no harm; on the contrary, they liked my company and gave me food with good will, and in a village known as *Aguacadiba* I agreed with the Indians and the cacique that they should bake cassava bread and hunt and fish and provide the Admiral with a certain quantity of victuals, delivered daily to the ships, with the understanding that someone would be there to pay them with beads, combs, knives, hawk's bells, fish-hooks and other trading truck which we had on hand for this purpose. On the basis of this agreement I sent one of my two Christian companions to the Admiral so that he might send someone to take charge of paying for and transporting the victuals. I passed on to another village three leagues away and made the same agreement with the cacique and the Indians and dispatched another Christian to the Admiral, that he might send another person for the same function. I then went on further and came to an important cacique named *Huareo*, in a place now called *Melilla*,³ which is 13 leagues from the ships. He received me very well, gave me very good food, and ordered all his subjects to collect many victuals within three days; they delivered the stuff to him, and I paid him in such wise that they were content. I arranged that they should furnish provisions regularly and that there should be someone there to pay them. With this agreement I sent the other Christian with the provisions they had given me there to the Admiral, and requested the cacique to

give me two Indians to go with me to the end of the island, one of them to carry the hammock in which I slept and the other, my supplies. In this wise I reached the eastern end of the island and came to a cacique named *Ameyro*, with whom I became very friendly, giving him my name and taking his, which is regarded by the people there as the sign of great fraternal affection. I bought a splendid canoe which he had and gave him in exchange a very fine chamber-pot which I carried in my bag, as well as a coat, and one of the two shirts that I had with me. I then boarded the canoe with the six Indians whom the cacique had given me to help the navigation, and set out to sea in search of the places I had left. When I reached the place whither I had sent the supplies, I found there the Christians the Admiral had sent, and laded them with all the victuals I had procured. I then went to the Admiral who received me very heartily and was not satisfied with seeing and embracing me, but asked what adventures I had had on my trip and gave thanks to God for having brought and delivered me to safety from the hands of such savage people. Since, furthermore, at the time I reached the ships, there was not one bit of bread on board, all were very joyful at my arrival, for I put an end to their privation in a time of so great need. From that day forth the Indians came to the ships every day charged with victuals from the places where I had made the agreements, so that there was enough for the 230 persons⁴ who were with the Admiral.

1. *Vizcaína*, at Puerto Bello; *Capitana* and *Santiago* continued.

2. Apparently the same as *Macaca*, so called by Ferdinand in his Chap. 99, above. The picturesque old town

of Trinidad, Cuba, was founded there in 1514.

3. The site of Melilla, the second Spanish settlement on Jamaica, is probably Hope Bay.

4. This was an exaggeration, as may be seen by subtracting men who had been killed from the payroll, above.

d. How I Organized and Effected a Canoe Voyage from Jamaica to Hispaniola to Rescue the Admiral

Ten days later the Admiral called me aside and told me of the great peril in which we were, speaking as follows: "Diego Méndez, me lad, none of these fellows know the great peril in which we stand except you and me. For we are very few and these savages are many; they are very fickle and undependable and the moment they take a notion to come and burn us up in these two vessels which we have turned into thatched cabins, they can easily set fire to us from the land side and burn us to a crisp. And, as for the agreement you have made with them for the supply of provisions, which they now bring with such good will, they may tomorrow repudiate it and bring us nothing; no, not a thing, and we are not strong enough to take this stuff by force, but must do what they wish. I have thought of a ready help, if it seem good to you; that someone attempt to pass over to the island of Hispaniola in the canoe which you bought, there to buy a ship in which it would be possible to escape from the very grave danger in which we find ourselves. What d'ye say to that?"

I replied, "Sir, I see all right that the danger we are facing is even greater than people think. A trip from this island to Hispaniola in so tiny a craft as the canoe, I consider not only difficult but almost impossible. For one would have to try to cross a gulf of 40 leagues' width between islands, where the sea is very rough and seldom calm; and I don't know a man who would face such evident danger."

His lordship made no attempt to answer my objections, but insisted that I was the one to do it, to which I replied, "Sir, many a time have I risked my life to save yours, and the lives of all these men here; and Our Lord has miraculously watched over me and my life. But withal, there has been no lack of grumblers to say that your lordship entrusts to me every mission of honor, although there are others among us who could do it as well as I. So, d'ye see, your lordship should summon all hands and lay this proposition before them to see if any there be who will volunteer for the task, which I doubt; and when everyone has begged off, I will risk my life in your service, as I have often done before."

The next day his lordship had all hands brought to the quarterdeck and laid the matter before them, just as he had done to me. And when they heard it, they all kept their mouths shut, save that some said that it was idle to discuss such a thing, for it was impossible in so tiny a craft to traverse so stormy and perilous a gulf of 40 leagues, as it is betwixt these islands, near which many tall ships had been lost on voyages of discovery, being unable to withstand or overcome the force and fury of the currents. Then I rose up and said, "Sir, the one life I have and no more, I will risk in the service of your lordship and for the welfare of all the men here, for I place my hope in God, our Lord, that in view of the purpose with which I am doing this, He will preserve my life as He al-

ready hath often done." When the Admiral heard my determination, he arose, embraced me and kissed me on the cheek, saying, "I well knew that I had no one who would dare to undertake this, but you. I place my hope in God our Lord that you will pull it off triumphantly, as in the other things you have undertaken."¹

The following day I pulled my canoe ashore and made a false keel for it. I then pitched and greased it, and secured washboards at bow and stern to keep the sea from coming in as it would have done if so low in the water.² I rigged a mast and sail and laid in enough provisions for myself, one other Christian and six Indians, eight in all, for the canoe would hold no more. Then I took leave of his lordship and of all hands and went up the coast of Jamaica to its extremity, 35 leagues distant from the point occupied by our ships.³ I navigated this distance with great peril and travail, for I was captured in my canoe by Indian pirates, from whom God miraculously delivered me. After we had reached the extremity of the island, and while we

were waiting around hoping for the fury of the sea to abate so that we might continue our journey, many Indians assembled and decided to kill me and take the canoe with all that it contained. Thus gathered together they cast lots for my life to determine which one would execute the business. As soon as I was onto this, I took myself off secretly to my canoe which I had left three leagues from there, set sail, and returned to the place where the Admiral was, fifteen days after my departure thence. I told him all that had happened and how God had miraculously delivered me from the hands of those savages. His lordship was very happy over my arrival and asked me if I would undertake the voyage again. I said I would, if he would send some men with me to the cape of the island until such time as I could go to sea and continue my voyage. His lordship gave me 70 men, including his brother the Adelantado, to stay with me until I embarked, and for three days after. So I returned to the extremity of the island and waited there four



days. When I saw the sea moderating, I took leave of these men, and they of me with many tears, commended myself to God and to Our Lady of Antigua. I sailed five days and four nights, steering the canoe, as my companions paddled, without once leaving my steering oar. By the grace of God Our Lord after five days I reached the island of Hispaniola, at Cape San Miguel, having gone two days with neither food nor drink, because our provisions were exhausted. I beached my canoe on a very beautiful coast, where soon a great multitude of natives appeared, bringing many things to eat. I remained there two days to rest and took six Indians from that place, leaving the others I had brought behind.

I then began to navigate the coast of Hispaniola, which extends 130 leagues from that point to the city of Santo Domingo, whither I was bound, since it was the seat of the Governor, the Comendador de Lares. Having proceeded 80 leagues along the coast of the island, not without great peril and toil, for [this part of] the island has not been conquered or subdued, I reached the province of Azua, which is 24 leagues from Santo Domingo. There I learned from the Comendador Gallego⁴ that the Governor had left to subjugate the province of Xaragua, which was 50 leagues in the other direction. I therefore left my canoe and set out by land for Xaragua, where I found the Governor, who detained me there seven months until he had burned or hanged 84 caciques, lords of vassals, and with them Anacaona, the chief lady of the island, whom all the natives obeyed and served.⁵ After this I went on foot to Santo Domingo, which was 70 leagues from there, and waited there in the hope that ships would arrive

from Castile, for it was more than a year since any had come. At this juncture, it pleased God to bring three ships. I purchased one, loaded it with victuals of bread, wine, meat, pork, mutton and fruit, and sent it to the place where the Admiral was, so that he might sail in it with all his people to Santo Domingo and thence to Castile. I myself went on ahead in the other two ships to report to the King and Queen all that had taken place on that voyage.

I think I should say something of what had happened to the Admiral and his men during the year that they were as lost on that island. A few days⁶ after I left the Indians became mutinous and refused to bring food as they before had done. The Admiral therefore summoned all the caciques and told them he marvelled at their not bringing food as they were accustomed to do, although they knew, as he himself had told them, that he had come to that place by the command of God; that God was furious with them and that He would that night reveal his anger by portents in the sky. And since there was an eclipse of the moon, which was almost totally obscured that night, he told them that that was the work of God because of His anger against them for not bringing food. They believed him and in great terror promised to bring food always, as in fact they did until the arrival of the ship with the provisions that I had sent. This ship brought no small joy to the Admiral and his men, for afterwards in Castile his lordship told me that in all his life long he had never seen so joyful a day, and that he had never expected to leave that place alive. He embarked on this ship, came to Santo Domingo, and thence to Castile.

1. It will be observed that, although Diego Méndez believes he had not received sufficient credit for this adventure, he fails to mention that Bartolomeo Fieschi, the Genoese captain, also volunteered, and made the traverse at the same time in another canoe.
2. The natives of the Antilles today fasten washboards to the gunwales of their canoes to make them more seaworthy.
3. Gallina Point, Jamaica, above which the Blue Mountains rise into the clouds.
4. Gallego was the founder of the town of Azua, in whose harbor Columbus had ridden out the hurricane in 1502.
5. This was the same Anacaona we have encountered before, sister to the cacique of Xaragua and widow of Caonabó. After the death of her brother she became

the cacique. Las Casas states that she was a cultured, virtuous and talented lady, and that her execution, for no good cause, angered Queen Isabella. Ovando governed Hispaniola, both natives and Spaniards, with far greater rigor and cruelty than the Columbus brothers ever thought of; but, since he was a Spaniard, he got away with it. He had no wish to rescue the men at Jamaica, lest Columbus have his privileges restored, and detained Diego Méndez from going to his rescue, doubtless in the hope that all would perish, but dispatched a vessel to Jamaica (as Ferdinand relates above) to see how Columbus was doing.

6. Not a few days, as we have seen; Méndez left Jamaica in July 1503, and the total eclipse of the moon (see Ferdinand, above, Chap. 100) occurred on 29 February 1504.

*e. How I Continued to Serve His Lordship and his Son Don Diego,
and Doña Maria the Vicereine, and her son Don Luis*

I have wished to set down here this brief summary of my labors and of my great and signal services, the like of which no man ever has rendered my lord or ever will again. This I have done so that my sons may know it and be inspired to perform service, and that his lordship¹ may know that he is under obligation to do them many favors.

When his lordship² returned to court and was confined to his bed in Salamanca with arthritis, and when I was left sole charge of his affairs, both in what concerned the restitution of his estates and in the supervision of his son D. Diego, I said to him, "Sir, your lordship knows how greatly I have served you and how strenuously I am toiling night and day in your interest. I beseech your lordship to grant me some reward." He replied cheerfully that I should ask for what I wanted and he would grant it, for there was ample reason for him to do so. I then named and besought his Lordship to bestow upon me the office of *Aguacilazgo*³ of the island of Hispaniola for life. His

lordship replied that he would do so very willingly and that that was but slight return for the great services I had performed, and he bade me report this to his son D. Diego, who was greatly pleased by the bestowal of the said office upon me and said that if his father conferred it upon me with one hand, he, on his part, conferred it upon me with both.

After I had succeeded, not without great exertions on my part, in negotiating the restitution of the government of the Indies to the Admiral D. Diego, my lord, after the death of his father, I asked him for an appointment to the said office. His lordship replied that he had given it to the Adelantado, his uncle, but that he would give me something else of equivalent value. I said he should give that one to his uncle and give me the job which his father and he had promised. But he did not so do. Thus I was left burdened with services, but no recompense, and the Adelantado, without having served, got my job and the reward for all my exertion. And when his lordship arrived at the city

of Santo Domingo as Governor, and took the reins, he gave this job to Francisco de Garay, servant of the Adelantado, who held it for him.⁴ This was on 10 July 1510. The job was then worth at least a *conto*⁵ a year, and for this my lady the Vicereine, as tutor and guardian of the Viceroy my lord, is chargeable to me and owes it to me in justice and conscience, for the grant was made to me and nothing has been done to make it up to me from the day the Adelantado got it to the present; and if I had got it I should be the richest and most honored man on the island, and because it wasn't given to me I am the poorest; I haven't even a house to live in without paying rent.⁶

[Various legacies and charges to his sons and executors follow; and this interesting order respecting his monument and inscription:—]

I order my executors to buy a big stone, the best to be got, and set it above my tomb and thereupon inscribe these words:

1. D. Luis, the Third Admiral. Many ladies besides his mother seem to have been delighted to take care of this gentleman. At the time Méndez made his will Luis was a lad of 14 or 15, living in the viceregal palace at Santo Domingo. His mother, the Vicereine D. Maria de Colón y Toledo, had just concluded an agreement with the crown, by virtue of which she renounced for her son and his descendants the hereditary viceroyalty with the right to appoint all officials in "the Indies," and the various cuts on trade and gold, that Christopher Columbus claimed under the Capitulations of 1492. In return, D. Luis was created Duke of Veragua and Marquess of Jamaica, and given the latter island as a fief, together with 25 miles square of Veragua; of this he was later deprived. He was, however, granted a pension of 10,000 ducats (\$2320 in gold).

D. Luis returned to Santo Domingo as Captain General of Hispaniola in 1540, and exercised that function, usually in absentia and always with conspicuous inefficiency, until 1551. He first married in 1542; five years later, while this wife was alive, he married again. In 1546 he sent an expedition under Cristóbal de Peñá to take over his duchy of Veragua, but found the Indians there to be as warlike as in 1503, and the force

HERE LIES THE HONORABLE GENTLEMAN DIEGO MÉNDEZ WHO GREATLY SERVED THE ROYAL CROWN OF SPAIN IN THE DISCOVERY AND CONQUEST OF THE INDIES, WITH THE ADMIRAL DON CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS OF GLORIOUS MEMORY, AND AFTERWARDS BY HIMSELF WITH HIS OWN SHIPS AND COST. HE DIED . . .

OF YOUR CHARITY OFFER A PATERNOSTER AND AN AVE MARIA FOR THE REPOSE OF HIS SOUL.

Item, in the middle of the said stone let there be a canoe, which is a hollowed log in which the Indians navigate, since in one such I navigated 300 leagues, and above it let them carve merely the letters which read CANOA

Done in the town of Valladolid on 19 June A.D. 1536. DIEGO MÉNDEZ

Signed and sealed by Garcia Vega, notary public.

was driven back with great loss, including that of the bastard Francisco Colón, son of D. Diego. In 1556 Philip II created D. Luis Duke of the Vega and allowed him to continue to call himself Admiral of the Indies, in return for renouncing the exercise of admiralty jurisdiction and his now useless fief in Veragua, and gave him an extra pension of 7,000 ducats. D. Luis celebrated this increase of income by marrying a third time, while wives Nos. 1 and 2 were still alive; for this he was tried and convicted of polygamy, and confined for five years in various fortresses. Stone walls, however, could not keep D. Luis from the women; by bribing his jailers he managed to get out at night, and acquired a mistress whom he married, Nos. 1, 2 and 3 all being alive. This final indiscretion earned him an additional sentence to exile at Oran in Algeria, where such manners were understood; and there he died, in 1572. Henry Harrisse *Christophe Colomb* II 251-62. The Duchy of Veragua was inherited by one of his legitimate daughters, and, after her death, by Nuño Colón de Portugal, a great-grandson of D. Diego. Nuño Colón's great-great-granddaughter, Catalina Ventura, married Fitz-James Stuart, son of the famous Duke of Berwick and grandson of James

II of England and Arabella Churchill. In the meantime, the descendants of Cristóbal Colón de Toledo, the younger brother of D. Luis, had married into the Larrategui family; and, by an arrangement made around 1790, the house of Stuart renounced the Veragua title (since, as the late Duke of Alba told me, "we already had three dukedoms in the family") in favor of the Larrategui. The present incumbent, whose full name is Cristóbal Colón de Carvajal y Maroto, Hurtado de Mendoza y Pérez del Pulgar, was born in 1925. He styles himself the 17th Duke of Veragua (counting D. Diego as No. 1), 15th Duke of the Vega, Marquess of Jamaica, and Grand Admiral of the Indies; by virtue of which, while still a lieutenant in the Spanish Navy, he sports four stripes on ceremonial occasions. He married another descendant of Christopher Columbus and has an heir, born in 1949. Rafael Nieto y Cortadellas *Los Descendientes de Cristóbal Colón* (Havana 1952), with photo of the 17th Duke at p. 311.

2. He is now talking about Christopher Columbus.
3. *alguacil mayor*, roughly corresponding to high sheriff, an office which even now in many States of the Union is a political plum.

4. He is now talking about D. Diego. Bartholomew the Adelantado died in 1514.

5. A million maravedis, roughly \$7,000 in gold.

6. It is strange, in view of Méndez's complaints of not being appointed *alguacil mayor* of Hispaniola, that he is referred to as such in proceedings before the Audiencia of that island in 1534, which are printed in the Duchess of Berwick & Alba's *Autógrafos de Cristóbal Colón* (Madrid 1892) 132-4. He was charged (1) with negligence in a case of wife murder (2) taking a sword and a measure of salt worth \$1.50 to let off a disturber of the peace (3) taking a *chamarra*, a rough shirt or cloak, from a certain sailor to clothe his Negro slave (4) similarly lifting a *chamarra* and a hat from an Indian, but returning the first item for a gold ducat. He was found not guilty of (1) but (2) and (3) were sent to a higher court, and in (4) he had to pay for the hat. Méndez appealed these sentences to the Council of the Indies, sitting at Madrid, on 31 October 1534, which cleared him of (2) and (3), but sentenced him to pay two ducats for the hat. Méndez appealed this to the Sovereigns, and they wiped the slate clean on 7 July 1536. This, it will be observed, is only three weeks after the date of the will.

Appendix

The Columbus Chronology

- 1451 Birth at Genoa, between 25 August and 31 October.
- 1471? Voyage to Tunis in an Angevin ship.
- 1474-75 One or two voyages to Chios in a Genoese ship.
- 1476, 13 August . . . Shipwrecked in *Bechalla* off Lagos; goes to Lisbon, enters partnership with brother Bartholomew making charts.
- 1477, February Voyage to the north of Iceland.
- 1478-79 Voyage to Madeira, Genoa and back to Lisbon.
- 1479 Marriage to Doña Felipa Perestrello e Moniz, at Lisbon.
- 1480 Son Diego born at Porto Santo.
- 1480-81 Correspondence with Toscanelli.
- 1482-84 One or two voyages to São Jorge da Mina.
- 1484-85 Presents "Enterprise of the Indies" to D. João II. Death of Doña Felipa.
- 1485, c. June Proceeds to Spain; interests Antonio de Marchena and Count of Medina Celi; leaves Diego at La Rabida.
- 1486, 20 January . . . Arrives at Cordova; liaison with Beatriz Enríquez de Harana.
 May First meeting with Queen Isabella.
 December Enterprise rejected by Talavera committee.
- 1487, February Placed on royal payroll, at 1,000 maravedis monthly.
- 1488, 20 March Letter from D. João II inviting him to Lisbon; accepts.
 June Removed from Spanish payroll.
 December Present at Lisbon on return of Bartolomeu Dias from voyage around Cape of Good Hope.
- 1489 Returns to Spain; stays with Duke of Medina Celi; visits Sovereigns at Santa Fe.
- 1490 Enterprise again rejected by Talavera.
- 1491 Fr. Juan Pérez of La Rabida obtains another interview with the Queen. Enterprise referred to Council of Castile.

1492

- January Present at royal entry into Granada. Sovereigns reject the Enterprise. Santangel obtains new hearing. Queen accepts.
- 17-30 April The Capitulations signed.
- May Proceeds to Palos.

FIRST VOYAGE

- 3 August *Santa Maria, Pinta* and *Niña* sail from Palos.
 12 August *Santa Maria* arrives Gomera, Canary Islands.
 25 August *Santa Maria* arrives Las Palmas, Grand Canary.
 1 September Fleet sails from Las Palmas.
 2-6 September At San Sebastián, Gomera.
 6 September Fleet sails from San Sebastián, ocean passage begins.
 9 September Takes departure from Ferro, course W.
 7 October Course changed to WSW.
 9 October Shipboard conference with the Pinzón brothers; decision to
 "sail on."
 11 October, 10 P.M. Light seen.
 12 October Landfall on San Salvador; goes ashore and takes possession.
 14 October Departs San Salvador.
 15, 16 October Discovers Rum Cay and Long Island.
 19 October Crosses Crooked Island Passage; anchors off Fortune Islands.
 21-23 October At Portland Harbor, Crooked Island.
 24-25 October Crosses Crooked Island Passage westward.
 26 October Anchors off Little Ragged Island.
 27 October Sails for Cuba.
 28 October Arrives Bahía Bariay, Cuba.
 29 October Arrives Puerto Gibara.
 30-31 October Sails westward, to point off Puerto Padre.
 1-12 November At Puerto Gibara.
 14-19 November At Bahía Tánamo.
 22 November *Pinta* parts from the fleet, sails to Great Inagua Island.
 24-26 November At Puerto Cayo Moa.
 27 November-
 4 December At Baracoa.
 5 December Crosses Windward Passage.
 6 December Arrives Port St. Nicolas Môle, Haiti.
 7-14 December At Moustique Bay.
 15-18 December At Port de Paix; reception of cacique.
 20-24 December At Acul Bay.
 24 December *Santa Maria* grounds on reef east of Cape Haitien; total loss.
 26 December Begins building Navidad, at Limonade Bord-de-Mer, Haiti.
- 1493
- 4 January Departs Navidad, in *Niña*.
 6 January *Pinta* rejoins *Niña* off Monte Cristi, Dominican Republic.
 10 January At Puerto Blanco.
 11-16 January At Samaná Bay.
 16 January *Niña* and *Pinta* begin homeward passage.
 13 February The two separate in a gale.
 15 February *Niña* sights *Santa Maria* in the Azores.

- 17-24 February At Santa Maria.
 4 March Sights Rock of Sintra, Portugal; *Niña* enters Tagus and anchors off Restello, near Lisbon. Columbus sends Letter to the Sovereigns.
 9 March Visits D. João II at Virtudes.
 11 March Visits D. Leonor at Castanheira; proceeds to Alhandra.
 12 March Arrives on board *Niña*, off Restello.
 13 March Sails for Palos in *Niña*.
 15 March *Niña* arrives Palos; *Pinta* arrives a few hours later.
 31 March Palm Sunday; arrives Seville.
 c. 1 April Letter on First Voyage printed at Barcelona.
 8 April Leaves Seville, arrives Barcelona between 15 and 20 April.
 early May Latin translation of Letter on First Voyage printed at Rome.
 3 May First *Inter caetera* bull of Alexander VI.
 20 May Appointed by the Sovereigns Captain General of fleet for Second Voyage.
 28 May Privileges confirmed at Barcelona; Columbus now Viceroy and Admiral of the Ocean Sea and the Indies.
 29 May Sovereigns issue instructions for Second Voyage.
 June Departs Barcelona, visits Guadalupe, proceeds to Seville.

SECOND VOYAGE

- 25 September In *Santa Maria La Galante*, with 16 other vessels, sails from Cadiz.
 2 October Arrives Las Palmas, Grand Canary.
 5 October Arrives Gomera, San Sebastián.
 c. 10 October Ocean crossing begins, from Gomera.
 13 October Takes departure from Ferro; course W by S.
 3 November Landfall on Dominica, anchors off Mariegalante.
 4 November Anchors in Grande Anse, Guadeloupe.
 10 November Sails from Guadeloupe.
 11 November Passes Montserrat and sights Antigua; anchors off Nevis.
 12 November Passes St. Kitts, St. Eustatius, and Saba.
 14 November Anchors at Salt River Bay, St. Croix; fight with Caribs.
 16 November Sights Virgin Islands; part of fleet sails down Francis Drake Channel.
 17 November Fleet reunites off St. Thomas, V.I.
 18-19 November Passes Vieques and sails along south coast of Puerto Rico.
 20-22 November At Añasco Bay, P.R.
 22 November Crosses Mona Passage.
 23 November Enters Samaná Bay, Dominican Republic.
 26 November Anchors off Isla Cabra, Monte Cristi.
 27 November Arrives off site of Navidad, finds garrison dead.
 7 December Departs Navidad, eastward.

1494

- 2 January Arrives at site of Isabela and founds the city.
 6 January First recorded Mass in New World, at Isabela.

- 6-20 January Hojeda's exploration of Cibao.
 2 February Antonio de Torres sails for Spain with 12 ships, carries Columbus's Memorial to the Sovereigns.
 12-29 March Explores Cibao and founds Fort of St. Thomas.
 24 April Departs Isabela on Cuban voyage, in *Niña*, with *San Juan* and *Cardera*.
 28 April Anchors at Port St. Nicolas Môle, Haiti.
 29 April Erects cross at Cape Maisí, Cuba.
 30 April Enters Guantanamo Bay.
 1 May Enters harbor of Santiago de Cuba.
 3 May Passes and names Cape Cruz.
 5 May Enters St. Ann's Bay, Jamaica.
 6-9 May At Rio Bueno.
 9-13 May At Montego Bay, Jamaica.
 14 May Enters Gulf of Guacanayabo, Cuba; sails through Laberinto de Doze Leguas.
 20 May Anchors off an island, Santa Maria or Cayo Caballones.
 22 May Anchors in Rio San Juan.
 23 May Passes Gulf of Cochinos.
 27 May Passes Zapata Peninsula.
 30 May Enters Gulf of Batabanó.
 12 June Off Bahía Cortés, crew sign declaration that Cuba is continental.
 13 June Turns fleet eastward; long beat to windward follows.
 7 July Anchors in Rio San Juan, Cuba.
 18 July Arrives off Cape Cruz.
 19 July Departs Cape Cruz. Sails around W and S shores of Jamaica.
 c. 8 August Anchors in Portland Bight, Jamaica.
 19 August Passes Morant Point, and crosses Windward Passage.
 20 August Sights Cape Tiburón, Haiti.
 c. 22 August Anchors in Jacmel Bay.
 31 August Passes Alta Vela.
 14-24 September At Saona Island, off Hispaniola.
 25 September At Mona Island.
 29 September Arrives Isabela; end of Cuba-Jamaica voyage.

1495

- 24 February Antonio de Torres's second fleet departs Isabela for Spain.
 c. 28 March Battle with cacique Guatiguaná.
 June Hurricane; 3 caravels destroyed.
 Rest of year Occupied in conquering Hispaniola and establishing gold tribute.
 October Juan Aguado arrives Isabela to report on Columbus.

1496

- 10 March Sails from Isabela in *Niña*, with *India*; calls at Puerto Plata.
 9 April Anchors off Mariegalante.
 10-19 April At Grande Anse, Guadeloupe.

- 20 April Departs Guadeloupe for Spain.
 8 June Landfall near Odmira, Portugal.
 11 June Enters Cadiz, proceeds to Seville, stays with Andrés Bernáldez.
 c. 20 July Departs with Indian cavalcade for the court at Burgos, where he presents proposals for Third Voyage.

1497

- 3 April Present at wedding of Infante D. Juan and Princess Margarita at Burgos.
 23 April–15 June . . . Sovereigns' orders for reinforcement of Hispaniola. Part of this year Columbus spends at court; most of it, at Las Cuevas Monastery, Seville.

1498

- 23 January Sends *Niña* and *India* to Hispaniola with supplies.
 22 February Creates *mayorazgo* (majorat) entailing estate.

THIRD VOYAGE

- c. 25 May Six caravels sail from Seville; Columbus joins at Sanlúcar.
 30 May In *Santa Maria de Guía*, with *La Vaqueños* and *El Correo*, and three provision ships, sails from Sanlúcar.
 7 June Calls at Porto Santo.
 10–16 June At Funchal, Madeira.
 19 June Arrives San Sebastián, Gomera.
 21 June Departs Gomera; the three provision ships sail for Hispaniola.
 27–30 June At Boavista, Cape Verde Islands.
 1 July Arrives Ribeira Grande, São Tiago, Cape Verde Islands.
 4 July Ocean crossing begins, from São Tiago.
 5–7 July Takes departure from Fogo.
 13–22 July Becalmed in Doldrums.
 31 July Landfall on Trinidad.
 1 August Calls at Erin Point, Trinidad; sights Point Bombeador, Venezuela.
 2 August Sails through Boca de la Sierpe into Gulf of Paria, anchors off Icosos Point.
 4 August Volcanic disturbance; anchors in Bahía Celeste, Paria Peninsula.
 5 August Lands at a cove on Paria Peninsula, probably Ensenada Yacua.
 6 August Lands inside mouth of Rio Guiria, Venezuela, and takes possession.
 8–10 August Sailing westward in Gulf of Paria, to Irapa.
 11 August Starts eastward; sends *Correo* to reconnoiter Rio Grande mouth.
 12 August Anchors Chacachacare Bay; *Correo* joins.
 13 August Sails out of Boca Grande; sights Tobago (Asunción) and Grenada (Concepción).
 14 August Turns W, discovers Margarita and several small islands.
 15 August Leaving Margarita on port hand, steers NW. Decides he has discovered an "Other World," a continent.
 19 August Sights Alta Vela, Dominican Republic.

- 20-22 August Anchored near Alta Vela or Beata Island.
 31 August Third Voyage ends at Ozama River, Santo Domingo.
 18 October Letter to the Sovereigns. *Santa Maria de Guía* and *Correo* depart for Spain.
 Columbus brothers remain in Hispaniola. Roldán's rebellion.

1499

- September Peace made with Roldán; *repartimientos* system established.

1500

- Summer Moxica Rebellion in Hispaniola.
 23 August Francisco de Bobadilla arrives Santo Domingo; arrests Columbus and brothers.
 early October Sent to Spain as prisoner in caravel *La Gorda*.
 late October Arrives Cadiz; writes letter to Doña Juana de Torres; stays at Las Cuevas Monastery, Seville.
 12 December Sovereigns order Columbus released and summon him to court.
 17 December Columbus brothers have audience with Sovereigns at Alhambra.

1501

- January-June At Granada.
 3 September Ovando appointed governor of Hispaniola.
 July-December Columbus living mostly at Las Cuevas, seeking restitution of privileges. Compiles his Book of Privileges.

1502

- 13 February Ovando sails from Cadiz with 30 ships and 2500 men.

FOURTH VOYAGE

- 14 March Sovereigns authorize Fourth Voyage and issue instructions.
 3 April Fourth Voyage fleet—*La Capitana*, *Santiago de Palos* (or *Bermuda*), *El Gallego*, and *Vizcaína*—sails from Seville, under Bartholomew's command.
 4 April Fleet careened at Casa de Viejo.
 late April Fleet proceeds to Cadiz, where Columbus joins.
 9 May Fleet sails from Cadiz, puts in at La Caleta.
 11 May Fleet sails from La Caleta.
 13 May Calls at Arzila, Morocco.
 20 May Arrives Las Palmas, Grand Canary.
 24 May Proceeds to Maspalomas, Grand Canary.
 25 May Ocean crossing begins, from Maspalomas.
 15 June Arrives Martinique.
 18 June Sails from Martinique for Hispaniola.
 29 June Arrives Santo Domingo, anchors off mouth of Rio Jaina.
 30 June Hurricane breaks; fleet seeks sea room.
 3 July Fleet rendezvous at Puerto Viejo de Azua.

- 10 May Passes Cayman Islands.
 13-20 May At Cayo Bretón, Cuba.
 20 May-20 June Beating eastward, along southern coast of Cuba, probably to Puerto Pílon.
 23 June Arrives Dry Harbor, Jamaica.
 25 June Arrives St. Ann's Bay, runs caravels ashore.
 7 July Finishes *Lettera Rarissima*.
 c. 17 July Méndez and Fieschi depart on canoe voyage to Hispaniola.

1504

- 2 January Porras mutiny at Jamaica.
 29 February Total eclipse of the moon, used by Columbus to get food.
 late March Diego de Escobar arrives in *caravelon* and returns.
 17 May Battle with Porras's mutineers.
 29 June Sails in Diego de Salcedo's *caravelon* from St. Ann's Bay, with all survivors.
 3 August At Beata Island.
 13 August Arrives Santo Domingo.
 12 September Departs for Spain in chartered caravel.
 7 November Arrives Sanlúcar; proceeds to Las Cuevas, Seville.
 26 November Death of Queen Isabella.

1505

- May Sets forth on muleback to Segovia, the then residence of the court.
 25 August Attests will before notary at Segovia; series of petitions to King Ferdinand.
 late October Follows court to Salamanca. Declines to negotiate about his titles.

1506

- April Follows court to Valladolid. Sends Bartholomew to demand justice of Queen Juana.
 19 May Signs last will and testament.
 20 May Death at Valladolid.

INDEX

Place names are listed under the first significant word, ignoring Cape, Cayo, Puerto, etc.

Compound page-listings such as 76-7n refer to both text and footnote material. Since the subject may be referred to by a different name in the text, it will frequently be advisable to work back from the footnote. For example: Acklin, Bight of, 76-7n. This place-name will be found on page 77 in footnote 1; the back-reference in the actual text on page 76 is *Cabo de la Laguna*, the name used by Columbus for the Bight of Acklin.

ABBREVIATIONS

B. Bahía, Bay	Is. Isleo, Island, Islands
C. Cabo, Cape	Pen. Peninsula
C.C. Christopher Columbus	Pta. Punta, Point
D. Don, Dom, Doña, Dona	Pto. Puerto, Harbor
Fr. Fray, Brother	R. Río, River
G. Golfo, Gulf	V. Voyage

For other abbreviations, see list on page xvi.

A

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| <p>Abstract, <i>see</i> Journal of First Voyage</p> <p>Aburemo, <i>see</i> Chiriqui Lagoon</p> <p>Abyssinia, <i>see</i> Ethiopia</p> <p>Acklin, Bight of, 76-7n</p> <p>Acul Bay, 127-36n; C.C.'s measurement of, 116n</p> <p>Adelantado, <i>see</i> Columbus, Bart.</p> <p>"<i>Adelante! adelante!</i>," 188-91</p> <p>Admiral of the Ocean Sea, 30, 48, 300</p> <p>Admiralty, meaning, 28n, 29n</p> <p>Africa, C.C. in, 23, 67n; ideas about, 22; trade with, 27</p> <p>Agave, <i>see</i> Aloes</p> <p>Aguado, Juan, 294-5, 298</p> <p><i>Aguja</i>, 324</p> <p>Ajes (yams), 89n, 91, 122, 128, 159, 234, 236n</p> <p>Alain, Brother, 43, 78n, 88n, 89n, 102n, 110n; quoted, 218n</p> <p><i>Albricias</i>, 57n</p> <p>Alcáçovas, Treaty of, 176</p> <p>Alcalde(s), 208n; defined, 202n</p> | <p>Alcatraz, Pta., 271-2</p> <p>Alexander, Fr., 319, 330n</p> <p>Alexander VI, Pope, 319</p> <p>Alfonso V of Portugal, 11</p> <p>Alfonso XIII of Spain, 6</p> <p>Alfragan, 16, 23</p> <p>Alguacile, defined, 208n; Méndez seeks office of, 387, 396, 398n</p> <p>Alhambra, C.C. received at, 299</p> <p>Alhandra, Portugal, 178</p> <p>Alligators, 338</p> <p><i>Almaicar</i>, 268-9n, 271, 327</p> <p>Almirante B., 334, 336n, 374-5</p> <p>Aloes, 77-9, 266; in Cuba and Hispaniola, 89, 93, 96, 117, 119</p> <p>Alonso, Rodrigo, 261</p> <p>Alpha et Omega, C., <i>see</i> Maisi, C.</p> <p>Alta Vela Is., 282-3n, 289</p> <p>Altolaguirre of Duvale, Angel de, 6n, 26</p> <p>Amazon R., name, 154n</p> <p>Ambrose, St., 22, 283n; quoted, 279, 283n, 287</p> <p>Amiga, <i>see</i> Rat I.</p> <p>Anacaona, 298, 395-6n</p> <p>Anastos, Milton, 43; translations:</p> | <p>Arts. of Agreement and <i>Titulo</i>, 26-30; Assereto doc., 8, 9; Deposition, 7; Fernández deposition, 18-9; <i>Historie</i>, 247-51; Instructions Second V., 203-8; Las Casas Abstract, 259-83; Letter on Third V., 284-8; Müntzer letter, 15-7; Syllacio letter, 229-45; Toscanelli letters, 12-5</p> <p>Angél, C., <i>see</i> Macoris</p> <p>Anjos, Sta. Maria, 168-9</p> <p>Annari, Hieronymo, 209-10</p> <p>Annunciation, feast, 124, 126n</p> <p>Antilia, 14, 55n; name given to W. Indies, 177n; Toscanelli on, 57n</p> <p>Arabic, 86, 310-11n; <i>albricias</i>, 57n</p> <p>Arawaks, as guides, 70-3, 76-82, 85, 88, 94, 100, 117-8, 125-6, 143; captured and enslaved, 65, 68, 93, 149, 187, 226; "Ciguayos," 152-4, 220; description of, 64-7, 91, 185; houses, 73-4, 83, 107, 109; of Cuba and Jamaica, 222, 228n, 355-7, 361-2; of Hispaniola, 112-3, 133-4, 151-3, 183-4; prisoners to Caribs, 236; treatment of, 204;</p> |
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Why We're Where We Are

EARLY IN 1942, only a few weeks after Pearl Harbor, there appeared a biography which was as nearly definitive as a biography can well be: *Admiral of the Ocean Sea: A Life of Christopher Columbus*. The author, Samuel Eliot Morison, had been teaching history since 1914, first at the University of California, and thereafter at Harvard and Oxford and then at Harvard again. (Soon he would begin to *make* history, and then to write it.) In the preface to *Admiral of the Ocean Sea* (which incidentally was the 1942 Pulitzer Prize winner in biography), Professor Morison noted that most previous biographies of the discoverer might well have been called "*Columbus to the Water's Edge*." What Morison wanted to do, and did do, was to cross the Atlantic both ways in a craft the size of Columbus' flagship.

He did a tremendous amount of research, too. He was shocked to find that "trustworthy translations" of the primary sources he examined did not exist, and so "I have made my own." In the spring of 1955, George Macy, Founder and Director of The Heritage Club, asked Professor Morison (who had now

become Rear Admiral, U.S.N., retired) if he would like to assemble these translations for publication by the Club. The answer was *yes*. Hence our new offering—not a reprint of a classic but a new, and the first *satisfactory*, translation of the basic accounts of the discovery of America. Supporting these accounts is a running commentary by Admiral Morison which comprises a considerable portion of the text. And there are notes at the end of each commentary-plus-text unit. Skip these at your peril.

This book has been eight years in the making—or we could as accurately say that it has been twenty-five years in the making, because the earliest Morison translations date back to 1938. The result is a book of which we are inordinately proud: *Journals and Other Documents on the Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus*.

I

SAMUEL ELIOT MORISON was born in Boston July 9, 1887, in the house on Brimmer Street which he still occupies. He was graduated from Harvard in 1908 and then studied for a year at the École des Sciences Politiques in Paris, returning to take his Ph.D. at Harvard in 1913. His *Who's Who in America* entry informs us that he "served as pvt. inf. U. S. Army, 1918-19." After the Armistice, however, Private Morison was summoned to Paris to serve on the Commission to Negotiate Peace. In 1919 he went back to teaching.

That Oxford stint we mentioned above, by the way, was a pedagogical milestone. Professor Morison went to Oxford in 1922 as the first incumbent of a newly established chair of American history, and he remained there until 1925. Two years later he produced *The Oxford History of the United States*, later revised and enlarged with the collaboration of Henry Steele Commager as *The Growth of the American Republic*, now in its fifth edition. Mr. Morison had already published, in 1921, *The Maritime History of Massachusetts, 1783-1860*—there is a whiff of salt air in most of what he has written, and he himself is a blue-water sailor of high competence and skill. In 1935-36 he produced his most elaborate work up to those dates: a four-volume *Tercentennial History of Harvard College and University*.

But even that monumental work pales into insignificance—well, that *is* going a bit far, so let's try again—even that monumental work can hardly hope to approach the supermonumentality of his fifteen-volume *History of U.S. Naval Operations in World War II*. To accomplish this grand design ex-Private Morison was made a lieutenant commander, and he worked his way up to rear admiral; in the process he earned six combat stars and the Legion of Merit with combat clasp, *not* for writing history, but for active service in the Pacific theatre of operations.

Ten colleges and universities in addition to his alma mater (Trinity, Amherst, Union, Williams, Bucknell Boston College, Holy Cross, Yale, Oxford, and Notre Dame) have conferred honorary degrees upon him. And in 1963 he won two more honors: He was elected a member of the National Institute of Arts and Letters, and he was awarded the Balzan Prize for achievement in historical writing—a high distinction, broadly comparable to the Nobel Prize in that the competition includes the whole world.

The Balzan Foundation was established by the late Angela Line Danieli-Balzan in mem-

ory of her father, an Italian publisher who fled Mussolini's regime to live in Switzerland. The Foundation is under the general supervision of the Swiss Ministry of the Interior. Prizes of 225,000 Swiss francs each (\$52,500—nearly twice the amount of the Nobel Prize) are awarded annually for contributions to world peace, human understanding, science, and culture.

In collaboration with Mauricio Obregon of Bogotá, Colombia, Admiral Morison is now at work on a book to be called *The Caribbean as Columbus Saw It*, which will be "liberally illustrated with our own photos."

Admiral Morison is not the only assembler of a multi-volume set of books to come within the purview of our present concerns. Fourteen volumes constitute the Italian government's official collection on Columbus and his four transatlantic voyages. Now it is all well and good for the United States Navy and the Italian government to do things on the grand scale; The Heritage Club must function on a more modest basis. Admiral Morison therefore made a selection of the basic Columbus papers, but it is the most extensive selection yet made in the English language.

The first documents in his selection establish the date of Columbus' birth and definitely connect him with a family of Genoese wool-weavers. His career is followed up to the signing of his agreement with Ferdinand and Isabella, and so aboard ship we go—no dropping Columbus at the water's edge *this* time! We get a brand-new translation of Bartolomé de Las Casas' *Diario*—an abstract of Columbus' 1492-93 Journal—an abstract which Admiral Morison calls "the most important document in the entire history of American discovery." He has also contributed a fresh translation of Columbus' printed letter to the Sovereigns—the first of a long series of Americana.

For the Second Voyage, Admiral Morison has chosen "the long letter of merry Michael Cuneo of Savona, the jolliest account of any

of Columbus' voyages," plus two other essential documents, including the "unique account" of the return passage by the Discoverer's son Ferdinand. One of the crown jewels of the account of the Third Voyage is a new translation of Las Casas' abstract of the journal for this voyage, "the most detailed account in existence of the discovery of the American continent." This, Admiral Morison notes, "has been translated before, but from a garbled text." The Fourth Voyage, "the most interesting of all for adventure and navigation," is represented by "the most complete selection to be found anywhere in translation." Among its gems is the roster and payroll of every member of the crews—the first time this has been available in English.

II

LEWIS F. WHITE has designed our *Journals and Other Documents on the Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus*, and he has designed it, in our admittedly prejudiced view, superbly. Mr. White was a printer before he was a designer, or we might more accurately say that he was once a printer and a designer at the same time. Some time ago he sold the physical assets of his New York printing plant to our friends Clarke & Way of the Thistle Press, and he himself has since then confined his activities to design.

Lew White has a wide variety of clients, all of them very special. He has designed catalogues of collections for the Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum of New York, menus for the Wine & Food Society, a bank book for a very big bank. In his days as a printer he printed books for the Hispanic Society, the Iranian Institute, Yale University, and the American Museum of Natural History. In 1962, Mr. White was elected a fellow in perpetuity of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

For the Columbus text, Lew White has chosen 12-point Janson on a 14-point base; Janson is one of the sturdiest and most read-

able of the "old style" faces. The Caslon types selected for the headings are closely related to the Janson design. Finally, the fine, rich typeface on the title page, and used on display pages for initials and numerals, is called Mercure; a bold, outline version of the Nicolas Cochin typeface, it has unobtrusive eccentricities that recall old pen-drawn letters and that match the spirit of the drawings.

Lima de Freitas, the only artist we considered for the illustrating of our *Columbus Journals*, was introduced to the members of this Club a bit more than two years ago when he did a truly magnificent job with our edition of Joseph Conrad's *Nostromo*. He was born thirty-six years ago in Setúbal, Portugal, an important shipbuilding center twenty miles down the Atlantic coast from Lisbon. Although its population is only around thirty-five thousand, Setúbal is the fourth largest city in Portugal.

Lima de Freitas studied at Évora, a university city that has been described as a Latin version of Heidelberg, but he did not study drawing. He studied the violin, and evidently to good purpose, for at the age of twelve he was playing with a symphony orchestra. Five years later, however, he put music behind him, professionally speaking, and went to Lisbon to study architecture. There was a Roman temple of Diana at Évora, as well as a Roman aqueduct and a thirteenth-century Romanesque cathedral, and these may have stirred his imagination. From architecture to illustration is a small leap and, happily, Lima de Freitas soon took it.

During the past fifteen years he has exhibited annually at the shows conducted by the National Fine Arts Society in Lisbon, Oporto, and other centers in his native country. In 1953 he was represented for the first time in the second biennial exhibition in the Portuguese section at São Paulo, Brazil. He exhibited at Warsaw in 1955 at an exposition devoted in part to celebrating the

three-hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of the publication of Part I of *Don Quixote*, a work for which he had recently made a dazzling series of illustrations. He has been an active lecturer in Portugal, under the auspices of the National Fine Arts Society, on modern art and art criticism. Today he and his wife divide their time between Portugal and Paris (three or four months in Portugal, the rest of the year in Paris). He has a wide range of interests—science (particularly biology) as well as art and music. He speaks and writes Portuguese, French, English, Italian, Spanish, and Russian; his letters to us have been self-typed in a thoroughly understandable and fluent English.

In the spring of 1961 his old school town of Évora put on his biggest one-man show to date, a ten-year retrospective of his work, and he also had a one-man show in Madrid; in 1962 he had extremely successful exhibits in Copenhagen and Aarhus, Denmark.

Lima de Freitas has a summer home in the province of Algarve, on the seacoast of southern Portugal, close to the Spanish border, and only "four or five hours by car," he writes us, from Palos, the port from which Columbus sailed for America. "While working on the illustrations for the Columbus Journals," he continues, "I often reflected that if Columbus' ships were to set out again on their wonderful journey, I would actually see them passing in front of my house. The place where my house is built is called 'Vale de Centianes' (Valley of Centianes), and they say the name comes from that of an old sailor, Sant' Ianes, who was from a navigator's family that was very well known in the sixteenth century. Who knows? This Sant' Ianes may have been a great-grandson of a member of Columbus' crew!"

For our and your and Admiral Morison's *Journals of Columbus*, Lima de Freitas has created five drawings which appear on as many double-page spreads, plus a medallion of the head of Columbus on the title page,

all of which are printed in black and two colors. In addition Senhor de Freitas has fashioned some sixty-five black-and-white drawings. The illustrations are reminiscent of the woodcuts of Columbus' own day, though there has been no attempt at slavish imitation. To achieve his brilliant effects he has used a sgraffito technique, covering his drawing board with a heavy black coat and cutting or scraping away to reveal the original white surface. And—very important—our artist has made a miniature likeness of a caravel which is used again and again and again; when you see one of these you will know that the text which follows it is a translated document, and not part of Admiral Morison's lucid commentary. Lima de Freitas has also redrawn two sections of Juan de la Cosa's world map of 1506 after the interpretations by Bertram Greene in *Admiral of the Ocean Sea*.

The seven other maps, based in part on those made for the earlier volume by Edwin Raisz, have been redrawn by Rafael Palacios, cartographer extraordinary. These "other maps" include the superb one reproduced in color for the end papers. Though a long-time resident of New York and its suburbs, Rafael Palacios was born in Santo Domingo and raised in Puerto Rico, and is hence intimately familiar with the Caribbean area. Palacios maps appear in most of the works of Thomas B. Costain and other historical writers—most recently in the Eisenhower memoirs, *The Presidential Years* and *Mandate for Change*.

The printing of our *Journals of Columbus* has been performed by the New Era Lithographing Company of New York upon a natural white, vellum-finish paper made specially for this shipshape book, which el Almirante Frank Fortney and his gallant mariners have bound in a tough, tightly woven cloth. The seascape printed on the cover is from Lima de Freitas' drawing of the Fourth Voyage.

