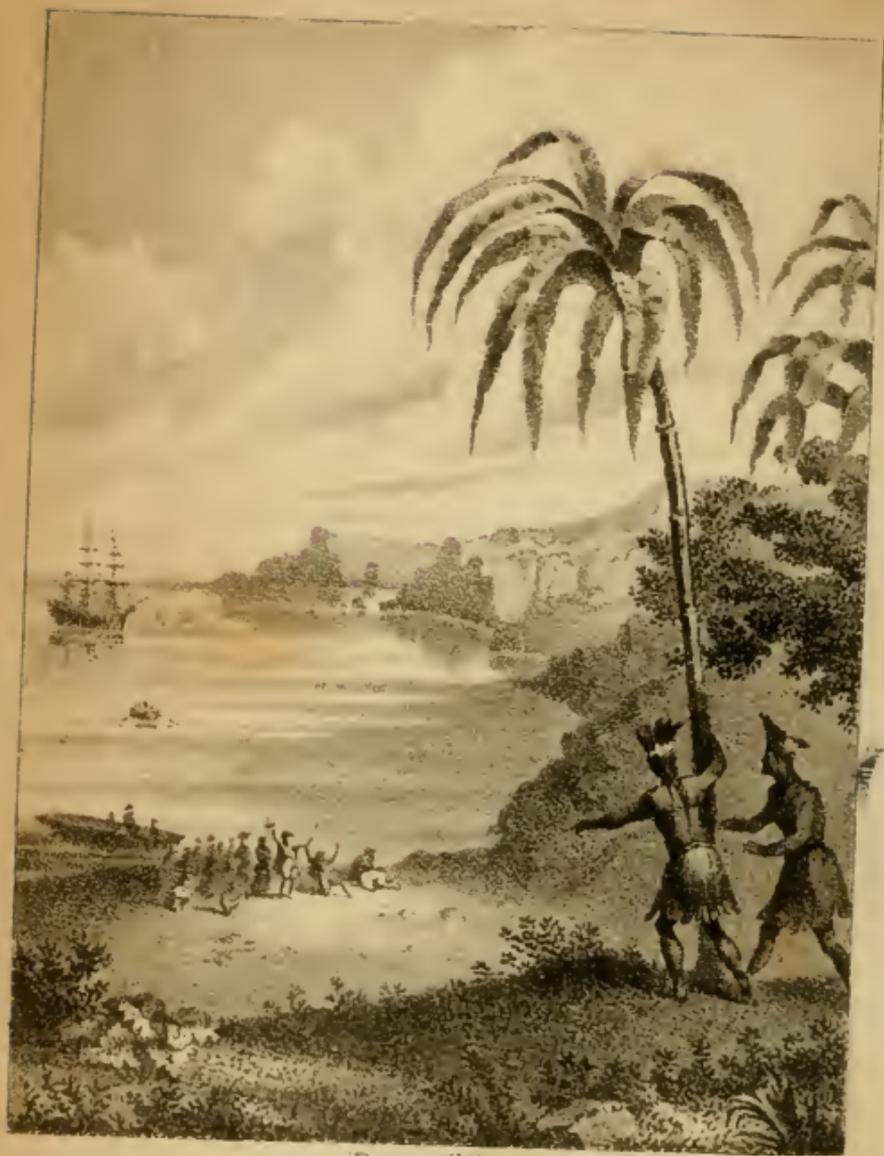




COLUMBUS.



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COLUMBUS,

OR

THE DISCOVERY OF AMERICA ;

AS RELATED BY

A FATHER TO HIS CHILDREN,

AND

DESIGNED FOR THE INSTRUCTION OF YOUTH.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF J. H. CAMPE,

BY ELIZABETH HELME,

AUTHOR OF THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, ROME, &c. &c.

BOSTON :

MUNROE AND FRANCIS, AND CHARLES S. FRANCIS,

NEW-YORK.





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THE
TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

IN the following sheets, though the names FATHER and MOTHER are applied to the elders, it appears that Mr. Campe's conversations were not held with his own children, but with pupils; yet as a family circle is usually more interesting to young people, than one farther removed, the Translator has followed the literal sense of the Author.

In relating the discovery of America, Mr. Campe has given their full merit to the adventurers, for courage, patience, perseverance, genius, and all the good qualities they possessed; retracing with a merciful hand the deeds that disgraced them, and skilfully preserving the medium which he expressed in his Preface, of not giving his pupils, on their entrance into life, an exaggerated idea of their cotemporaries being either angels or fiends, but mortals possessing a mingled share of uprightness and error. At the same time he strongly inculcates those virtues that dignify human nature, exemplifying them, as opportunities occur, in the course of his narrative. Inciting his youthful auditors to follow meritorious example, he says, "Thus, my children, have those youths distinguished themselves, even in their early years, who aspired to great actions. Rejoice, then, if, like Columbus, you possess that youthful ardour which leads to

noble pursuits ; but if you cannot yet give yourselves that pleasing testimony, hasten, I conjure you, to endeavour to obtain it ; for, in a short time, the years of preparation will be elapsed, gone without recal — a loss never to be repaired !”

To impress their minds with fortitude and patience under misfortunes, and to implant a firm reliance on Providence, are leading features in this Work, which the author illustrates, not only by the conduct of Columbus, but by his own feelings. “ Experience,” says he, “ has taught me, that by supporting misfortunes with fortitude and patience, and firmly relying on the Divine will, the clouds of sorrow will disperse, when least expected ; the night of tribulation pass like a dream, and the sun of unexpected pleasure enliven with its cheering influence the human soul. Learn, my children, and let this truth be engraven on your hearts, that in the hour of trial it may sustain your sinking spirits. That those heavy calamities, which at the time I considered as my greatest misfortune, have been the immediate basis on which Providence has established my future successes. Convinced of this, I have learned to submit with resignation to whatever it shall please God to inflict ; assured that his infinite wisdom is the best judge of what is proper for the weakness of the creatures he has made.”

For an endeavour to disseminate sentiments like these, the Translator can make no apology, and can only wish that her power equalled her inclination to impress them with indelible characters on the minds of the rising generation,

THE

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

IT is some years since I formed the design of composing a succession of little Works, calculated to inform, in a useful and agreeable manner, the age of infancy and youth. The thought occurred to me from observing the absolute want of such a collection, made with care, and particularly with a view to those early periods. To attain this end the choice of materials was principally to be considered, and the gradation necessary to be observed both in the subjects and style, that they might be so far adapted to the purpose, that young people of every age might be successively instructed and amused. This is what I in part attempted to execute when I published "The Children's Little Library," and "The New Robinson Crusoe," which last ought to precede the histories of Columbus and Cortez; the children who read my former works being the sole readers whom I had in view when I digested the present. I have considered no greater stock of ideas necessary than those acquired from the perusal of the books alluded to; and what the New Robinson has left imperfect in the development of these ideas, will be easily completed by Columbus, the style of which may on this account be found in some measure more elevated than that of the former work.

It may be asked, for what kind of reading the history of

Columbus is to prepare my young readers ? I answer, for the histories of Cortez and Pizarro, which will immediately follow it, and afterwards for a collection of voyages properly arranged for their instruction. In the composition of such a selection, I would introduce no idea of cosmography, geography, history, &c. that may not have been previously acquired by the perusal of the works before-mentioned, and a course of ordinary studies. To this I purpose to dedicate my few leisure hours for some years to come, as it appears to me that they cannot be better or more usefully employed ; for, if any thing may be judged capable of forming the character of a young man, enlarging without fatigue or disgust the sphere of his observation upon men and manners, and of arming him betimes against those romantic reveries which the fashionable books of the present age appear solicitous to inculcate ; in short, if any thing can give him a salutary contempt for the affected jargon or frivolity, or sentiment, and of false delicacy, with which these dangerous productions are filled, and inspire him, on the contrary, with a taste for chaste and profitable amusements, it is doubtless a similar collection of voyages, where the author, in the choice of the events, and the manner of relating them, shall have confined his attention solely to this object. Such is the plan which I have formed, a plan to which the present work may be considered as a necessary preparative.

From what has been said, it may be understood why I have preferred the form of dialogue. If the interlocutors less frequently interrupt the principal narrative, the reason is obvious ; I was myself less frequently interrupted in the recitals I addressed to my young pupils, of which recitals the present work is but a faithful transcript, and passages that required an explanation more rarely occurred.

The sources from whence I have drawn the materials for this work being generally known, I thought it unnecessary to point them out ; but the informed reader will easily dis-

cern, that, far from following them at random, I have selected them with the most scrupulous attention, adopting sometimes one author, sometimes another, as it appeared to me more clear and satisfactory. In doubtful circumstances, or where I could discover no solid reason to determine me, I have been almost constantly guided by an author,* who to the penetration of the Englishman has joined the indefatigable perseverance of the German. I have nevertheless at different times had occasion to reject some errors which have crept into his work, but on events of little importance.

I have more than once in my preceding publications advanced this principle: "The tutor, far from discovering to his pupils the dark side of human nature, should, on the contrary, employ his utmost skill to conceal it, lest he give birth to the following idea: — "Since other men are naturally inclined to vice, it is unjust to require us to be an exception to the general rule." I am aware that I may be reproached with deviating myself from the principles I have laid down, in publishing, for the amusement of youth, a narrative replete with traits of injustice, rapine, and inhumanity. To this charge I answer, first, that the book is not designed for the early stages of childhood, but for those who are approaching adolescence, nay, who have already attained it. Secondly, I entreat my accusers to recollect the restriction I annexed to my precept, viz. that, as the pupils advanced in years, and the time of their entering into the world drew nigh, it was necessary by degrees to unveil the truth, and with infinite precaution to discover to them the caprice and injustice of men; lest, finding themselves deceived in the flattering picture they had drawn, from imagining a society of angels, they fall into the opposite extreme, and take their fellow creatures for so many fiends. Thirdly, it is to be observed, that the same impression is not

* *Robertson.*

made on the mind of the child, when he is told that such or such villains lived some centuries ago, as when he is informed they exist among his cotemporaries. With respect to the effect this information may produce, it depends wholly upon the colours under which it is represented to his young mind ; these colours may, according to the manner in which they are selected and employed, cause the picture to operate in unison with, or in opposition to the ideas of the painter. It is from this choice and preparation that I dare flatter myself the experienced tutor will find that I have not deviated from my point.

The flattering manner in which the public have replied to my question, “ Whether this work should be committed to the press,” has touched me in the most lively manner ; and I sincerely wish it may answer the expectations of those who have so warmly interested themselves in its success. They who peruse it will readily discover that my object in composing it was the same as that I have always had much at heart, viz. not only furnishing the minds of my pupils with useful and agreeable knowledge, but inflaming them with an ardent zeal for their religion, and a love of the social virtues ; arming them betimes with a courage that will render them proof against adversity, and inspiring them with a lively desire of signalizing themselves by acts of humanity and public utility. Heaven grant that I may not fail in my intention ! It is the sweet, the grateful reward I expect for my feeble efforts ; this attained, I willingly renounce every other.

C O L U M B U S.

DIALOGUE I.

Nicholas (calling.) Theophilus! Christian! Frederic! John! Where are you all?

Christian. What's to be done now?

Nicholas. Make haste and call the rest; my father is going to tell us a story.

All. How delightful!

Frederic. May I not fetch my brothers and sister, father?

Father. With all my heart. (*Frederic goes out.*)

Christian to Nicholas. What is my father going to relate to us?

Nicholas. I do not know yet; but I dare say it will be as pleasing as Robinson Crusoe.

Frederic returns running, followed by Henry, John, Peter, Ferdinand, Mathias, Charles, and Charlotte, all exclaiming — Are you indeed, my dear father, going to tell us a story?

Father. Yes, my children, if it will contribute to your amusement.

All. Oh! that it will. Now, father.

Charlotte. Do not be so hasty; my father will be good enough to stay till I have called mother.

Father. Undoubtedly, my love, your mother must be of the party. Will you request her to oblige us with her company?

Charlotte in a few minutes returned with her mother; when the whole party being placed, the father, after a short pause, addressing them said, Well, my children, whose history do you think I mean to relate?

John. It is impossible to judge, father.

Father. Doubtless it is now; but perhaps you may guess, when I inform you, that I mean to give the history of the most remarkable character that ever existed, — a man who made one of the most important discoveries, and to whom we owe many of the conveniences of life, and also much information, that we should not otherwise have possessed. Well, now can you judge?

Theophilus. I think you mean *Peter Helé.*

Father. And why do you particularly guess him?

Theophilus. Because he was ingenious, and the first inventor of watches.

Frederic. Ah! I remember reading that; and also that watches were then called *the eggs of Nuremberg*.

Henry. I think there are more interesting inventions than those.

Charlotte. Now, it is my opinion that father means the man at Brunswick, who invented spinning-wheels, but whose name I have forgotten.

Christian. Jurgens.

John (ironically.) I know not why he should be named before *Moumme*, the inventor of the Brunswick beer that bears his name.

Father. Well, since you cannot guess, I must inform you that I mean *Columbus*, who first discovered America.

John. Oh, I am glad to hear it, for I have read of him.

Father. Well, then, be attentive. Near three hundred and fifty years ago, at Genoa, in Italy, there dwelt a man named Christopher Columbus.* Of his birth little is known, except that his ancestors gained their living by navigation; a circumstance that may perhaps account for his having from his

* The discoverer of America is generally known by the name of COLUMBUS, but his real name, according to the Spaniards was COLON, which is the appellation given him by all Spanish writers.

childhood a decided preference for a sea-faring life, which he at length embraced.

From his early youth he possessed dispositions not only requisite in a skilful navigator, but also those necessary to form a great and good man. He was courageous and resolute, contemned idleness and effeminacy, disdained to pamper his appetite with dainties, which, while they please the palate, destroy the health ; in short, he was the declared enemy of luxury and frivolity, and constantly employed in some study that might render him hereafter useful to his fellow creatures. As he was informed, that in order to study the sciences successfully, it was first necessary to learn Latin, on account of the number of useful books in that language, he immediately applied so assiduously, that he speedily acquired a knowledge sufficient to assist him in his pursuits. |

It was then that he could profit by the instruction of his masters, which he received with such avidity, that in a short time he made so great a progress in geography, geometry, astronomy, and drawing, that he was capable of going to sea in his fourteenth year, possessed of all the elementary knowledge necessary for a skilful navigator.

Thus, my children, have those youths distinguished themselves, even in their early

years, who aspired to great actions ; for it is true that, according to the proverb, — *The branch should be bent while the tree is green.* Rejoice, then, if like Columbus you feel that noble ardour which leads to great pursuits ; but if you cannot yet give yourselves that pleasing testimony, hasten I conjure you to endeavour to deserve it, for in a short time the years of preparation will be elapsed. Think of this, my children, gone without recal, — a loss never to be repaired.

To return to Columbus. He served his apprenticeship in the Mediterranean, to which sea the navigation of his countrymen was then confined ; but this sphere was much too contracted for a spirit that was emulous of performing some great action that had yet been unattempted.

He therefore sought occasion to make long voyages ; and after sailing to the North Seas, where he greatly extended his knowledge, he engaged himself in the service of a captain, one of his relations, who had at his own expence fitted out some armed ships, to cruise alternately against the Venetians and the Turks.

Frederic. What is meant by cruising, father ?

Father. It is navigating, in order to watch the enemy's ships, and if possible to take them.

Frederic. In the same manner as I remember reading Admiral Roduey acted with regard to the Spanish vessels.

Father. The same. In this cruise Columbus would have lost his life had not Providence reserved him for more glorious exploits. The vessel which he commanded being engaged with a Venetian ship, our young hero proved himself a model of valour; but just at the moment he was on the point of boarding the enemy, his vessel took fire. I judge you understand what I mean by the word *boarding*?

Mathias. It is, father, when one ship grapples another so strongly, that it cannot disengage itself; in which case, the crew fight upon the decks with sword and pistol, until one of the parties surrender.

Father. Well explained. Represent to yourself two vessels thus grappled, sinking at the same time, and no ship in sight to save the crews. In this dreadful state was Columbus; but even then, neither his prudence, intrepidity, nor presence of mind forsook him, for, throwing himself into the sea, he seized a floating oar, by the aid of which he fortunately gained the coast at the distance of two marine leagues.

Henry. Pray, father, what is the computation of a marine league?

Father. Three quarters of a German mile, or three miles and one sixth English. Columbus saved himself on the coast of Portugal, and had no sooner recovered his fatigue, than he resolved to visit the capital.

Charlotte. Lisbon, father, is it not ?

Father. Undoubtedly. This shipwreck contributed greatly to accelerate the glorious course he afterwards pursued, and may prove to us, that the beneficence of Providence frequently exerts itself in our favour, even from our seeming misfortunes. Attend, and I will explain this. The Portuguese were at this period the most skilful sailors in the world ; they had sailed farther into the Atlantic Ocean, which was then little known, than any other nation, and had been recompensed for their intrepidity by the discovery of two islands, which they named Porto Santo and Madeira.

Charles. They are no great distance from Africa.

Father. The same. This success induced those enterprising men to venture yet farther in their pursuits, until at length they formed the great design of endeavouring to find a passage by sea to India.

Frederic. They could not be long in making that discovery.

Father. Why do you suppose so ?

Ferdinand. It was only necessary to consult the map, to have immediately seen that they must keep the coast of Africa, doubled the Cape of Good Hope, continue their course up the other side of Africa, and they immediately reach India. (*Tracing with his finger on the map.*)

Father. Truly, Ferdinand, you are right; but was it not very extraordinary that formerly they were studying for a whole century what we discover at a single glance.

John. But we have a map to consult; and also know the possibility of doubling the Cape.

Father. Ferdinand, observe your brother. Pray, did not the people of those days possess a map of Africa? And were they uninformed of the practicability of doubling the Cape?

John. Undoubtedly they were, which made them anxious to discover India by taking a course round Africa.

Henry. We also find, by ancient geography, that they knew nothing more than the northern part of Africa, and a small part of Ethiopia; but, whether the land ended on the south side, or extended to the South Pole, the ancients were unacquainted.*

* It is related, that by order of Nechor, king of Egypt, the Phœnician navigators sailed round Africa; but there is great

Father. You see, then, my dear Ferdinand, if this be true, we might not have been wiser, had we then existed, than the Portuguese. In this case it appears to me, as if some one, at the present time, were to ask us how we should reach India by sailing round North America, or otherwise, by the north-east coast of Europe and Asia. Well, will your charts furnish you with an answer to that question?

Ferdinand. No, father.

Father. Why not?

Ferdinand. Because it is not specified on the maps, whether there is, or is not, to the north of America and Asia, a sea open to all parts.

Father. Why is it not mentioned?

Ferdinand. Most probably because the geographer was ignorant of it himself.

Father. Agreed. But why should he be so, when he had nothing farther to do than to read the voyages of those that had passed by the north?

Ferdinand. Perhaps no person had made that voyage.

reason to doubt the truth of this tradition. Herodotus, however, expressly says, that they not only coasted round Africa, but also penetrated into the North Sea, returning home by the Mediterranean.

See Herodotus, 2 c. 158. lib. iv. c. 42.

Father. Do you not then at once conceive, that it was necessary, above three hundred years ago, to begin, by making attempts in order to discover the practicability of reaching India by sea ?

Ferdinand. It must be so ; I now perfectly comprehend.

Father. Columbus having reached Lisbon, his knowledge and talents soon procured him the friendship of many skilful navigators, in which circle they frequently discoursed on the intended plan.

Frederic. Pray, father, which way did they go to India, at that period ?

Father. In those days the Venetians were the only nation that traded to India, the productions of which country they received by the Red Sea and the Mediterranean ; but those two seas, as you well know, have no communication, being separated by a considerable isthmus.* When the vessels reached this isthmus, they were obliged to be unladen, and the merchandize carried, either by land or by small boats on the canals, to

* The same King of Egypt, Nechor, (before mentioned,) who existed about 600 years before Christ, attempted to make a communication between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea ; but, after losing twelve thousand men, he desisted, convinced that his scheme was impracticable.

Alexandria in Egypt, from whence they were sent by the Mediterranean to Venice.

The necessity of lading and unlading the vessels, and the remittance of the goods to Alexandria, must necessarily cramp the commerce of India so greatly, that it is natural to suppose the discovery of a way by sea was regarded of the utmost importance. Chance also led to another circumstance, which greatly facilitated the important design of Columbus. He married the daughter of a captain who had been of the party in making the discovery of the Isles of Porto Santo and Madeira, and by this union, enjoyed the advantage of perusing the journals and maps of a skilful navigator.

He studied them with unwearied attention, until, by frequent perusal, his inclination for discoveries daily gained strength, and he resolved to visit those newly found islands; he accordingly embarked for Madeira, where, during several years, he carried on a lucrative commerce, trading alternately to the Canaries, the coast of Africa, and the Azores.

Mother (ironically.) Pray, did he not take his wife with him in these voyages?

Father. I should think not, as none of his historians have mentioned that circumstance.

Mother. Then I am resolved he shall sail no farther this evening. Come, my children,

you have attended long enough for one time ; a little gardening will be an agreeable relaxation.

Charlotte. Oh ! mother, thus you always serve us whenever father comes to an interesting part.

Theophilus. Never mind, Charlotte ; mother's only incentive is our health, and to teach us not to give way to impatience.

All. Well then, to work, to work — to play let's be merry.

DIALOGUE II.

Father. During the short voyages that Columbus made to the Canaries, his enterprising spirit was continually employed on one great idea, to which his residence at Lisbon had given birth. "What," said he, as he reflected on the subject, "is it possible that there should not be a nearer way to the Indies than that sought by the Portuguese, of sailing round Africa? Surely, if, on leaving Europe, sail were constantly made directly westward through the Atlantic Ocean, it would lead to a land which must be India, or,

which at least, appertains unto it. The earth is undoubtedly round, and if so, God has most probably created in the opposite hemisphere, a country habitable by man and other creatures ; for it is not likely that it should be entirely composed of water. India is, perhaps, much more extensive than is generally imagined, and possibly extends towards the east, near Europe ; if, therefore, the course were directed right westward, it must inevitably be attained."

Such was his first reasoning on the probability of the opposite side of our globe being habitable ; an idea that was strengthened, by much reflection and observation, arising, among others, from these circumstances :— The master of a Portuguese vessel, having advanced a considerable way into the Atlantic Ocean, sailing westward, drew up a piece of wood brought by that wind, and which evidently bore the marks of labour. This strongly corroborated his supposition, that towards the west there was an inhabited country. The brother-in-law of Columbus, Pedro Correo, a celebrated navigator, sailing from Madeira westward, had also found a similar plank. They had likewise, from time to time, discovered on the coast of the Azores— But before I proceed, let me ask you if you recollect where those isles are situated ?

Christian. Certainly we do. They are in the Atlantic Ocean, between Europe and America, and are also called the Spur Islands.

Father. Well, then, on the western coast of these islands, they had frequently found trees of a species unknown to them, brought by the same winds ; and what rendered their idea yet more probable than all I have related to you, was that one day the waves threw on the same coast the bodies of two men, whose persons they considered peculiarly remarkable, as they neither resembled Europeans, nor yet the inhabitants of Asia or Africa. Columbus carefully reflected on these different circumstances, and compared them with what he had studied, both from ancient and modern authors, respecting India ; the whole of which contributed to change his conjectures into conviction.

He was however careful not to trust entirely to his own judgment, and therefore consulted a man whose penetration and understanding were at that time in high estimation. His name was Paul ; he was a physician, and resided at Florence, a city in Italy. This wise man considered the observations of Columbus of the greatest importance, communicated to him some observations he himself had made on the same subject, and concluded, by exhorting him to realize so great a project.

From this time Columbus was firmly resolved on the enterprize ; but as it required a fitting out far beyond the compass of his fortune, he was necessitated to propose the execution to some superior power. - He did not hesitate a moment to devote the fruit of his future discoveries to his own country, rather than to any other state, in consequence of which he presented the plan, which he had drawn up, to the Senate at Genoa ; who, however, incapable of understanding the solidity of his reasonings, took this great man for an idle projector, and declined his offers.

Columbus was not discouraged by this repulse ; and having satisfied the duty he owed to his country, turned his thoughts towards Lisbon, which had lately signalized itself in enterprizes of the same kind. His proposal was listened to with the utmost attention ; but having, by degrees, drawn from him the whole of the plan, they were guilty of the meanest duplicity towards him.

They had formed the resolution of depriving him of the honour he would obtain by such interesting discoveries ; and, with that view, fitted out a vessel in haste, giving the direction to another commander to execute what Columbus had projected. This captain accordingly set sail ; but possessing neither the spirit of enterprize, nor the courage of the

man whose right was thus infringed, he, after a short voyage towards the west, renounced all hopes of success, and returned to Lisbon discontented and totally disheartened.

John. I am very glad that the foolish and treacherous Portuguese did not succeed in their attempt to deceive poor Columbus.

Father. That event must doubtless give us pleasure ; but, my dear boy, we should be cautious of accusing the whole of the Portuguese nation with either folly or treachery, because, three hundred years ago, four or five evil-disposed counsellors persuaded the king to commit an unjust action, which was, perhaps, abhorred by all the rest of the country.

John. I only meant to condemn those who devised it, father.

Father. In that case you are perfectly right — it was an act of the utmost meanness and treachery towards Columbus, who felt himself so justly offended, that he immediately took the road to Madrid.

Charlotte. In Spain, is it not, father ?

Father. Undoubtedly. But fearful that his proposals should be rejected by the court of Spain, he sent his brother Bartholomew, who was entirely acquainted with his whole plan, to England, to see what could be obtained there in his favour.

Ferdinand, surnamed the Catholic, at that

period reigned in Spain. He was of a suspicious and circumspect temper, consequently very cautious of entering into any expedition, the success of which he regarded as the least doubtful. His queen, Isabella, was of a more enterprising temper, but she depended entirely upon her husband, and entered into no arrangements whatever without his approbation ; — added to this, unfortunately for Columbus, the King of Spain was at that time engaged in a war with the last King of the Moors,* who had established his empire in Granada, a province in Spain.

Ferdinand and Isabella, notwithstanding their circumstances, received Columbus with distinguished kindness, and listened to his plan with great attention ; but, before they returned a decisive answer, they laid his project before some counsellors, who, unfortunately, were not sufficiently enlightened to comprehend it, and therefore made the most absurd objections. They maintained that the sea between Europe and India was so extensive, that, even granting he met with the

* The Moors were a people that, from Arabia, had formed themselves a settlement in the upper part of Africa, from whence they passed into Spain, the greater part of which they subdued ; but the original inhabitants, having at length made head against them, succeeded, after a long and obstinate contest, in forcing them to evacuate Spain and retire to Africa.

most favourable voyage, it would take at least three years to reach the nearest continent. Another rejected his plan, upon account of the rotundity of the earth, saying, that if he sailed constantly towards the west, it would be a continued descent ; in which case, when he wished to return, he must ascend, which he would find impossible. Others were impertinent enough to ask him, if he thought himself wiser than the millions of men who had existed before him ; or whether, if there were really a continent on the other side of the globe, he could suppose it would have remained unknown for so many ages ?

Columbus had occasion for all his perseverance to bear, with equanimity, the ignorance and pride of his judges. He, however, supported this examination with a calmness worthy of admiration, replying to the most ridiculous objections with respect. He, however, obtained but little advantage from this praise-worthy conduct ; for, after having thrown away five years, in endeavouring to convince those idiots that his plan was practicable, he had the mortification to learn that it had been represented, in the most unfavourable light, to the king, who, in consequence, had declared that, during the continuance of the war with the Moors, he could not think of any enterprize whatever.

You may easily conceive, my dear children, the vexation of poor Columbus, thus a second time disappointed in his dearest hopes. It was indeed great, but his fortitude was yet greater ; and, far from relinquishing his enterprize, he immediately applied to two Spanish dukes, who were sufficiently rich to have fitted out a small fleet to send on these researches, but these noblemen wanted either confidence in Columbus, or courage to risk the undertaking, and he again met with a refusal.

Henry. Really, father, it is quite vexatious to hear how this great man was repulsed in all his applications.

John. I am astonished that he was not so entirely disheartened as totally to relinquish the undertaking.

Father. Had he acted thus, it would have proved that he did not in reality possess those qualifications that so eminently distinguished him. Noble and elevated spirits, my dear children, are not to be deterred by any difficulty, however great, from the path that leads to honour. The coldness, or even the ingratitude of their brethren may grieve and vex them, but cannot discourage or reduce them to inaction. Whatever disappointment they may experience, whatever obstacles may oppose them, their minds still remain fixed on

the object they have resolved to attain. Such is the conduct that will ever distinguish the man whose character is truly great and virtuous. Such was the hero, whose history I now relate to you ; his noble spirit rose above the grief he experienced on having his excellent plan disdained, and himself treated with ingratitude, and he formed the resolution of going to England, having never received any information respecting his brother since his departure.

Bartholomew had the misfortune in his passage to fall into the hands of pirates, and to be made a slave, from which bondage he was not released for many years ; when he hastened to England, but in so deplorable a situation, that he was obliged to design geographical charts, in order to procure himself some clothes, before he could appear at court to make his offer.

Columbus had a son named Diego, whom he tenderly loved ; and being unwilling to quit Spain without seeing him, he paid a visit to the convent where he was placed. Here he formed an acquaintance with the superior of the institution, named Perez, who was a man of great judgment and information ; he readily comprehended the extent and solidity of the plan that had been before condemned as ridiculous, and, being in great estimation

with the queen, persuaded Columbus to defer his departure until he could receive an answer to a letter he wrote to that princess.*

Columbus agreed willingly to this request, — when Perez represented, in his address to the queen, the whole scheme in such proper and forcible colours, that Columbus was sent for back to court, and received by Isabella with distinguished kindness ; he also received the congratulations of his friends on his success, when once more his hopes were destroyed by the pusillanimous timidity of the king.

Ferdinand again consulted the same persons that he had before appointed to judge the

* According to the testimony of Garcia Fernandez, a physician, resident at Palos in Andalusia, “ a stranger, on foot, accompanied by a small boy, stopped one day at the gate of the convent near that place, and asked of the porter a little bread and water for his child. While receiving this humble refreshment, the prior of the convent, friar Juan Perez de Marchena, happening to pass, was struck with the appearance of the stranger, and observing from his air and accent that he was a foreigner, entered into conversation with him, and soon learnt the particulars of his story. This stranger was Columbus, accompanied by his young son Diego. The zeal of this worthy friar, thus early enkindled, never cooled, and many years afterwards, in the day of his success, Columbus looks back, through the brilliant crowd of courtiers, prelates, and philosophers, who claimed the merit of having patronized his enterprize, and points to this modest friar, as one who had been most effectually its friend.” — IRVING.

proposition of Columbus ; and as they still adhered to their first opinion, the king absolutely refused to enter into it, and so far influenced the queen, that she was necessitated to break off the engagement she had commenced.

Once more, my children, consider this great character ;—disdained, his well-digested plan derided, and himself a butt for the raillery of the sycophant courtiers, who considered his rising fortune with an envious eye. Overwhelmed with such repeated vexations, Columbus must have given way to his just indignation, had not his mind been superior to all the adversity he had so many years been obliged to struggle with.

Charlotte. My dear father, what are sycophant courtiers ?

Father. In the courts of kings and princes, as in the society of other wealthy men, are ever to be found a set of worthless characters, who will flatter and cringe to their superiors, and calumniate and ridicule men of understanding or virtue, that have the misfortune to be under their displeasure. It is such wretches as these, my child, that I name sycophants.

Columbus now prepared for what appeared to him the last resource, which was, to offer to the King of England a part of the world

which three states had already imprudently rejected. While he was preparing for this voyage, the Spaniards were successful in reducing the province of Granada, which entirely destroyed the power of the Moors in Spain. Ferdinand and Isabella were delighted with this victory, as it rendered them masters of all Spain; and as the human heart when open to joy is most inclined to good actions, two of Columbus's friends, whose names ought to be respectable to posterity, again ventured at this fortunate period to remind the queen of his project.

Frederic. Pray, what were their names?

Father. The one was called Quintanilla, the other Santangelo. Both represented the attempt of Columbus with such strength of reasoning, that at length the king and queen could no longer resist giving it their sanction.

A messenger was immediately sent after Columbus, who was already on his journey; he fortunately overtook him, and re-conducted him to the court, where the queen was expecting him with impatience. His vexations and repeated disappointments were soon forgotten, and he presented to the queen the conditions upon which he was willing to encounter all the hazards of the sea, to discover and explore unknown lands. The proposals were accepted, and Columbus, after so many

tedious attempts, considered himself at the height of his wishes.

All the children testify their pleasure, exclaiming, I am glad of it!—How charming!—His hopes will be realized!

Charles. Did he immediately depart, father?

Father. That information I shall reserve until to-morrow.

All. Oh, to-morrow! To-morrow is a long time, father; but we must submit.

DIALOGUE III.

Peter. Make haste, dear father! I do so long for Columbus to set sail! I am afraid some new obstacle to his departure will arise.

Father. Do not be uneasy, my dear boy. Columbus has now taken his measures so well, that your fears are groundless. He is in possession of an act signed by the king and queen, in which among other things it is decreed, that he shall be created viceroy of the countries he shall discover, and that this dignity shall be transferable to his descendants to the latest generations; nay more, that he

and all his posterity shall have a tenth part of the revenue which the newly discovered countries shall bring annually to the crown of Spain.

Mathias. Ah, ha! then he is going to be rich.

John. I fear he has first a great deal to suffer.

Father. You are right, John; but let us proceed. The vessels destined to this enterprize were now fitted out with the utmost expedition; but they were so small, and so ill constructed, that no one but Columbus would have had courage to attempt in them the dangers of a sea totally unknown, the rocks and quicksands of which had not yet been pointed out on any chart. This little squadron consisted of the Santa Maria, on board of which Columbus hoisted his flag, the Pinta, and the Nina; the two last being little more than large shallops or boats. They were furnished with provisions for twelve months, and the crew that was to accompany Columbus in this perilous expedition did not exceed ninety men. The whole expence of the armament amounted only to twenty-four thousand rix dollars; a sum which appeared to the court of Spain so immense, that the enterprize would have been given up, if Columbus had not engaged to furnish an eighth part, in consideration of

which, he also stipulated for himself an eighth part of the profit arising from the voyage.

Henry. Was the court of Spain then so poor as to make an object of so moderate a sum ?

Father. In those days, my dear Henry, five crowns were equal in value to an hundred now ; money was then obtained with greater difficulty, and business carried on more by an exchange of merchandize. If, besides, you reflect that their treasures had been exhausted by a long war which Spain had supported against the Moors, and but recently concluded, you will easily account for what surprizes you. But to continue, — Every thing prepared, imagine that you see the little fleet with which the brave Columbus is to sail, at anchor in the road of Palos, a small maritime town in Andalusia.

Nicholas. I already see them weigh anchor and set sail.

Father. Not in such haste, Nicholas. Columbus was not only a brave man and skilful navigator ; but a pious Christian ; he knew the protection of that great Being, who is equally Lord of the ocean and of the whole universe, was necessary to the success of his undertaking, and that it was his duty to implore it. When all therefore was ready for his departere, he repaired in procession with

the companions of his voyage to a convent near the city ; there with the warmest devotion he offered up his prayers, and implored the protection of the Divine Being on an enterprize, one great object of which was to diffuse among those remote and savage nations into which it should please his Divine Providence to conduct him, the knowledge and worship of the true God. His example was followed by the rest ; after which, confident in the protection of the Almighty, they returned to the port, and the next morning, being the 3d of August, 1492, set sail, amidst the blessings and acclamations of numerous spectators.

The Children. Bravo ! a good voyage to them. Go on, dear father.

Father. Agreeably to his plan, Columbus steered directly for the Canary Isles ; but the next day an accident happened which, though in itself trifling, would have put a stop to the enterprize, had Columbus been as weak and superstitious as his companions. The helm of the Pinta broke ; an accident purposely contrived, it is supposed, by the pilot, who repented having engaged in so dangerous a voyage, and hoped to oblige Columbus to return.

Frederic. Was the misfortune then irremediable ?

Father. The helm was repaired, but the crew considered the accident as a presage of the ill success of the voyage. "We are lost," they exclaimed, "if we do not immediately return!" "Why so?" asked Columbus. "Does not Heaven," they replied, "show clearly by the accident that has happened to the helm, the misfortunes that will attend us if we persist in this rash enterprize?"

"Really," replied Columbus, "I cannot conceive why you should infer that God, by this trifling accident, announces any future misfortune; all that I can understand from a broken helm is simply, that it must be repaired."

"The admiral is an Athiest!" whispered the sailors, "he does not believe in omens!"

Columbus, who suspected what passed in their minds, thought it necessary to wean them from a superstition that in thousand other instances might again intimidate them. He therefore entered at large upon the subject, and showed them the folly of believing any event a presage of our future destiny, which God has never promised to reveal to us by signs. "His wisdom and goodness," said he, "are on the contrary conspicuous in concealing it, and it is equally weak and unavailing to endeavour to develope it by ac-

cidents with which it has no connection. All that a wise and truly religious man has to do is, conscientiously to fulfil the duties of his station, and to rest with trust and confidence in the protection of Providence, without perplexing himself concerning the future. May our actions, my comrades, during our voyage, be regulated by this maxim!" If Columbus did not by these arguments entirely dissipate the fears of his companions, he at least considerably weakened them, and they continued their course, without the intervention of any accident, to the Island of Gomera, one of the Canaries, where they cast anchor.

These islands (seven in number) were formerly known by the name of the Fortunate Islands, they are situated from $27^{\circ} 30'$ to $29^{\circ} 30'$ north lat. and from 12° to 21° west lon. at the distance of five hundred miles from the coast of Spain, and one hundred from the continent of Africa. In the year 1344, the court of Rome gave the property of them to a prince of the royal house of Castile, but they were not finally subjugated to Spain until 1496. Their names are Canaria, Palma, Teneriff, Ferro, Forteventura, Lancerota, and Gomera. They, in general, enjoy the advantage of a serene sky, the heat though excessive on the coast, is agreeably temperate upon those situations that are a little ele-

vated, and upon the mountains the cold is as much complained of, as the heat on the coast ; their tops are covered with snow the greater part of the year.

Teneriff is known by its volcanos, and by a mountain called the Peak of Teneriff in the form of a sugar loaf. It is about fifteen miles in circumference, and according to Dr. Sprat, Bishop of Rochester, whose account was published in the Philosophical Transactions, it is nearly three miles perpendicular. Sometimes this mountain throws out such a quantity of sulphur and lava as to convert the richest lands into barren deserts.

The superior tribunal of justice is in the island particularly called Canary, but Teneriff is considered as the capital ; it is the residence of the Governor General, and is the richest and most populous of the whole.

After having repaired their vessels and taken on board refreshments, they weighed anchor, the 6th of September, and with beating hearts launched into the great western ocean, which had as yet been unexplored by any vessel. The first day after their departure, their progress was inconsiderable for want of wind, and it was not till the third day that they lost sight of the Canaries. Now behold, my children, the attention of the crew solely and invariably fixed on Columbus, who from this day will appear with a dignity of

character that cannot fail of inspiring you with respect and love. The courage of the crew disappeared with the sight of land ; as if ignorant till now of the greatness of the enterprize they had undertaken ; they wept, beat their breasts, and burst into the most passionate lamentations, as men who were conducted to inevitable destruction. Columbus alone, like a rock beaten by the waves, preserved his usual coolness and intrepidity, showing such tranquillity of mind, and so firm a confidence in the happy issue of his enterprize, that even the most timid drew courage from his presence. He first made them ashamed of their pusillanimity, and then, touching on the recompense which awaited them on their return, painted in such lively colours the riches and glory they were about to acquire, that their courage revived, and they promised to follow wherever he should conduct them. This specimen of their weakness demonstrated to Columbus the scenes he was to expect in future. From this period he passed the greatest part of his time upon deck, either with the sounding-line in his hand, or the instrument used for making astronomical observations.

Frederic. What instruments are those, my dear father ?

Father. The sounding-line is a large piece of lead fastened to the end of a long

cord, which the sailors throw into the sea, lengthening it as it descends. When the lead touches the bottom, it is seen by the length of the line, that is to say, as much of it as has been wetted, what is the depth of the sea in the place where it is let down. Do you comprehend, Frederic ?

Frederic. Yes, my dear father ; but why do they take the trouble of measuring the depth of the sea ?

Father. Cannot you yourself guess ? — Reflect a moment.

Frederic. Ah ! I have it. If the water were not deep enough, the ship would run aground, and then good bye to it. For this reason, I suppose, they are obliged to make use of the sounding-line ?

Father. You see that by a little reflection we can ourselves discover many things that we wish to know ; but I suppose you must also have some account of the astronomical instrument I spoke of ?

Frederic. I was just going to ask for it, my dear father.

Father. First answer me a question I am going to ask you. When you go from Hamburg to Wandsbeck, can you tell on the way how much ground you have passed over ?

Frederic. Certainly I can ; one need not be a conjuror to know that.

Father. How do you know it ?

Frederic. Oh, it is only necessary to count the steps, or to look behind one.

Father. You are right ; but is it the same, Frederic, with navigators when out at sea, where they can perceive only sky and water ? Is it equally easy for them to discover the place where they are, and how many leagues they have sailed ?

Frederic. Oh no, father ; that is quite another thing.

Father. Yet you conceive that this knowledge is of the utmost importance to them ?

Frederic. Undoubtedly ; otherwise, how could they steer to the place where they intended to land ?

Father. You are very right ;—and what means do you imagine they employ to obtain this information ?

Frederic. Really, father, I am ignorant.

Father. Follow me into the great hall, and I will show you. (*They retire into the hall.*) Now, Frederic, examine the ceiling of this apartment with the most exact attention, and observe the ornaments.

Frederic. I have observed every thing.

Father. Now, then, I shall tie a bandage over your eyes, and lead you throughout this spacious apartment, making you turn in various directions so often, that you shall absolutely not know in what part of the hall you

are. (*The father blindfolds him, and does as he proposes.*) Now throw your head back in such a manner, that when I take off the bandage you may see nothing but the ceiling. That is well. Now — (*taking the bandage from his eyes*) — look up, and tell me in what corner of the hall you are.

Frederic. In that near the organ.

Father. From what do you judge ?

Frederic. From the plaster rose which I took particular notice of before.

Father. You discover, then, by the contemplation of the ceiling, in what part of the hall you are now ; do you not think that navigators can by a similar mode discover their situation ?

Frederic. Why, yes ; they need only look at the sky as I have done at the ceiling, and I think the stars would point out to them the place where they are.

Father. Right. But, my dear boy, the sky is so high, that the star which is now vertical above our heads, will appear to be so when we have sailed several leagues ; to which it must also be added, that the stars do not continue always in the same place, but on the contrary, like the sun and moon, appear sometimes on one side of the heavens, sometimes on the other. You see, therefore, that our course cannot be so exactly regulated by the stars as yours has been by the ceiling.

For a sure guide, recourse must be had to certain ingenious mathematical instruments ; to one especially, by the help of which the exact position of the stars may be ascertained, with their distances from each other. This is the instrument of which I spoke.

Frederic. It must be curiously constructed.

Father. At present it is sufficient to explain its use. We will now return to Columbus. The greater part of his time was spent upon deck either in making observations relative to the depth of the sea, and the course of the vessel, or in giving the necessary orders to his men. From these arduous cares he allowed himself but few hours of repose, but with all preserved an air of perfect serenity and confidence ; he rejected every indulgence that his men could not partake, and was only distinguished from the lowest by the superiority of his knowledge, and that unshaken fortitude by which he gave to the timid a courage the most powerful eloquence would have failed to inspire. Such a man was alone capable of executing an enterprize, which, with less courage, knowledge, and skill in managing the hearts of others, had inevitably failed. But enough for to-day ; to-morrow we will continue the course of our adventurers.

DIALOGUE IV.

Father. Come hither, my children ; before I proceed with the history of Columbus, I have something to say that requires your attention.

The Children, with eagerness. Dear father, what is it ?

Father. In the course of my history I must sometimes unavoidably speak of latitude and longitude ; I wish therefore that you should clearly comprehend what is meant by those terms.

John. You explained them, dear father, when we first began to study geography.

Henry. Yes ; — it is a long time since, — nearly two years.

Father. I am delighted to hear you are already informed : one of you sage elders will be able to take my place, and give the necessary explanations to the little ones, who are yet unacquainted with the subject.

Henry. Certainly we can ; but we must first fetch the globe.

Father. I think we can dispense with it ; here is a little map of the world which will answer the purpose without farther trouble. And now which of you will be father ?

All. I ! I ! I !

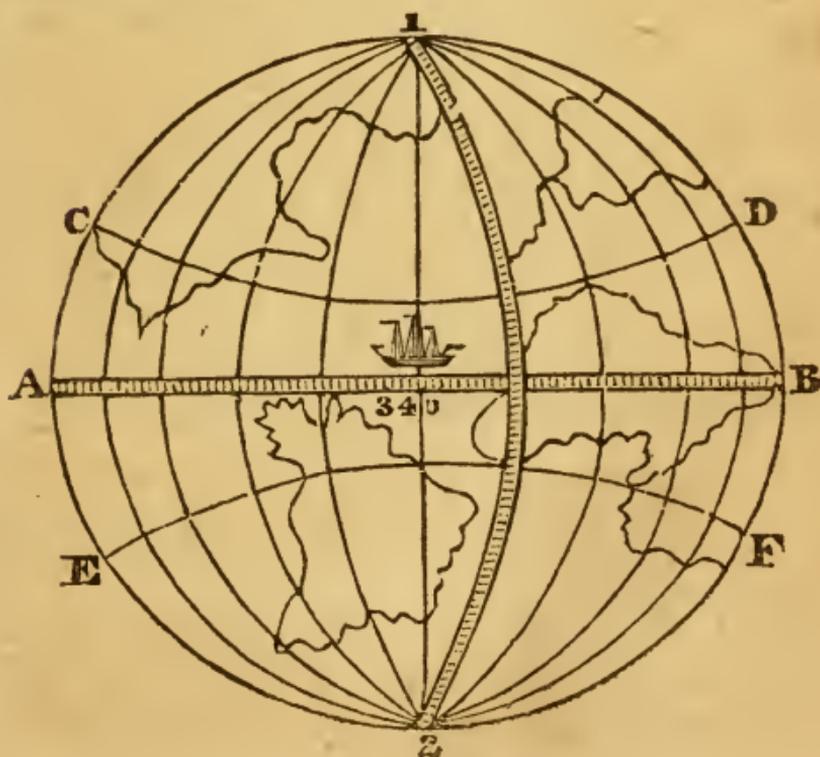
Father. Since you all offer your service, I must needs make a choice ; you, therefore, Henry, who are the eldest, come hither ; and

you, John, stand next, to see that he discharges his office properly. Should your assistance be necessary, you will be at hand to give it.

Henry, personating his father. Come hither, children ; come hither, Charlotte and Frederic, be attentive, I am going to teach you what we call the latitude and longitude of our globe.

Mother. A very consequential beginning, indeed !

Henry. Nay, mother, I am now the father, I ought, therefore, to take upon me a little. So observe, children, this little drawing represents the half of our earth.



The earth, as you have already heard, is round.

Charlotte. Oh, I know how it is proved to be round ; it is because its shadow is round and because ———

Henry. Not so fast, my little girl ; what you are going to say is not immediately necessary to our subject. It is enough for you simply to know that the earth is round like a ball, but rugged, from the mountains and hollows on its surface. This map represents one side of it.

Frederic. Now do, Henry, go on ; we know this already.

Henry. On this ball of earth are two points, one precisely opposite the other, upon which the earth continually turns. In this map before us they are marked by the figures 1, 2. These two points are called the Poles of the Earth ; that which is at the top has exactly over it a star called the North Star, for which reason geographers have given it the name of the North Pole, that opposite is called the South Pole. Do you comprehend ?

Charlotte. To be sure I do ; the highest point is called the North Pole, and the lowest the South Pole.

Henry. Excellently well explained, dear girl. Now look again at the figure ; in the middle of the ball, the half of which only is

represented, is a line or circle which separates it into two equal parts: It is marked A and B.

Frederic. But is there in reality such a line upon our globe ?

Henry. No, my dear Frederic ; our learned men have only imagined such a line to extend round our earth.

Charlotte. But, for what reason ?

Henry. Patience, and you will presently comprehend ; let me now tell you, that this line is called the equator.

Charlotte. The equator ?

Henry. Yes, because we not only by means of it divide the earth into two equal parts, but, when the sun is immediately over it the days and nights are equal. So much for the signification of the word. The space traced round the globe by the line from A to B on the other side, is called the longitude of the earth. Do you comprehend ?

Both. Perfectly.

Henry. The first point then is cleared ; it now remains to explain to you what is meant by the earth's latitude. Observe those lines that are drawn from the North to the South Pole.

The Children, (tracing them on the map.)
Here they are !

Henry. They mark the latitude of the earth, and are called meridians.

Frederic. Why meridians ?

Henry. Because it is noon at the same time at all those places over which the same meridian is drawn, which happens precisely when the sun is opposite to that line. Do you understand, Charlotte ?

Charlotte. I do, Mr Professor.

Henry. One of those meridians which you see drawn here in such numbers is called the first meridian. In the figure before us it is something thicker than the rest, and is divided into a number of little sections ; now the longitude of a place is nothing more than its distance from the first meridian, east or west ; the latitude, on the contrary, is its distance from the equator, north or south.

The Children. We understand this perfectly.

Henry. In our little planisphere I observed the figure of a ship. Now, should I inquire in what longitude it is, what would you understand by my question ?

Charlotte. Why — how far it is from the first meridian, to be sure.

Henry. That is to say, measuring constantly towards the west to the first meridian ; but should I further inquire in what latitude this ship is, what then, Frederic, should you understand by my question ?

Frederic. That you wished to know how far it was from the equator.

Henry. Perfectly right ; I am very well satisfied with your attention.

Father. I also am pleased with your explanations. Come, Frederic and Charlotte, give your little father a kiss for so well instructing you ; I shall give him one as a reward for doing such honour to my office. (*Embraces him.*)

John. But he has forgotten, father, that the equator and meridian are divided into degrees.

Father. Well, then, take his place, and see if you can clear up this point.

John. I will try, father. Now observe, Charlotte, the equator and the first meridian are divided into equal distances by a number of small strokes, which form so many divisions. Do you understand ?

Frederic and Charlotte. Perfectly. Now, go on.

John. Each of these divisions is called a degree, and comprehends the space of fifteen German miles, or sixty-nine English miles and a half. The equator contains three hundred and sixty of those degrees, and a meridian, from one pole to another, one hundred and eighty. Thus, for example, when we say such or such a place is in the three hundred and thirtieth degree of longitude, we mean, that in reckoning the degrees of the

equator, from the given place westward to the first meridian, we find three hundred and thirty degrees ; and if to this we add that this same place is in the eighth degree of latitude, we mean no more than that in counting the degrees of the first meridian, from the equator, we find eight.

Father. Bravo ! John merits a reward as well as his brother ; give him a kiss, my children, and here is mine. (*Embracing him.*)

John. It is reward gained at little expense, father.

Father. Now, children, for example, let us observe in what degree of latitude and longitude the ship we have spoken of is placed. We must count the degrees of the equator towards the west, from the express point in which the ship is, to the first meridian. But as the figure represents only half of the earth, we cannot number them entirely round it. We must therefore rely on the authority of the person who made the draft, and who, as you see, has placed under the ship the number 340, the degree of its longitude ; but now as to its latitude, nothing prevents our numbering the degrees of the first meridian, and seeing how far it is from the equator, one, two, three, four, five. The ship you see, my children, is in the fifth degree of latitude. Have I explained it clearly ?

Charlotte and Frederic. Oh! yes, father; we understand it perfectly.

Father. I am glad of it; for, were you ignorant in this point, when I shall tell you that Columbus, with his vessel, found himself in such or such a degree of latitude or longitude, you would be at a loss to understand my meaning. One thing yet remains to be observed, before I resume the thread of my story; and that is, that when the latitude of the earth, above the equator, towards the north pole is spoken of, it is called north latitude, to distinguish it from that which is below the equator towards the south pole, which is called south latitude. I will now return to Columbus.

John. I am rejoiced to hear it.

Father. The second day of his departure from the Canaries, he made but eighteen leagues, for want of wind, the weather being perfectly calm; but foreseeing that the length of the voyage alone would intimidate his companions, he resolved to make use of an innocent stratagem, and conceal from them the progress they every day made; he therefore persuaded them that they had as yet sailed but fifteen leagues.

On the twelfth of September, the sixth day of their navigation, they found themselves in the 350th degree of longitude; reckoning from the isle of Ferro, one of the Canaries,

or, which is the same, 150 miles from this island westward, and in the same latitude. Here they perceived the trunk of a large tree, which had apparently been floating a long time. The sailors took it for the harbinger of land, which they imagined near; and this idea, though it proved fallacious, contributed, in a great measure, to calm their apprehensions. But their confidence was of short continuance; for, scarcely had they proceeded fifty leagues farther, when they discovered a phenomenon which struck the whole crew with consternation; even Columbus himself was not unmoved.

Henry. What could it be.

John. Since Columbus himself begins to fear, there is reason indeed to fear for him.

Father. To fear, John, he was a stranger; though what he saw might surprize, it could not intimidate him.

Charlotte and Frederic. Now do, dear father, go on; I do so long to hear.

Father. I need not tell you, Henry and John, that the chief guide of navigators is the magnetic needle, from its having the singular property of pointing invariably to the north. By this the mariners can distinguish day and night, the four cardinal points of the world, and steer in any direction. Till now the needle had been found a safe and sure director, and to have explored so long and un-

known a tract without it, would have been the height of folly and temerity. What then must have been the astonishment of Columbus, and the terror of his pusillanimous companions, to perceive, on a sudden, that the needle did not, as usual, point immediately to the polar star, but declined a whole degree towards the west ! Come hither, Charlotte and Frederic, here is a mariner's compass, which I have brought, to render the thing more evident.

Observe now, this needle is in its usual position, that is to say, turned directly to that part of the heavens on which, at night, the polar star is seen. Now it happened, at the time of which I speak, that the needle inclined a whole degree of those you see marked on the box more to the left, or towards the west. This was a phenomenon of which neither Columbus nor any other navigator had yet had any experience ; - no wonder then if it astonished him.

Peter. And from whence, father, did the variation arise ?

Father. It is to this day, Peter, as difficult for us to account for it, as it was then for Columbus ; though since his time the same declination has been repeatedly observed, and tables of the places in which it usually happens have been formed. This, my dear children, is not the only one of Nature's secrets

which remains yet to be discovered ; and it should encourage you to a vigorous cultivation of your talents, since we know not if Providence may not have reserved for one of you the glory of unveiling a mystery which has hitherto been concealed from every human eye.

Nicholas. When I have gained more knowledge I shall endeavour to penetrate it.

Mathias. And so shall I.

All. And I — and I.

Father. Well, and good ; but if you expect your efforts to succeed, you must first study physics and the mathematics, both which I shall endeavour to render easy to you. But to return. The companions of Columbus were, as I have said, in the greatest perplexity. The space which they had already traversed appeared immense, though their commander, in the calculation he laid before them, had suppressed a full third. Imagining that Nature herself was deviating from her course, they trembled at the idea that their only guide, the needle, would no longer direct them. Columbus, however, inexhaustible in his resources, soon suggested for this unexpected event, a plausible reason, which satisfied the ignorance of his companions, re-animated their hopes, and encouraged them to proceed in their voyage ; and now behold them within the circle where the trade winds blow.

Frederic. The trade winds ?

Father. You, without doubt, know what is meant by the tropics ?

Ferdinand. Oh yes, father ; they are the lines which geographers imagine to be drawn on each side of the equator quite round the earth ; when the sun is over them, our days and nights are the shortest or the longest.

Father. Your explanation is just ; you may see these two circles upon our little figure ; the upper one is marked C D, and the under one E F. Now, in the space between the tropics the winds are observed to blow constantly one way ; that is to say, from east to west. These are called the trade winds. This singularity, which is now generally known, was not discovered before the time of Columbus, no opportunity having occurred for making the observation. A new source of uneasiness was therefore opened to our navigators, when they perceived their vessels driven constantly in a right line from east to west. “ If this easterly wind,” said they among themselves, “ blows here constantly, how will it ever be possible for us to return to our own country ? ” — a thought which filled them with inexpressible terror. Unfortunately, a few days after, a new phenomenon increased their apprehensions. They on a sudden observed the ocean covered as far as they could see with green weeds, which gave

it the appearance of an immense meadow, and they were even in some places so thick as to obstruct the course of the vessels. This was a new cause of uneasiness. "What will become of us?" said they. "We are certainly arrived at the limit of all navigable seas. Beneath these weeds are doubtless rocks and shallows, on which our vessels, at the moment we least expect it, will be dashed in pieces. What could we expect in suffering ourselves to be seduced into this rash, extravagant undertaking?"

The moment was critical, but the courage and prudence of Columbus did not forsake him. "Are you not," said he, "extremely weak, to alarm yourselves at an appearance that ought to strengthen the hope that we are on the brink of our wishes? Do weeds grow in the midst of the sea? It is rather probable that we are near some continent, from the shores of which those weeds proceed." This happy suggestion re-animated the whole crew; and as at the same time they perceived different birds, which bent their flight from the west, hope and joy succeeded terror and dismay, and they cheerfully continued their course, in the expectation of soon seeing their enterprize crowned with the happiest success.

DIALOGUE V.

Christian. Will not Columbus, my dear father, soon discover the country of which he is in pursuit ?

Father. He has yet many difficulties to encounter. The hope to which the weeds and birds gave birth soon vanished ; and though they had sailed a space of seven hundred and seventy marine leagues, no land yet appeared. Fortunately no one in the three ships, except Columbus, was able to calculate the length of their course ; he therefore concealed from them a considerable part, persuading them that they had sailed but five hundred and eighty leagues. Even this distance from their country appeared immense, and they again broke into murmurs and lamentations. One while they bewailed the facility with which they had listened to the vain protestation of Columbus ; another, they accused their queen of cruelty in exposing the lives of so many of her faithful subjects, in the execution of an enterprize, the success of which was as vague and uncertain, as the attempt was rash and presumptuous. They conceived they had already showed sufficient courage to exculpate them from the charge of cowardice, should they now think it necessary

to consider only their own preservation. At length all agreed in maintaining that it was time to return, supposing the fixed east wind did not render it impossible, and that it was necessary to oblige the admiral to give up his vain projects. The most audacious of the malcontents were of opinion, that at once to free themselves from so dangerous a seducer, it were best, without more ceremony, to throw him overboard ; persuaded that on their return to Spain little inquiry would be made into the death of a wretched schemer, whose projects had been attended with so little success.

Columbus, though sensible of the danger which threatened him, still preserved his intrepidity. Convinced of the justness and solidity of his plan, and confident in the protection of the Divine Being, he appeared before the mutineers with the calmness of a man who had reason to be satisfied with the progress of his enterprize ; and, after having reproached them mildly with their childish timidity, had recourse to all those means with which a knowledge of mankind and a manly eloquence furnished him, to revive their drooping courage, and reduce them to obedience. Sometimes he recalled them to a sense of their duty by the most pathetic remonstrances ; sometimes he assumed the air of a commander who is dictating to his men,

threatening them at once with the indignation of the queen, and the most rigorous punishment should they dare halt so near the end of their glorious career.

It is the privilege of great geniuses to mould at pleasure the hearts of ordinary men; and how enviable would be the condition of human nature, if, like Columbus, all who are endowed with distinguished talents would employ them only in forwarding plans of public utility! He had once more the satisfaction of recalling his mutinous comrades to reason, and Heaven itself seemed to second his endeavours; for the wind, which had till now continued in the east, shifted suddenly to the south-west, which satisfied the crew, by convincing them it was in their power to return when they pleased. This the admiral pointed out to them, and several other circumstances concurring to strengthen the hope of an early discovery of land, they promised to return to their duty, and the voyage was continued. At length the captain of the *Pinta*, which was foremost of the three vessels, one day lay-to, to inform the admiral that he thought he perceived land at the distance of about fifteen leagues to the north. At the word **LAND** every one yielded to the emotions of the most lively joy, and pressed the admiral to change his course, and steer directly to that quarter whence it was describ-

ed ; but Columbus, convinced that the captain was deceived, without attending to the murmurs of his men, invariably pursued his plan of sailing to the west.

Nicholas. But was there not a little obstinacy in this, father ?

Father. How obstinacy ?

Nicholas. Why could he not have indulged his men with sailing those fifteen leagues to the north ?

Father. No, my dear boy, as he was convinced that this pretended discovery was a delusion, such an indulgence would have been inconsistent with his former prudence ; for, had he yielded to their solicitations, they would have judged that he was not perfectly clear in his plan ; a suspicion that he had taken great pains to prevent, the confidence of his men being of the utmost importance to him. Besides, had they once found they could prevail upon him to alter his course, they would have renewed their importunities upon every fresh occasion. These reasons made him resolve, never, in the most trivial instance, to deviate from a plan he had so maturely digested, and upon which he founded the most sanguine expectations. The event proved the propriety of his conduct. The next day a quantity of sea fowl were perceived, which Columbus thinking not formed for long flights, was himself led into an er-

ror, and took them for the forerunners of some neighbouring land. But no soundings could be found at two hundred fathoms, a circumstance that appeared destructive to their hopes, as the depth of water commonly decreases in proportion to its vicinity to the shore. The following evening some song-birds were observed to perch upon the ship's yard, where they continued all night, and at break of day directed their flight westward ; a tropic bird was also discovered soon after.

Mathias. What is that, father ?

Father. It is a bird which inhabits that region of the earth which is between the two tropics. But soon one of the most singular spectacles which had yet appeared attracted their attention, — no less than a cloud of flying fish, which approached, raised above the surface of the water. Several of them in their passage fell upon the deck, and were taken up by Columbus and his men, who examined with curious attention the long fins which supported them in their flight. The same evening the sea was again covered with weeds ; an appearance which, being still considered as a presage of land, again inspired the crew with the lively hope of being near the term of their voyage. But, alas ! this term appeared from day to day to recede ; and in proportion as happy omens flattered

the expectations of the crew, their grief and disappointment were the more extravagant, —for, having sailed some days longer, they perceived, in spite of all those flattering appearances, their hopes again disappointed. The spirit of discontent and revolt now broke forth without restraint in the three vessels. Forgetful of the respect they owed their chief, the sailors murmured loudly ; and the officers, who till now had always sided with the admiral, declared against him.

Columbus, pressed on every side, and resisting with an admirable firmness the rage of the mutineers, who demanded his death, or, what was more bitter to him, the renunciation of his beloved project, might be compared to the hardy and unsheltered oak, which unmoved resists the fury of the storm. He made a last attempt to quell the tumult, but his eloquence failed ; despair and rage had taken such strong possession of every heart, that the means he had so often employed with success, now lost their effect. They no longer attended to his expostulations, but loaded him with reproaches, and threatened him with death if he did not immediately tack about and steer for Spain. In this desperate situation he was at length forced to yield to necessity, and to promise the mutineers that he would comply with their desires upon condition they would obey his orders only three days long-

er ; protesting, that if in the space of that time they did not discover land, he would on the fourth day sail for Spain.

How violent soever the rage of the mutineers, they could not forbear acknowledging the proposition to be reasonable ; they therefore complied with it, and the agreement was confirmed on both sides by the most solemn oaths. Columbus was in the meanwhile firmly persuaded that he risked no great matter in the concession he had made ; for the signals of land multiplied so fast, that he felt assured they should attain it within the stipulated time. They had for several days past sounded, and found a swampy bottom, which announced the proximity of a shore ; they saw swarms of little birds of a species that did not appear formed for long flights, direct their course towards the west, and took out of the sea a branch perfectly fresh, bearing a red fruit. The air was also milder, and the wind more variable, particularly during the nights. These were indubitable signs that the perseverance and constancy of Columbus would soon be crowned with success. So confident was he upon this point, that the next evening, after the usual duties of the day, he reminded his people of the gratitude they owed the Almighty, the protector of their perilous enterprise, exhorted them to vigilance, and then

ordered them to furl the sails, lest they should during the night run aground.

Theophilus. What is the meaning of furling the sails?

Father. It is shortening or rolling them up, that the vessel may not be driven by the wind.

Theophilus. I thank you, dear father.

Father. Columbus reminded his men of the queen's promise, that the first who descried the land they were in pursuit of, should have a pension of three hundred and twelve Spanish crowns; in addition to which he promised, on his own account, a velvet cloak. The whole crew passed the night upon deck, in the greatest agitation, their eyes constantly turned towards that point from which they hoped to discover the long-expected continent. In this situation, I believe, we must leave them until to-morrow, when we shall see whether their hopes were realized.

The Children, (with eagerness.) Oh, dear father!

Father (smiling.) You do not then wish me to leave off?

The Children. Oh, no, for pity's sake.

Peter. This is the most interesting part of all.

Father. Well. Near two hours before midnight, Columbus, who was on the fore-castle, thought, at a considerable distance, he

discerned a light ; he pointed it out to a page belonging to the queen, who was on board, and he showed it to another of the crew. All imagined they perceived it move ; and from this, if you can conceive, my dear children, what pleasure you yourselves would feel, after a long and tedious absence, on being reunited to beloved parents and friends, you may form some judgment of Columbus's joy on the discovery of the light. He now expected to reap the fruit of his laborious studies and to enjoy the recompense of so many dangers happily surmounted ; his incredulous companions would now be convinced that his plan was not chimerical, nor himself a vain projector. These pleasing ideas occupied his mind during the whole night. About two hours after midnight, the air resounded from the Pinta, which was always ahead, with the joyful cry of " Land ! land !" The crew would have yielded to the transports of an immoderate joy on this occasion, but their hopes had been so often disappointed, that doubts and anxiety naturally mingled with it. Divided, therefore, between hope and fear, they waited the break of day with impatience, in order to be convinced whether their most ardent wishes were at length realized. The night was insufferably tedious ; each minute appeared an hour, each hour a day. At length, the east began

to be enlightened, morning dawned, and already the crew of the *Pinta* chaunted *Te Deum*. The crew of the other vessels, at the same instant, made the air resound equally with exclamations of thanksgiving, at the same time shedding a torrent of tears, for the long-wished-for land was actually before them. Scarcely was the hymn concluded, when they recollected a second duty, that due to their commander, whom they had distrusted and grievously offended. They threw themselves at his feet, with expressions of repentance, and sincerely entreated pardon for their past offences.

Columbus, on this occasion, acted consistently with his character. The mildness with which he pardoned them, and promised to forget their errors, was not less magnanimous and engaging than had before been the firmness with which he combatted their fury.

John. And what part of America did they discover?

Father. Columbus himself is at present uninformed. On his landing we may, perhaps, gain some information; do not therefore forget to bring with you to-morrow a map of America.

DIALOGUE VI.

John. Here is the map, my dear father, which you desired me to bring yesterday.

Father. Well then, draw near, all of you, and observe. These isles (*pointing to them on the map*) are, in general, called the Lucaya or Bahama isles; one of them, which is here, is called Guanahami, otherwise the Isle of Cat. This was precisely the land first discovered. Columbus gave it the name of St. Salvador — intimating that it was the discovery of that country which had saved his life; but this name is not now retained.

The Bahamas are situated to the south of Carolina, between 12° and 27° N. latitude, and 73° and 81° W. longitude. They extend along the coast of Florida, down to the Island of Cuba. They are said to be 500 in number; some are mere rocks. Twelve are large and fertile, yet few of them are inhabited. Though they were the first of Columbus's discoveries, they were not particularly expressed or noticed until the year 1718, when, by order of the English government, a settlement was made in the Isle of Providence, and a fort erected for its protection. But we will now proceed.

The crew, for some moments in silence,

contemplated this unknown world, which, enlivened by the first ray of the sun, transported them with the smiling view of a fertile country, covered with embowering woods, and intersected by numerous rivers, which, meandering in a thousand different directions, heightened the beauty of the picture.

Columbus at length ordered out the boats, and in one of them himself advanced towards the shore, amidst the sound of warlike instruments, with colours flying, and attended by the most considerable of his companions, and some armed men. As they approached, they beheld the shore covered with the natives of the country, drawn together by the new and astonishing spectacle which the European vessels presented.

At length, having gained the shore, Columbus, richly clothed, and in his hand a drawn sword, leaped from the boat, and was the first who set his foot on the land, the discovery of which he had projected with such infinite skill and perseverance.

Henry. What must have been his feelings at that moment ?

Father. Never, my dear Henry, till you have conceived and executed some great project, subject to a thousand pains and difficulties, can you enter into the sensations which transported the heart of Columbus at that moment ! Immediately on landing, those who

accompanied him fell prostrate, and, kissing the earth in silent transport, in that posture renewed their promises of perfect obedience to him in quality of viceroy of the new world. This first effusion of joy having subsided, they erected on the shore a cross, before which they a second time prostrated themselves, to acknowledge the sacred debt of gratitude due to their Maker. This done, they solemnly took possession of the country in the name of the King and Queen of Spain.

While these ceremonies were performing, the Indians assembled in crowds round them, looking in silent surprize, sometimes at what they considered as floating houses, and, sometimes at the extraordinary beings which they had conveyed across the waves. Of the meaning of the ceremonies they were perfectly ignorant; for of all the religious and solemn acts of the Spaniards they comprehended not one. Alas! had they known the consequences that were to follow, they would have rent the air with groans, and have shed the last drop of their blood to have driven back the strangers upon whom they now gazed with so much admiration and respect.

Charlotte. Dear father, you surprize me! Did any thing particular happen?

Father. Have patience, and you shall know all. The more the astonished Indians examined the actions of the Spaniards, the

less they could comprehend. The colour of the Europeans, their beards, their dress, their arms, their behaviour, all was new and wonderful ; but when at length they heard the thunder of the cannon and musketry, their astonishment was beyond all bounds, and they looked upon it, as a certainty, that the strangers, armed, as they conceived, with the thunder and fire of Heaven, were not mortals, but beings elevated above the condition of human nature, children of their divinity, the Sun, who had condescended to visit them.

Christian. Did these people then worship the Sun ?

Father. Yes, my child ; among the Americans, some, who possessed a little more sense than the rest, were so struck with the beauty and splendour of that great luminary, with its fire, which vivifies all nature, and, with the regularity of its course, that they mistook it for the most beneficent and powerful of all beings — for God himself. Others, on the contrary, imagined one or several gods in the human form ; while others again were so simple and dull of understanding, as never yet to have reflected on the cause of the world, or its daily changes. These poor creatures had not, therefore, you see any idea of the true God, but lived, careless of knowing whence they came, or what would become of them.

If the appearance of the Spaniards astonished the Indians, they were, in their turn, little less surprized at the many new and singular object they beheld. They saw herbs, plants, trees, and animals of various kinds, totally different from those of Europe, and beheld men, who seemed to belong to another class of beings than themselves. They were of the middle size ; their skin was of the colour of copper, their hair long and black, their chins without beards, their air mild and bashful, their faces, as also other parts of their bodies, painted in a whimsical manner. Some were quite naked, and others nearly so. Their ears, nostrils, and heads, were loaded with different ornaments, made of feathers, shells, and gold plates. At first they were timid and reserved ; but when Columbus began to distribute amongst them different trifles, such as glass beads, ribbons, and little bells, they reposed so much confidence in their (supposed) celestial guests, that when they returned in the evening, to their vessels, a number of Indians accompanied them in their canoes (which were formed of the trunks of trees hollowed,) either with a view of satisfying their curiosity farther, or of bartering for gewgaws. In exchange they gave cotton spun into thread after their fashion ; javelins, the points of which were formed of a strong fish bone ; all sorts of fruits, and paroquettes. Each was

so eager to procure some European bauble, that they carefully collected the pieces of a broken pot that were scattered on the deck, and joyfully gave twenty-five pounds of fine spun cotton for some copper counters, which could not possibly be of any use to them. The novelty alone, and the idea of receiving them from the white men, gave all the value to these worthless trifles.

The next day Columbus visited the coasts of the island, accompanied by a great number of the natives, of whom he enquired, by significant signs, whence they procured those gold plates with which their nostrils were decorated. He understood, in return, that they were not found in that isle, but in another situated to the south, which, according to their account, produced large quantities. This rich country, Columbus, by their directions, resolved to explore.

Frederic. Was he then so covetous, father ?

Father. I did not tell you that he was covetous ; but having promised the Queen of Spain, and his avaricious companions, that he would conduct them to countries that would enrich them all, it was natural he should be desirous to keep his word. He, accordingly, therefore, re-embarked, accompanied by seven Indians, who agreed to serve him as guides

and interpreters, and directed and his course southward.

In his way he met with several isles, the three largest of which only he visited, naming them, Santa Maria de la Conception, Ferdinand, and Isabella. Look for them on this other map,* which I have brought for your inspection. As no gold was to be found in those islands, and the Indians, upon a repetition of his inquiries, pointed always to the south, he continued there but a short time, and proceeded on this voyage. In one of these islands they observed dogs that were quite mute, a circumstance that appeared, at that time, singular. They also saw there an alligator, an animal of the lizard kind, very nearly resembling a crocodile. Having continued their course a short time longer, they discovered a country distinguished by its great extent, and the nature of its soil, from the islands they had hitherto seen. Instead of being level and uniform, it presented to the eye mountains and vallies, agreeably diversified by forests, meadows, and rivers. Columbus himself could not determine whether it was a part of the continent, or only a large island; but some days after he learnt that it was really an island, and that, in the

* A map of the Gulf of Mexico, by Ritchere.

language of the country, it was called Cuba. Here it is on the map, between the twentieth and twenty-third degree of north latitude.

Nicholas. Ah! is it not the island where the Havannah is, the port which is the rendezvous of the galleons, when they make their voyage to Spanish America?

Father. The same; and of all the register ships likewise.

Mathias. What is meant by galleons and register ships?

Father. I will tell you. The galleons were the vessels which the King of Spain, every year, previous to the late South American revolution, sent to America for gold, silver, and other precious things, which were collected there. The register ships, on the contrary, were those which had on board European merchandize, which the Spanish merchants, who purchased the permission, sent to America, in exchange for the productions of the country. These vessels were bound, the one for Vera Cruz, in Mexico, and the other for Carthagena, and Porto Bello, in Terra Firma. Look at the two ports on the map.

Theophilus. But still I cannot understand why they should call them register ships.

Father. Because all that was sent from Spain to America, on board of those vessels, was first exactly registered, lest the privateers should carry into America a greater quantity

of merchandize than the king allowed for the stipend paid.

John. Are not the galleons called also the silver fleet ?

Father. Not now. Before they were classed as register ships, a single fleet was yearly sent to America, freighted with merchandize, partly on the king's account, and partly on that of private merchants, and returned to Spain loaded with gold and silver ; but as these transports are now known by the sole name of register ships, the appellation of silver fleet is no longer in use. But to return,—Columbus cast anchor at the mouth of a large river, impatient to obtain a knowledge of the country and its inhabitants ; but at the sight of the European vessels, the latter forsook their cabins, and fled to the mountains,—one only had courage to approach the ship in a little boat, and to ascend the deck. Having ensured the friendship of this Indian by some trifling presents, the admiral sent him on shore with one of those he had brought from Guanahami, and two Spaniards were commissioned to reconnoitre the country, and inspire the natives with confidence ; a greater number he justly feared would only intimidate them farther.

In the mean time the vessels were much damaged, and it was thought necessary to caulk them. Do you know what this means ?

Henry. Oh ! yes, father, stopping the leaks of the vessels, and pitching and greasing them anew. I know also that for these repairs the ships are usually laid on one side.

Father. I am pleased to find you so well informed, and will now proceed. The two Spaniards, after having advanced up the country more than a dozen leagues, returned, and made their report to the admiral nearly in these words :— “ We found a great part of the country we have traversed cultivated, and the different regions apparently extremely fertile. The fields produce maize, or Indian corn, and a root which, when roasted, tastes like bread. We at length arrived at a small town, consisting of about fifty houses all of wood, and containing about a thousand inhabitants. The most considerable of them came out to meet us, and, having learnt from the Indians what people we were, led us into the town, where they assigned us a spacious lodgment. They seated us in a sort of couch made in the shape of some animal ; the eyes and ears were of gold, and the tail served for the back of the seat. We were no sooner placed than the Indians seated themselves beside us on the ground, kissed our hands and feet, and expressed so much veneration for us, that we clearly perceived they took us for celestial beings. They pressed us to eat of their roasted roots, the taste of which very

much resembled chesnuts. We observed the whole assembly was composed of men only ; but these after a certain time withdrawing, were replaced by so many women, who paid us the same honours. To conclude, — when we expressed a desire to return, a crowd of the inhabitants proposed to accompany us ; but we entreated them to remain, and accepted this honour only on the part of the cacique or king, and his son, who as you see have accompanied us, and every where given orders that we should be treated with the utmost attention.”

The admiral expressed his acknowledgments to the two princes, and entertained them on board his vessel with great respect. He inquired concerning the country where the gold was found. They pointed to the east, but could not comprehend why the white men should discover such a passion for a metal which, in their estimation, was of little value ; while the whites, on the contrary, were not less surprized at their simplicity.

Columbus shortened his sojourn in the isle, that he might bend his course, according to the new direction he had received, to the country in which he hoped to discover the gold mines, which were now the principal object of his pursuit. This country was called by the Indians, Haiti. He left Cuba on the 19th of

November, and took with him twelve of the natives with the design of carrying them to Spain. Strange as it may appear, they left their country with the utmost indifference ; Columbus having prudently taken care to render their abode in the vessel in all points agreeable to them. The wind blowing contrary for several days, the admiral was obliged to tack.

Charlotte. As our sloop did on the Elbe during our voyage to York ?*

Father. Yes. He was in the same manner obliged to steer sometimes one way, sometimes another, the wind not permitting him to proceed in a direct line. Alonzo Pinzon, captain of the Pinta, endeavoured to profit by this circumstance ; and, as his ship was a swifter sailer than the others, attempted to separate from the admiral, with the view of arriving first at the country where the gold mines were to found, and loading himself with treasure before his comrades arrived.

Columbus, who suspected his intention, made a signal for him to bring to ; but Pinzon paid no regard to it, and did all in his power to accelerate the course of his vessel, that he might satisfy the avarice which made him forget the obedience due to his commander.

* In the neighbourhood of Stade.

Theophilus. Fye ! How base and odious was such behaviour !

Frederic. Permit me to ask you, father, what is meant by a signal ?

Father. It is a sign made either by the report of cannon, the hoisting of certain flags, or other expedients that may be seen from afar, by which the commander of a fleet or squadron makes his orders known to the captains of the other vessels. Columbus being unable to remedy this misfortune, bore it with patience ; and as the atmosphere became so thick that it seemed dangerous to continue at sea, he returned with the two vessels that remained with him to the isle of Cuba, where he cast anchor in one of its bays.

He employed the time he was obliged to pass there in reconnoitring the country, which every where presented a fertile and smiling aspect. One observation with respect to the inhabitants at first disgusted the Spaniards ; this was, their greedily devouring a species of large spider, worms bred in decayed wood, and fish half dressed, the eyes of which they swallowed raw. By degrees, some Spaniards were tempted to imitate them, and found no inconvenience from such nutriment.

As soon as the wind changed, Columbus set sail for the isle of Haiti, and in pursuit of the perfidious Pinzon. The distance was but sixteen leagues, and the 6th of Decem-

ber he arrived at Haiti. This island he called Hispaniola, or Little Spain, because it appeared, in some measure, to resemble that country in the nature of the soil. It is of all the countries he discovered almost the only one that has preserved the name he gave it till the present day.*

Henry. But is it not also called St. Domingo?

Father. It is; because a city which is become the capital of the isle has been since built there, to which the name has been given.

On the arrival of Columbus the inhabitants fled into the woods; and as for the *Pinta*, they could gain no tidings of it. The admiral, therefore, soon left the harbour, and steered northward along the coast. Having cast anchor in another haven, he was more successful in gaining the confidence of the natives. An Indian woman whom they had seized and loaded with presents, gave her countrymen so advantageous a description of the Spaniards, that they no longer hesitated to approach them, in order to behold, and in their turn partake of, the wonderful things with which their comrade had been entertained.

With respect to their persons and manners these people differed in nothing from the na-

* It is now also called Haiti.

tives of Cuba and Guanahami. Like them, they were not clothed, and their skins of a copper colour ; they were ignorant and timid, and had not less of gentleness in their character. Struck with admiration at all they heard and saw, they also appeared to believe the Spaniards were not men, but beings of a superior order ; more gold was displayed in their ornaments than in those of the former islanders, but like them they held the metal so cheaply, that they thought themselves happy in exchanging it for glass beads, pins, little bells, and other baubles of that kind. When Columbus inquired concerning the place where they found the gold, they pointed to the eastern part ; and, in consequence of this information, he again set sail, in the sanguine hope of soon discovering a source of immense riches.

DIALOGUE VII.

WHEN they had anchored in another bay of the same isle, the cacique, or king of the country, who had received information concerning the white men, deigned to visit the admiral in person. His suite was consider-

able ; four men bore him on their shoulders in a palanquin, a sort of sedan chair, his royal person was not loaded with habiliments any more than were those of his naked supporters. He did not make the least difficulty in coming immediately on board ; and when informed that the admiral was at dinner, he desired to be introduced, accompanied by two old men, who appeared to be his ministers. He seated himself by Columbus with a countenance expressing respect and confidence, while the two old men placed themselves at his feet. They served him with different dishes, and some wine ; of which having partaken, he sent the remainder to the people of his suite, who had remained on deck. The repast finished, he presented the admiral with several plates of gold, as also with a belt curiously wrought. Columbus in return gave him a string of amber beads, a pair of red slippers, a quilt, and a flask of orange-flower water ; presents with which his Indian Majesty was so transported, that in the excess of his acknowledgments, he desired that the admiral might be informed that the whole country was at his disposal.

The demeanour of this naked monarch towards his subjects was dignified, but to the Spaniards it was perfectly familiar. He viewed every thing with great attention, and testified infinite surprize at all the extraordina-

ry things he observed in the vessel. In the evening desiring to be re-conducted on shore, he was suffered to use his pleasure ; and to strengthen the impressions of astonishment with which he left the vessel, the admiral accompanied his farewell with a salute of cannon. This confirmed their opinion of the celestial origin of the Spaniards, since it appeared that they disposed of the very thunder itself. Their veneration for the august strangers carried them so far, as to kiss the very traces their feet had imprinted on the earth.

As this country was not that which contained the gold mines, Columbus prepared to sail further to the east. From all the information hitherto received, it appeared that the gold was found in certain mountainous districts, which depended on a powerful cacique. To this prince Columbus despatched deputies, and, having received from him the most pressing invitation, sailed immediately to the place. Alas ! had he foreseen the misfortune that was to attend him in this short course, he would have been less eager to embark in it, and rather have renounced all the silver and gold than have paid so dear for the possession of it.

Peter. What could happen ? I am impatient to hear.

Father. They advanced in their new course till they reached a cape, where the ad-

miral, on account of a dead calm, ordered his men to furl the sails at about a league off land. His anxiety for the last two days had not suffered him to take any repose ; but exhausted nature now claimed her rights, and Columbus, having committed the helm to the pilot, with strict orders not to leave it, towards midnight went to rest. Scarcely was he asleep when the crew, thinking themselves sheltered from all danger, followed his example ; even the pilot, presuming on the calm, did not scruple, in contempt of the orders of his superior, to transfer the charge confided to him to a cabin-boy, and to commit himself to repose also. Thus was an inexperienced lad the only watch on board. While the whole crew was buried in profound sleep, a current insensibly carried the vessel towards the coast, and suddenly it received so violent a shock, that the cabin-boy in his fright let go the helm. Roused by his cries, Columbus sprung upon deck, perceived the rocks, and was immediately sensible that the vessel had struck. Seized with terror and dismay, every one but Columbus yielded to despair ; he alone preserved sufficient presence of mind to give the necessary orders for saving the vessel if that possibility remained.

He commanded some of his men immediately to embark in the long boat, and at a certain distance to cast an anchor, by means of

which they might tow the ship, and disengage it from the rocks ; but such was the despair and the pusillanimity of those whom he deputed, that, instead of executing his orders, they thought only of their own preservation, and attempted to save themselves on board the Nina. The captain of that vessel, however, refused to receive men who had so basely betrayed their trust and forsaken their commander ; they were therefore obliged to return to the wreck. In the mean time, Columbus, to lighten the vessel, ordered the masts to be struck, and threw overboard those things that were least necessary ; but all was in vain. The vessel opened near the keel, and the water suddenly poured in in such quantities, that all hopes of preserving it was destroyed. The admiral therefore and his men had recourse to the boats, which came to their assistance, and, by dint of oars, reached the Nina.

The next day Columbus sent to inform the cacique of the misfortune that had happened, and to request the assistance of his vassals in preserving from the wreck that part of the cargo which it was possible to save. The cacique, whose name was Guakanahari, expressed the most generous concern at these melancholy tidings, and, with tears in his eyes, attended by all his subjects, flew to the suc-

cour of the Europeans. Far from profiting by the accident to embezzle any of the cargo, these generous islanders exerted their utmost efforts to preserve all. They assembled with the greatest celerity a number of canoes, by the help of which, and so many hands, almost every thing of value was transported to land. The kind Guakanahari took all that was preserved under his care, and sent from time to time, entreating Columbus not to be uneasy, and to assure him in his name, that every thing should be restored. He caused the effects of the vessel to be deposited near his own dwelling, till the huts in which they were to be kept could be emptied. He also for their security appointed a guard over them; a precaution which however seemed little necessary, so heartily did his subjects appear to lament the misfortune of the white men.

Columbus, in the relation he gave on his return to the court of Spain, describes the character of these amiable savages in the most interesting manner:—“To sum up all,” says he, “these islanders are so gentle, humane, and peaceable, that I think I may venture to assure your majesty, that there are not better men on the earth. They love their fellow-creatures as they do themselves. Their manners are pleasing, gracious, and animated; and although it must be allowed they go

naked, I entreat your highness to believe that they have among them many laudable customs. The king is served with great respect, and his manners are so noble, that it is a pleasure to see him act; nor is the excellent memory of these people less worthy of observation, than the ardent desire they discover for improvement."

Mother. Well, my children, what do you think of those Indians?

The Children. Think! Oh, we are delighted with them!

Mother. Yet they are savages! — men without education, without even the knowledge of God!

Father. It would be to our shame and eternal disgrace to be surpassed by them in humanity and goodness of heart! With how many more motives to act well has Providence furnished us than those poor Indians, deprived of all instruction! Oh, my children! let us earnestly endeavour to render ourselves worthy of these great advantages. What will become of us, if, one day weighed in the balance with these good savages, we are found wanting in rectitude and generosity! (*A short pause, after which the father continues:*) Guakanahari having observed the Europeans' fondness for gold, to console the Spaniards for their misfortune presented them with several plates of that metal, with a prom-

ise that he would cause a more considerable quantity to be brought from a place called *Cibao*. Several of his subjects also supplied them, delighted with the opportunity of exchanging their ore for different sorts of European trifles. One of them who held a very large piece of this metal in his hand, extended the other towards a Spaniard, who put into it a little bell. The Indian, delighted with his prize, immediately dropped the gold, and ran off as fast as possible.

While Columbus's men were tasting the sweets of their abode in this island, his heart was a prey to the most distressing anxiety. The best of his vessels was lost, — the treacherous Pinzon had forsaken him, and the sole vessel that remained with him was so small and weatherbeaten, that it would neither contain all his men, nor could without temerity be employed in so long a voyage as that from America to Spain. What was to be done in this critical situation? After mature reflection, he resolved to re-embark with part only of his people, and, braving every danger, to sail for Spain, to inform the court of the discoveries he had made, and to leave the remainder of his crew in the Spanish island as a colony. This resolution was universally approved, and applications were instantly made to Columbus by many of his men for leave to remain. The Cacique Guakanahari him-

self, so far from opposing their design, thought himself fortunate in detaining some of these strangers of celestial origin, who would defend him and his subjects against their common enemy.

Nicholas. Had they, then, any enemies ?

Father. By what they learnt from Guakanahari, several isles situated to the south-east were inhabited by a barbarous and ferocious nation called Carai-bees. These people, he said, from time to time invaded his country ; and as his subjects were not in a situation to make head against them, all that remained for their preservation was to retreat as speedily as possible to the mountains. Columbus promised to take them under his protection ; and to give them some idea of the military skill of the Europeans, he made his troops perform some evolutions before them. The Indians viewed all with astonishment ; but when Columbus caused the artillery of the wrecked vessel to be fired, their terror was so great that they fell to the ground stunned, covering their heads with their hands. Guakanahari himself was struck with consternation ; but Columbus restored his confidence by giving him to understand that he should employ these thunders only against the Carai-bees. To render him more sensible of the effects of these dreadful engines, he ordered

a cannon to be levelled and fired against the wreck, the ball of which passed through the vessel, and fell into the sea.

The astonishment of the cacique surpassed all bounds ; he returned to his house wrapt in profound meditation, more convinced than ever that his guests were the descendants of Heaven, since like Heaven itself the thunder was at their command.

Mathias. But, my dear father, I cannot conceive how the Spaniards and the savages could converse, as they were ignorant of each other's language ?

Father. They spoke by gestures, signs, and single words, which they had caught one from another ; a language very imperfect, no doubt, but sufficient in many cases to communicate their reciprocal ideas. But to continue ; — after this, some days were employed in erecting a small fortress, in doing which the officious islanders gave the Spaniards all the assistance in their power. Unhappy men ! they knew not that they were forging for themselves the fetters they were hereafter to wear.

Whenever the admiral came on shore, Guakanahari paid him some distinguished honours, which were always returned by the liberality of Columbus. One day the cacique conducted him into a hut prepared for his reception ; when taking from his own head a gold crown, he placed it on that of his guest. Columbus

immediately took from his neck a string of small pearls which he usually wore, and tied it on Guakanahari ; he also disrobed himself of a splendid habit, and clothed the cacique in it with his own hands — besides this, he slipped on his finger a silver ring, and sent for a pair of red buskins, which he also made him put on.

These mutual attentions fixed the seal of friendship to the treaty already formed between them. The fort was completed in ten days ; at the end of which time, Columbus selected from those who were desirous of remaining, thirty-eight, and appointed for their commander Diego de Arada. He enjoined them punctually to obey the chief he had nominated, to try all possible means of preserving the good opinion that Guakanahari and his subjects entertained of the Spaniards, and attentively to study the language of the country. The place where he left them he called Navidad (that is, Nativity.)

Columbus, having re-embarked on board his shattered vessel, weighed anchor the 4th of January, 1493, amidst the acclamations of those whom he left behind. What a bold and hazardous enterprize ! It is impossible, without trembling for the life of this brave and excellent man, to behold him in a single bark, weather-beaten and damaged, attempt to brave

the dangers of an ocean yet so imperfectly known.

Charlotte. Oh ! if he had but remained with Guakanahari.

Theophilus. If that base Pinzon had not left him, they might have assisted each other.

Father. The fate of that treacherous wretch and his vessel was an enigma. Columbus had not been able to gain any tidings of him ; he concluded, therefore, either that he had perished, or had sailed for Europe, with the view of being the first to bear the news of the great discoveries that had been made, and perhaps also with the intention of blackening his character at court, in order to deprive him of the recompense he had so justly earned. This last suspicion made Columbus more sensibly feel the necessity of accelerating his return, that his presence might defeat the pernicious designs of his perfidious enemy. In the mean while, effectually to destroy every doubt which might arise respecting the truth of his report, he had previously ordered specimens of every thing that he had found in the newly discovered countries worthy of observation ; gold especially, as the thing most to be desired, was not forgotten. The natives of the different isles they had visited, who had agreed to accompany him, were also conveyed on board ; as were also several unknown birds, and other curiosities,

as well natural as artificial, calculated to give an idea of the importance of his discoveries. Sailing eastward, Columbus first coasted Hispaniola, that he might in passing take a view of the other parts of the country which had before escaped his observation. The day after his departure, he perceived at a distance something that had the appearance of a ship. He immediately steered towards it, and, contrary to all his hopes, discovered the vessel of Alonzo de Pinzon. You will readily imagine what must have been the joy of the admiral and the whole crew on this unexpected encounter.

When Pinzon came on board the admiral's ship, he endeavoured to justify himself by throwing the whole blame of their separation on the bad weather, which had caused him, he said, against his inclination, to deviate from his course. Columbus, though sensible of the falsehood of this excuse, treated him with indulgence, being led to do so, not only by the natural generosity of his temper, but on the present occasion by prudence. He accepted his apologies therefore, and restored him to favour, secretly pleased that he was not reduced to the necessity of trusting the proofs of his discoveries to a single vessel, and that in so bad a condition.

Charles. Where could Pinzon have stayed so long ?

Father. He had anchored on the coast of Hispaniola, in order to traffic for gold, but in a different part from that where Columbus had landed ; he had therefore made no new discovery.

Mother. Well, my children, that you may have cause to rejoice in the discovery of America, your supper this evening shall consist wholly of its productions.

The Children. Indeed !

Mother. What do you think of cocoa ? — or something that you will not perhaps so well approve — potatoes ?

The Children. Oh, potatoes ! potatoes ! our favourite dish !

Father. Long live the memory of Columbus, to whom we are indebted for this favourite root !

The Children. Huzza ! Columbus for ever !

DIALOGUE VIII.

Father. Come, children, let us attend Columbus in his return to Spain.

The Children. We are all ready, father.

Father. A fresh gale from the west opportunely rose, and, filling the sails of the vessels, appeared to lend them wings. The

crew, overjoyed, already thought themselves in Spain, surrounded by curious enquirers, who listened with avidity to the wonderful details of their adventures.

Mother. But cannot you, my dear, put them at once on shore, that they may in reality ease their hearts by the recital of their adventures ?

Father. I would readily follow your advice ; but in the west I see a storm forming on the horizon, which makes me tremble for my poor adventurers. I am desirous therefore of sheltering them in some good port ; but unfortunately no land is to be found between Hispaniola and Spain.

John. Oh, yes, the Azores, father.

Father. You are right. They certainly might have found refuge there, could they have reached them in time ; but the storm approached rapidly, the darkness increased, and the crew in silent anxiety expected the event, their eyes fixed on the admiral, who gave his orders with his usual intrepidity. The sea swelled insensibly, the vessel became the sport of the waves, the cordage gave way and the masts resounded with the force of the wind. Lightning, the crashing of thunder, and darkness, rapidly succeeded each other, while the rain poured on them in torrents. The atmosphere appeared in flames, the thunder mingled with the roaring of the ocean,

whose tremendous waves threw the vessels one moment towards heaven, and the next precipitated them into the abyss.

Terror and dismay seized upon the whole crew. Some on their knees with uplifted hands implored the preservation of their lives, — others silent, pale, and motionless, deprived of all sense, bore a nearer resemblance to dead than living men, — while others, recurring to a superstitious expedient, made ardent vows of going on a pilgrimage to some church dedicated to the Virgin, in the first Christian country wherein they should land.

Charlotte. I do not understand what going on a pilgrimage is, father ?

Father. I will explain it. Those Christians called Roman Catholics, formerly thought it an action pleasing in the sight of God, to undertake a long and painful journey, from the place where they dwelt, to some other country, in order to pass a certain time there in fasting and prayer. A journey performed with this pious intention was called a pilgrimage, and those who undertook it, pilgrims. Pilgrimages were at the time of Columbus very frequent, and were usually rendered by the pilgrims as painful as possible. Some travelled bare-foot, wore sackcloth next their skin, and endured on the way all the severities of hunger and thirst, heat and cold. They scourged their bodies with

whips, and esteemed themselves happy in proportion to the misery and torments they suffered ; believing they should, by their voluntary mortifications, make their peace with God, and obtain pardon for all their sins. Conformably with this idea, whenever they were in any great danger, they thought it the most certain means of insuring the Divine assistance to make a vow of undertaking such a pious journey. This was the expedient to which the sailors in the vessel of Columbus had recourse. Do you now comprehend, Charlotte ?

Charlotte. Yes, father.

Father. To return then to my narrative. Columbus and his men remained in the deplorable state I have described, floating between life and death, expecting every wave to be that which was to decide their fate. In vain Columbus, ever collected and calm, employed all the means that prudence and experience suggested ; he endeavoured to encourage his men ; all energy was lost, terror had benumbed their faculties, and they appeared like bodies bereft of souls to animate them, while the storm raged with a fury that nothing could resist. At length, no longer being able to dissemble even with himself, that he must renounce all hope of human succour, with a heavy heart he withdrew into his cab-

in ; and what, my children, do you think he did ?

Frederic. Prayed to God, father, to be sure.

Father. Doubtless he directed to Heaven a devout submission and acquiescence in the Divine will ; his life he was sensible, belonged to him from whom it was received, and he was content to resign it. All he asked of the Almighty in this trying moment was, that he would be pleased to give success to a resolution he had formed in the very moment of expecting death.

Ferdinand. What can he have resolved on ?

Father. The greatest source of uneasiness to Columbus, ever more occupied with the general good of his species than with his own safety, was the idea that his death would deprive Europe of all the probable advantages she would reap from his discoveries. This was a heart-rending reflection ; and he resolved to think only of preventing a misfortune which he considered as greater than all the rest. When I have informed you of his proceedings, you will judge what greatness of soul that man must have possessed, who, in momentary danger of death, was capable of such wise resolutions and such unpremeditated activity. He took a parchment, and sitting down wrote upon it the most important intel-

ligence concerning his discoveries ; this he wrapped in linen dipped in oil, covered that with a waxed cloth, and put the whole package into a closed cask, which he threw into the sea.

Mathias. Why did he do this ?

Henry. I think it is not difficult to guess ; he naturally thought the sea would in time throw the cask on shore.

Father. Yes ; and in case any person found it, he might discover to the world the treasure it enclosed. He next tied a second cask, containing the same information, to the poop of his own ship, in order that it might remain there when the vessel should strike. I now ask you, my children, which of us would have been capable, in such circumstances, of exerting equal presence of mind ?

John. Not one of us, I believe ; at least it would not have been me.

Father. Would you wish to know the method Columbus took to acquire this uncommon fortitude ?

John. We are all attention, dear father.

Father. At your age, my children, he accustomed himself to restrain his passions ; in every little misfortune or embarrassment he exercised the virtues of courage and forbearance, never yielded to terror or despondency, but instantly revolved in his mind the means of surmounting the difficulty. He relied on

himself only for assistance, never claiming the hand of another when his own was sufficient for the undertaking he had in view ; for sincerely did he despise those weak effeminate beings, who, unfit for every human function, suffer others to think and act for them. By these means, and by a laborious, active, and at the same time a pious life, which he had led from his earliest youth, he acquired the habit of meeting every event with calmness, of shrinking at no danger however great, and of applying on the instant the whole force of his mind either to the averting or surmounting it. Thus, my children, must you conduct yourselves, if you would become such men as Columbus.

Theophilus. And be assured, father, we will endeavour to profit by his example.

Frederic (to the servant.) Jane, do not to-morrow morning think of helping me to lace my spatterdashes, I shall entirely do them myself ; do you hear ?

Jane. Oh, never fear ; I shall not press my services upon you.

Frederic. I would not have you. Father, should I not lace them myself ?

Father. Certainly. If you would become a Columbus ; if indeed you mean to pass your life like an old woman at your fire-side, it is another thing.

Frederic. Oh, father ! how can you think of such a thing ?

Mother. But, my children, we lose sight of Columbus ; I am on thorns to know what will become of him.

Father. I will continue, then. The tempest still raged with its former violence, and to augment the terrors of death which they every moment expected, the darkest and most horrible night succeeded ; not a star, whose benign lustre could convey a ray of hope into their depressed hearts, was to be seen ; the thickest gloom obscured both heaven and earth, and the storm, during the whole night abated not an instant its terrors. Thus scarcely breathing, they continued floating between life and death, till at length ——

Some of the Children. Oh, poor Columbus !

Father. Till at length, my children, this dreadful night being past, the first rays of the sun returned, and, to the inexpressible transports of the crew, recalled them to life and hope, by the discovery of a distant land which appeared to rise out of the bosom of the ocean.

The Children. Oh, how rejoiced they must have been !

Father. At first the admiral himself could not determine what this land was, but on ap-

proaching nearer he found it to be one of the Azores.

Christian. Heaven be praised, they are safe ! I was in terrible fear for them.

Father. They are not yet so, dear Christian. Though the land was before them, the wind, which continued its violence, rendered the approach to the coast so extremely dangerous, that, notwithstanding the ardent desire every one had once more to disembark, they were constrained to pass four days longer in tacking and manœuvring in the midst of the dangers that surrounded them. The *Pinta* had disappeared, and it was doubtful whether she had perished, or whether Pinzon, profiting a second time by the obscurity and the tempest, had not deserted the admiral to carry into Spain the first tidings of the new discoveries.

At length the weather becoming somewhat calm, the admiral embraced the moment to gain the shore, and cast anchor. The Portuguese soon flocked to him with the view of selling them refreshments, and of informing themselves at the same time whence they came, and whither they were bound. As Columbus understood from them, that at a short distance from the coast there was a chapel dedicated to the Virgin, he permitted half of his crew to land in order to perform their vow of pilgrimage. With respect to

himself, exhausted with fatigue and watching, he was forced to remain on board ; but he ordered those who left the ship to return as soon as possible, that their comrades might also acquit themselves of the same devotional act. Having promised to attend to these orders, the whole party set forward bare-foot, and marched in procession towards the chapel. Their return was expected in the course of a few hours ; but Columbus was not a little surprized, when two hours after the expected period elapsed, and no one returned. Night, which now approached and brought no tidings of them, increased his astonishment, and gave birth to suspicions which the return of day was necessary to clear. Morning at length appeared, when the cause of their absence was no longer a mystery ; for Columbus with infinite astonishment learnt, that the Portuguese Governor had actually seized upon his unarmed men, and put them in prison.

Columbus received the intelligence of this treachery with the most lively indignation, and, as his expostulations were ineffectual, protested with an oath, that he would not depart till he had taken a hundred Portuguese, and ravaged the whole isle ; a menace which had such an effect on the governor, that he sent deputies to question him whether he and his ships were really in the service of the

King of Spain ; and when they were satisfied on this head, the prisoners were released. It is said, that the governor had received orders from the King of Portugal, his master, to seize if it were possible the person of Columbus, apparently with the view of keeping him and his men in confinement during their lives, that he might privately possess himself of the countries he had discovered. But this design having failed on account of Columbus remaining on board, the governor judged it prudent to liberate the men, and excuse himself by pretending that he did not believe they were Spaniards. Here, again, my children, we see that what we call misfortunes are often real blessings, though to our imperfect view they seldom at the moment appear so. A violent sciatica deprived Columbus of the pleasure of disembarking after a long and perilous voyage ; this he doubtless regarded as a misfortune, but how was he deceived ! It was to him a manifest blessing ; for, had he been in health, he would have left his ship, been arrested, and probably passed the remainder of his days in a melancholy dungeon. Happy are we that our destinies are in the hands of God, who, even when he finds it necessary to afflict us, can turn our misfortunes to a wise and salutary end. Rejoicing in the happy issue of this disagreeable affair, Columbus again set sail, hoping in a short time to reach the

term of all his labours ; but Heaven had decreed him yet another trial.

A terrible storm again arose, the vessel was driven from its course, the sails were rent in pieces, the masts shivered, and every wave threatened its destruction. In this desperate situation the vessel had continued forty-eight hours, when on a sudden near midnight some rocks were discerned, towards which it was forcibly driven. Had it proceeded in this direction a minute longer, it had inevitably struck ; but that presence of mind which never deserted Columbus in the moment of danger, enabled him to double the Cape, and by these means happily to save the vessel, and all that it contained. He soon discovered that he was on the coast of Portugal, at the mouth of the river Tagus, where he at length cast anchor.

At day break he despatched a courier to the court of Madrid, to acquaint the king of Spain with his safe arrival ; and another to Lisbon to ask permission of his Portuguese majesty to proceed up the river to the city, in order to refit. Leave being granted, he immediately sailed for Lisbon, where the news of the arrival of a vessel after so surprising a voyage was no sooner known, than the inhabitants flocked in crowds to the port. The shore swarmed with men, and the river with barks, every one ardently desiring to be-

hold this extraordinary man, who had projected and accomplished so stupendous and hazardous an enterprize. Some congratulated him on his success, while others lamented the misfortune of their country in rejecting the overtures of so elevated a genius. The King of Portugal himself could no longer refuse Columbus his esteem, although he with regret foresaw the prodigious increase of riches and power which Spain would derive by his means ; advantages which, misled by evil councils, he had rejected with so little consideration. He gave orders that all imaginable honours should be paid him ; that he should be furnished with refreshments, and wrote with his own hand to request that he would visit him. Columbus hastened to attend the invitation, and, on his arrival, found the whole court, by the express order of the king, assembled. The king, during the interview, insisted upon his being seated, and to discourse with his head covered ; while he listened to the account of his discoveries, and alternately testified the greatest admiration and the most lively regret. Columbus, on his side, modestly enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing those unworthy parasites who had formerly brow-beaten and ridiculed him as a vain projector, now dazzled with the eclat of his exploits, and overwhelmed with shame and confusion at the recollection of the indig-

nities they had made him suffer. The king, by the most flattering proposals, endeavoured to engage him in his service, but all was in vain ; such was the integrity of Columbus, that, had he tempted him with the half of his kingdom, his fidelity would have remained unshaken towards the country, to the service of which he had now wholly devoted himself.

Mother. Excellent man !

Father. At length, having taken a respectful farewell of the king, and the most necessary repairs of his ship being completed, he set sail, and steered towards the same Spanish port from which he had departed. He arrived there on the 15th of May, 1493, after an absence in all of seven months and eleven days. There we will leave him to repose after his fatigues. To-morrow I will give you an account of his landing.

Peter. Oh, that will be delightful ! it must be interesting ; I only wish to-morrow were come.

DIALOGUE IX.

Nicholas. Well, my dear father, is not Columbus going to land ?

Father. All in good time, Nicholas ; we

must first see him enter Port de Palos. Scarcely had news arrived of the approach of his vessel, when all the inhabitants flocked thither to convince themselves that so agreeable a report was not a delusion. The vessel soon approached sufficiently near for one to discern upon the deck a son, another a brother, a third a friend, a fourth a husband ; then was the air rent with joyful acclamations ; — then did a thousand beating bosoms press forward to welcome with tears of joy the dear objects of their long solicitude.

Columbus landed amidst the noise of the artillery of the place, the ringing of bells, and the acclamations of the multitude. Far from presuming on the honours that were paid him, his first care was to acknowledge publicly that the glory of the enterprize was not due to him but to the Almighty, who had crowned it with success. With this view he immediately proceeded to the church, in which, before his departure, he had implored the assistance of the Most High, attended by his crew and all the inhabitants of the town, who accompanied him in procession. Having acquitted himself of this duty, he set out for Barcelona, a city of —

Nicholas. Catalonia, father, a province of Spain ; — is it not ?

Father. It is ; the court was then kept there.

John. But do not historians tell us, father, what is become of Pinzon ?

Father. They do not agree in their accounts concerning him. Some assert that he entered Port de Palos a short time after Columbus ; others, on the contrary, tell us, that having landed some days before him in Galicia, in order to carry to the court the agreeable news of the discoveries, the king refused him an audience till the arrival of Columbus ; a disappointment which was so severe a mortification to this vain ambitious man, that he was seized with a malady which put an end to his life in a few days.

Henry. Your servant, Mr Pinzon.

John. See what he has gained by being so vain and perfidious.

Father. Let us hope that his heart was changed, and that he was sensible of his errors. Columbus, wherever he passed, was surrounded by an incredible multitude, who repeated his name with transport, and rent the air with the most joyful plaudits. He at length arrived at Barcelona, where the king and queen expected him with impatience. To do him honour, the court was ordered to meet him, and the streets were in reality so crowded, that there was scarcely room left for him to pass. I will now give you the order of his entry into the city.

First came the Indians, those he had brought from the newly discovered islands, dressed in the manner of their country, — after them was carried all the gold, whether in plates or dust ; — next followed those who bore specimens of the natural and artificial productions of the new world, such as chests of pepper, balls of cotton, parroquets perched on canes twenty-five feet long, quadrupeds and birds stuffed, and a number of other things which had never till then been seen in Europe. Lastly appeared Columbus himself, on whom all eyes were fixed with mingled pleasure and amazement.

To honour him in a peculiar and more distinguished manner, their majesties received him seated on a throne which they had caused to be erected in a public square. On approaching, according to the custom of those days, he would have prostrated himself at the foot of the throne ; but the king prevented him, gave him his hand to kiss, and placed him at his side in a chair that had been prepared for him. Columbus then with equal modesty and dignity gave a circumstantial account of his discoveries, and presented the productions he had brought from the countries of which he spoke. When his narrative, which filled the whole court with astonishment, was concluded, the king and queen, whose example was followed by the numerous

spectators, prostrated themselves, and returned thanks to God for having suffered so memorable an event, an event that seemed to promise such glorious advantages to Spain, to take place in their days.

After this, the highest honours were bestowed on Columbus. All that had been promised before his departure was now publicly confirmed. *Patents of nobility for him and his whole family were ordered to be made out as speedily as possible ; and so highly was he in favour, that the king never went on horseback unaccompanied by him, — an honour which was till then reserved only for the princes of the blood. But that which gave him more pleasure than all the rest, was, an order which the king gave, to equip a complete fleet immediately for a second voyage. In the interim the king sent an ambassador to Rome, to entreat the pope to allot to the Spaniards (in exclusion of all other powers) the countries that were already, or might in

* “ To perpetuate in his family the glory of his achievement, a coat of arms was assigned him, in which the royal arms, the castle and lion, were quartered with his proper bearings, which were a group of islands surrounded by waves. To these arms was afterwards annexed the motto :

Por Castilla y por Leon,
Nuevo mundo halló Colon.

(For Castile and Leon
Columbus found a new world.)” — IRVING.

future be discovered in the unknown ocean, to be by them and their posterity hereditarily possessed. The Pope, Alexander the Sixth, granted his request ; and drawing on the map a straight line from one pole to the other a hundred leagues from the Azores, and as much from Cape Verd, decreed, that all the country that should be discovered from thence westward should belong to the King of Spain.

Charlotte. But how could the pope give countries that did not belong to him ?

Father. In those days, my child, the pope, as you know from history, was a very powerful personage, who was thought to have the disposing of the whole earth at pleasure, in his quality of vicar of Jesus Christ. A king or prince therefore, who would secure the possession of his dominions, had necessarily recourse to the pope to confirm his right. It is not so now.

Mathias. I am glad of it ; for the pope might one day or other take away our good city of Hamburgh.

Father. In the mean while the equipment of the fleet was carried on so vigorously, that in a short time seventeen vessels, some of them very considerable, were ready to sail from the port of Cadiz. The desire of acquiring riches and honour led incredible numbers of all conditions to offer themselves as

companions of this voyage, and many even expressed a desire of settling in the New World. Columbus not being able to accept all, chose out of the number fifteen hundred, and took care that the vessels were provided with every necessary, not only for so long a voyage, but also for the foundation of several colonies. For this a quantity of tools and instruments of every kind were necessary; several quadrupeds unknown to the New World, such as horses, asses, bulls, cows, &c. all sorts of European grain, with the seeds of those vegetables which it was supposed would succeed in those distant climates. As the erroneous opinion that the newly discovered countries were a part of the Indies, supposed to extend into those seas, still prevailed, in order to distinguish them from that already known, they were called the West Indies, the route towards them being westward. Proper India was, on the contrary, from that time called the East Indies.

Christian. But all America is not called the West Indies?

Father. No; under that denomination are now only comprehended the American islands, situated in the great Gulf of Mexico. But to proceed,—the preparations for their departure being completed, the fleet sailed out of the port of Cadiz the 25th of September.

Columbus, as before, steered to the Canaries, where he cast anchor the 5th of October. Here he laid in a fresh store of water and wood, and took on board more quadrupeds, especially hogs. From those hogs which were embarked at the Canaries, descended all those which, to this day, exist in South America.

Theophilus. But others might be taken there afterwards.

Father. Your remark is just, *Theophilus*. Columbus and his suite sailed from the Canaries the third day, and the wind continuing still favourable, they made in twenty days eight hundred marine leagues; in this course so little worth observation occurred, that, without further ceremony, they shall disembark. On the second of November, therefore, only twenty-six days after their departure from Spain, they cast anchor at an isle to which Columbus gave the name of *Dominica*, the day of its discovery being Sunday, which you know in Latin is equally *Dies Dominica*, or the Lord's day; and *Dies Solis*, or the day of the Sun.

Charles. Is it not one of the little Antilles or Caribee isles, which the French in the last war took from the English?

John. Certainly it is; — look at it on the map.

Father. Not finding the anchorage here

very safe, Columbus soon again set sail, and shortly after discovered several other small isles, the most considerable of which was Marie Galante.

John. I never heard it spoken of in our geographical lessons.

Father. Observe it well, it now belongs to the English. Then Guadaloupe, which now ——

Theophilus. Also belongs to the English.

Father. Columbus called it Guadaloupe, because he had promised the monks of a convent in Spain, that he would bestow the name of their abode on some one of the isles he should in future discover. Next Antigua (*Ancient.*)

Ferdinand. Belonging to the English.

Father. Then Porto Rico (*Rich Port,*) which, as you know, is to this day possessed by the Spaniards. Lastly, Martinico, on which the English have lately seized. On the coast of Guadaloupe they perceived a beautiful cascade, formed by a prodigious quantity of water that issues from a very high and pointed rock. The noise of the torrent is heard at the distance of three leagues. At first they did not discern a single inhabitant, all having on the approach of the vessels deserted their dwellings, and fled to the mountains. At length the Spaniards, who had been sent out to reconnoitre, returned with

two boys whom they had taken ; these informed them that they were not natives of that island, but of another, from which they had been forced by the inhabitants of Guadaloupe. Besides these they found six women, who implored the succour of the Spaniards, informing them, that they were captives condemned to perpetual slavery — it being the custom of the islanders to roast and devour all the men whom they took prisoners in war, and to keep the women as slaves. These poor creatures so ardently solicited their compassion, that they could not refuse to take them on board. The other islands at which Columbus touched, confirmed the information of the women ; and the Cacique Guakanahari had before informed him of the hostile character and barbarities of this nation. Almost in every place where he attempted to land he was received as an enemy, and he found every where traces of the inhuman practice of feasting upon the prisoners taken in war. They beheld with inexpressible horror the bones and skulls of men who had been the victims of this detestable practice, scattered round their dwellings. These abominations, added to the ardent desire he had of returning to the Spaniards he had left in Hispaniola, determined Columbus to hasten his departure from these recently discovered isles ; the more so, as all his attempts to establish a commerce with the na-

tives were fruitless. He continued his course therefore with all diligence, and on 21st of the same month anchored on the coast of Hispaniola, in a road which was not above a day's journey from Navidad. On their arrival Columbus sent some Spaniards on shore ; but they soon returned to inform him that they had discovered near the coast the bodies of two men, each fastened by the neck with a cord made of the bark of a tree to a piece of wood in the form of a cross, — but such was the state of corruption they were in, that they could not say whether they were Indians or Europeans.

These tidings alarmed Columbus, and gave birth to suspicions which were the next day but too fatally confirmed. He passed a melancholy night, and at day-break being arrived at the height of Navidad —

Charlotte. What is the meaning of the height, father.

Father. It means that his fleet was opposite to or off the coast on which he had erected the little fort. Do you recollect how things appeared to us the day we were on the coast of the Baltic Sea? Did not the sea appear gradually to rise?

Charlotte. Oh, yes! when we were at a little distance, it had the appearance of a mountain.

Father. Well then, since the sea appears

to rise, that part of it from which the coast can be discovered is not improperly called the height. Columbus was scarcely arrived at the height of Navidad, when he ordered out the boat, and proceeded to the shore; but what was his terror to find neither the Spaniards he had left there, nor the fort which had been constructed! The ruins only remained, with some arms and tools broken in pieces and scattered on the shore. This sight alone told every thing; and as a confirmation of the melancholy fate of the colonists, eleven of their bodies were found at some distance, bearing evident marks of a violent death. While Columbus and his companions were lamenting the fate of these unfortunate men, and the greater part of the crew were already thinking of the means of revenging on the natives the loss of their comrades, the brother of Guakanahari arrived, and gave a circumstantial detail of the misfortunes that had befallen the colony. The substance of it was this; Columbus had no sooner set sail than the Spaniards who remained, forgetting his salutary advice and the orders he had left on his departure, instead of conducting themselves towards the natives with that humanity and justice necessary to preserve the profound veneration they had conceived of the Europeans, soon gave way to such excess and injustice, that the Indians easily discovered, that

far from being better, they were even worse men than those of a darker colour. The officer whom Columbus had appointed their commander, attempted to keep them within bounds, but neither his exhortations or menaces had any effect. Disdainfully refusing to obey him, they over-ran the island in the most disorderly manner, desolating it by their rapine, and every kind of violence. Their excursions were especially frequent in the district of the cacique of Cibao, on account of the gold that was found there. This cacique, incensed at their atrocities, at length had recourse to arms, surprized them at the moment when, least expecting danger, they were dispersed in parties ; and, having invested the fort, set fire to it. Part of the Spaniards lost their lives in defending it ; and the rest, attempting to escape in a canoe, perished in the waves.

The recorder of these sad events added, that his brother, ever the friend of the Spaniards, although exposed to their insults, had taken arms in favour of them, and that in an engagement with the Cacique of Cibao, he had received a wound, which still confined him. Columbus's men, inclined to suspect the truth of the latter part of this recital, were still desirous of taking a bloody vengeance on the natives ; but Columbus himself was too wise and too humane to enter into their views.

He endeavoured, on the contrary, to convince them of the necessity there was of effecting the establishment of a new colony there ; of reinstating themselves, if it were possible, in the good opinion of the natives, and of regaining their confidence. With this view he strongly recommended to all his people to conduct themselves with the utmost circumspection. He then made a visit to the Cacique Gukanahari, whom he really found confined by a wound, which did not appear to have been received from an European weapon, but from an Indian one of wood. The frank and steady conduct of the cacique spoke for the truth of his recital, which perfectly agreed with that of his brother. Beside this, anxious to put his sincerity beyond all doubt, he presented Columbus with eight hundred little shells, to which the Indians attach a great value, a hundred plates of gold, and three calabashes, filled with gold dust, making together about two hundred weight. On his side, Columbus presented the cacique with different European baubles, which were not found less agreeable. After this interview, Columbus conducted his people into a more pleasant and healthy district, resolving to build there, near the mouth of a river, a regular and well fortified town, which should prove a retreat equally secure and commodious to those whom he

should leave behind. No one was suffered to remain an idle spectator of this labour ; and, by the united force of so many hands in a short time the first European city that was founded in the New World was completed. Columbus named it Isabella, in honour of his sovereign the Queen of Spain.

DIALOGUE X.

Father. While the city of Isabella was building, Columbus had to encounter a thousand difficulties, which a mind like his was alone capable of surmounting. The Spaniards, naturally indolent, and rendered more so by a hot climate, murmured at labours, the necessity of which they had been too much elated to foresee. Intoxicated with the most extravagant hopes, they expected to have found, in the New World, treasures ready culled to their hand ; and from the first moment of their arrival to have passed a life of affluence and idleness. How different was the reality ! Condemned, like the meanest mechanics, to toil from day to day, exposed to the sultry rays of a scorching sun, add to this, the bad state of the air, which occasion-

ed frequent diseases, and the want, which now began to be felt, of many conveniences of life, which, inured to the luxuries of Europe, they knew not how to relinquish ; the mountains of gold they had promised themselves, they were not even permitted to search for, because their admiral had resolved to see his city finished before they visited the interior of the country.

Such were the causes of discontent, which increased every day ; and at length ended in a conspiracy against the life of Columbus. Happily the design was discovered before its execution. The authors of the plot were seized, some were punished, and others were sent to Spain, to be tried for the crime they had projected.

Columbus, at the same time, requested of the king, as speedily as possible, fresh reinforcements, as also a supply of provisions.

In the interim, in order to divert the attention of the malcontents, Columbus selected a large party of his own men, and began his march, with the design of penetrating into the interior of the country. For this he had also another motive, which was, to show the natives the superiority of an European army. He advanced, therefore, with his troops in close ranks, the colours flying, and military music playing, making his cavalry, at the same time, perform evolutions that filled the Indians

with astonishment. They had never before seen horses, and absolutely at first thought the horse and its rider formed but one individual. After this, you may easily suppose the terror this monster, half man and half beast, inspired. The greater part concealed themselves in their cabins, and were simple enough to fancy they were secure, by barricading the entrance with canes. Columbus, for guides, had taken with him some Indians of Guakana-hari's district. These, whenever they arrived at a cabin, entered, and furnished themselves with whatever they had occasion for, the owners not making the least opposition. It might truly be said, that those good people possessed all things in common. How different from the selfish spirit of the Europeans !

Columbus directed his march towards the rich country of Cibao, and found the account which he had received from the natives of the isle confirmed. It is true, they had no open mines, the Indians never having given themselves the trouble of digging for a metal, of which they knew not the use ; but every rivulet presented grains of gold, which had been washed down from the mountains, a certain proof that the mountains themselves contained abundance of this metal. Columbus secured the possession of so rich a country, by erecting a fort ; and, having left in it

a small garrison, set out on his return, being anxious to communicate the good tidings to the new colony. On his arrival he found them in a pitiable state. They had scarcely any provisions remaining ; they had not yet had sufficient time to cultivate their lands, and the disorders to which they were exposed, in a hot and uncultivated country, had made a rapid progress. All expected to perish either by hunger or contagion. All bewailed the folly which had led them to sacrifice their fortunes, their country, and their health, and to seek a miserable death in a foreign land. All joined in cursing the authors of their distress ; the seducers, who, in deceiving them by an exaggerated account of its advantages, had engaged them in this unfortunate enterprize. Even the priest, who had accompanied them from Spain, in quality of chaplain, was at the head of the malcontents, and endeavoured to solace his own woes by exclaiming against Columbus.

Happily this was not the first assault the heart of that great man had encountered ; his experience, and the innumerable dangers to which he had already been exposed, armed him with a prudence and fortitude superior to all attacks. He once more quelled the revolt, and restored tranquillity. This end was no sooner gained, than he resolved to set out in pursuit of new discoveries, and accordingly

appointed Don Diego, his brother, to command in his absence.

Peter. Was it the same he sent to England ?

John. No ; his name was Bartholomew.

Father. Don Diego was his second brother.

Frederic. But why was he called Don ?

Father. It is a term of respect used in Spain before the names of persons of rank.

Frederic. Oh ! I understand.

Father. Columbus put to sea with two large vessels, and two barks, steering westward. The most remarkable of the discoveries he made in this new voyage, was that of Jamaica.

John. Which now belongs to the English ?

Father. The same ; and the most important of their settlements. It is situated between 17° and 15° North lat. and 75° and 79° West longitude from London. About 140 miles in length, and 60 in breadth, and is near 5000 miles south west from London. The distance from Cuba is 36 leagues, and 39 from the western part of St. Domingo. Port Royal was formerly considered as its capital. It was destroyed by an earthquake in the year 1692. Ten years after it was rebuilt, and again consumed by fire. In 1722 it was reduced to a heap of rubbish by a hur-

ricane, and again in 1774. These repeated calamities caused it to be forsaken, and a town, on the opposite bay, now bears the pre-eminence, which is called Kingston. But to proceed — Columbus having cast anchor, at the height of this isle, he sent his boats, well manned, to sound the port.

Charlotte. What does that mean, father?

Father. Nothing more than that they threw out the sounding line, at different places, to see if the water was deep enough to bear the vessels. The boats were soon surrounded by a great number of canoes, filled with armed Indians, who attempted to prevent their approaching land. The Spaniards having in vain essayed gentle means to dissuade them from their design, discharged a shower of arrows, which immediately dispersed them.

Theophilus. The Spaniards then had not musquets?

Father. The use of fire-arms was not yet general; the greater part of the soldiers, therefore, used only bows and arrows. The haven having been found practicable, Columbus entered it to repair his vessels, employing the residue of his time in reconnoitring the country, which, from the nature of the soil, appeared to him, superior to Hispaniola. He did not fail to take possession of this also, in the name of his Catholic Majesty.

Frederic. Who was that ?

John. Do not you know that the king of Spain is called so ?

Father. From thence he sailed for the isle of Cuba, which he had before discovered, with the design of examining whether it was really an island, or part of a continent. From this period he had a succession of difficulties and dangers to encounter, superior to all he had before experienced. Sometimes he had to struggle, in the most perilous parts of an unknown sea, with violent tempests ; sometimes he was enclosed between rocks and banks of sand, which every instant threatened the destruction of his vessel ; sometimes he was perplexed in shallows, while the vessels filled with water so rapidly, that the whole strength of the crew, incessantly occupied at the pumps, was scarcely sufficient to keep them afloat ; sometimes he suffered, with his men, the severest hunger and thirst ; and when, by a happy turn, they procured refreshments, he was always the last to reap the benefit, ever being more anxious for others than himself. He had also to combat the discontent and despair of his men, who, by the most bitter reproaches, revenged the evils they suffered under his command, although he so generously shared all the privations and toils of which they complained. Represent to yourselves, my children, this great man,

ever calm and unshaken in the midst of danger, endeavouring, by his arguments and example, to inspire hope, and raise the drooping courage of his companions; and judge from your own feelings, whether the observation of an ancient author is not just, viz. that there is not a nobler sight in nature than a good man struggling with ill fortune. In the various descents Columbus made on Cuba, he learned, from the natives, that it was really an island. Some parts of it swarmed so with birds and caterpillars, as to obstruct the light of the sun, and to render the day as dark as it is with us in the blackest tempest. On the northern side he found several small islands scattered, to which he gave the name of the Queen's Garden. One day, sailing among these little islands, he met a canoe, containing some Indians, whose singular mode of fishing deserves to be related. They employ, for this purpose certain fish, about the size of the herring, called kives, whose teeth are reported to be extremely sharp. One of them is tied by the tail to a string, and thrown into the sea, when the fish immediately as it sees another, attacks it vigorously with its teeth, and the fishermen draw out their prey. They saw a tortoise of an hundred pounds weight taken in this manner, the fish keeping so strong a hold with his teeth, that one could not be drawn out without the other. As soon

as the fishermen saw the boats which preceded the vessel, they made signs to them, familiarly, not to advance farther. This was complied with; and when they had taken the tortoise, they came on board to present their capture to the admiral, who in return for this mark of respect, presented them with some European trifles, which he knew would please them.

While Columbus coasted the isles, in the neighbourhood of Cúba, he observed a singular phænomenon, which should not be passed over in silence; it was that the surface of the sea, to the astonishment of the crew, appeared in some places spotted with green and white, in others, white as milk, and in others, perfectly black. This singular appearance could not be accounted for. At length, after a long and perilous navigation, among rocks and sand-banks, they again cast anchor on the coast of Cuba, where they landed. An old cacique arrived at the moment divine service was performing publicly before an altar they had erected on the shore. He observed all that passed in respectful silence, and when they had concluded, modestly presented the admiral with some fruit of the island. Then being seated on the ground, he placed his chin upon his knees, and, in that posture pronounced, in a firm voice, a discourse, which

was translated to the admiral, nearly in these terms :

“ Thou art arrived in countries which thou hast never before seen, with a force which spreads terror among us ; learn, nevertheless, that we acknowledge, in the life to come, two places for the residence of spirits, one filled with terror and darkness, which is the portion of the wicked, the other, happy and tranquil, where the spirits of those who love peace, and the good of mankind, will repose. If thou also believest, that the good or evil which thou doest here will be rendered to thee in the next life, I trust thou wilt do no injury to those who will do thee none. What thou hast hitherto done is blameless ; since it appears that thy design has been to return thanks to a superior power.”

The admiral replied, that he was delighted to find that he believed in the immortality of the soul ; that far from intending to injure the natives, his master, the King of Spain, had sent him on the most praiseworthy motives, to cultivate friendship and harmony among the different islanders who were peaceably inclined, and to correct those, who, like the Caribees, were savage and inhuman.

The cacique, to whom this answer was explained, was affected even to tears, and caused the admiral to be told, that if affection for his wife and children did not detain him, he

would voluntarily make a voyage to Spain with him. His admiration was increased when Columbus presented him with some European trinkets, and falling upon his knees, he enquired several times whether the strangers were not descended from Heaven.

The continued and extraordinary exertions of mind, which Columbus had undergone for some time past, produced at length the most fatal effects on his health. A universal debility seized his whole frame, attended with a want of rest, which, in a short time, impaired his memory. In this melancholy state, as there was great reason to fear for his recovery, he set out for Isabella, where Providence had prepared an event which contributed more to his recovery than all the resources of medicine ; this was no less than the arrival of Don Bartholomew, the best beloved of all his brothers, who had brought from Spain the succours he demanded. A similarity of disposition, and a cultivation of the same talents, had tenderly endeared these two brothers to each other ; you may judge, therefore, with what transport they threw themselves into each other's arms, after a separation of thirteen years ! I have already informed you, Bartholomew had been sent to make proposals to the King of England, who had approved them ; he was returning to Spain with these agreeable tidings, but in his way, touch-

ing at France, learned that Columbus had already put his project in execution. Rejoiced at this information, he hastened his voyage to Spain, in the hope, at least, of making one in his second expedition ; but on his arrival he found that he had already sailed.

At the invitation of the king, he repaired to court, where he was received with all the honours due to the brother of the man who had discovered a new world. Some time after, when despatches were received from Columbus, describing his embarrassment and want of immediate succours, Bartholomew was nominated to carry them ; and he, to whom fraternal love might truly be said to have lent wings, acquitted himself of so agreeable a commission with the utmost diligence.

He could not have arrived at a more critical moment ; the presence of a brother so active, so courageous, and so dearly beloved, was a stroke of good fortune, without which Columbus had probably been lost with his whole colony. A happiness so unexpected speedily restored his health, and rendered him capable of preventing the approaching ruin of his infant establishment. The greatest disorder had taken place during his absence : two-thirds of the colony were become the victims of the epidemic disorders which commonly reign in that climate. Margarita, to whom Columbus had confided the com-

mand of the troops, had revolted, and not being able to attain his ends, departed for Spain in one of the vessels, with Father Boyle, the accomplice in his revolt ; while his disbanded troops were dispersed in small parties over all the country, committing every kind of injustice and violence on the islanders, who, incensed by ill treatment, converted their patience into rage, and uniting in a large body massacred several of the Spanish banditti. These unfortunate events threatened the total destruction of the colony. The worst part was, that the Indians, formerly so tranquil and pacific, were at length become sensible of the misfortunes that awaited them. Warned by experience, they extended their views to the future, and saw with alarm that if these strangers, once so revered, continued long in the island, famine and slavery must inevitably be the consequence. The indolent and inactive life which they habitually led, together with the heat of the climate, made a very small portion of food necessary ; a handful of maize and a little cassava* sufficed them.

* The cassava or manioc is an American plant, which grows to the height of about four feet. It has large leaves, and a thick stem ; the form of its root resembles the red beet, and is about five or six inches in diameter. In its crude state it has an unpleasant taste, and is unwholesome ; but when bruised

They saw therefore with infinite surprize that a Spaniard consumed at a single meal more than four of their own people could eat in the whole day. This apparently ravenous appetite gave birth to the idea, that the Europeans had taken so long a voyage for no other reason than that of having absolutely consumed all the provisions of their own country ; and that like insects they were obliged to emigrate in order to satisfy their voracity. From hence they drew the inference, that the produce of their isle would not long suffice for them and their rapacious guests ; and that a general famine would not fail shortly to reduce them to the most cruel extremities. This consideration, together with the violence they daily experienced from the Spaniards, convinced them they must either throw off the yoke immediately, or submit to it for ever. They had the courage to attempt the first, and accordingly took up arms, united under their caciques, and by the junction of these different powers formed a numerous army.

Such was the state of things when Columbus returned to Isabella. All was in confusion, all announced war and carnage. The whole nation of Haitians, except Guakana-

or pounded, a mealy substance, like flour is taken from it, which dried in the sun, or by fire, furnishes little cakes that are very nutritive and pleasant.

hari, who remained constantly attached to the Spaniards, was under arms, and ready to fall upon the handful of men who oppressed them. Their numbers, it is said, amounted to a hundred thousand warriors.

Columbus felt less the danger which threatened him and his colony, than the injustice by which the Christians under his command had animated the peaceable Indians against them. The delightful hopes he had formed of inclining these poor unenlightened Pagans, by a gentle and affectionate conduct, first to venerate, and then to embrace the Christian religion, were now no more ; and he saw himself reduced to the cruel necessity of making a horrid slaughter among men who sought only the security of their property, their liberty, and their lives, against a band of robbers ; a sad alternative for a man so just and humane as Columbus !

In this deplorable situation he received a visit from the faithful Guakanahari, who came to testify the part he took in his misfortunes, and to offer him succours. This unshaken friend of the Spaniards, by protecting them as he really had done, had incurred the hatred of all the other caciques, insomuch that necessity and inclination equally led him to side with the Europeans. Columbus expressed towards him the warmest gratitude, and each began to set his troops in motion. Prepare

yourselves now, my children, for the first scene of war in America ; for a scene which was the beginning of all those horrid tragedies that have since deluged that unfortunate country with blood. But an event of such importance should be the subject of a separate conversation.

DIALOGUE XI.

THE next day their father appeared at the usual hour, but with so gloomy an aspect, that all eyes were immediately fixed on him ; and throughout the little circle there reigned an anxious silence, which no one ventured to interrupt. At length their father, in a tone of voice, which expressed how much he was affected, addressed them in these words :—

Oh, my children ! why cannot I now draw the curtain and conceal from you for ever the atrocities that have been committed in the New World ? But why should I conceal them ? Soon or late you must know them ; for the voice of innocence and humanity cries aloud, and will announce to the remotest posterity the injustice and barbarity of which the Christians have been guilty towards their in-

offensive brethren, the poor Indians. I will without disguise, then, acquaint you with these horrid facts, that you may learn to abhor the cruelty men are capable of when they resign themselves to their passions, or, renouncing the use of reason, debase themselves to the level of brutes.

The two armies were already in sight of each other, and the dreadful moment approached which was to decide upon the life of the Spaniards and the liberty of the Indians. On one side a hundred thousand Indians appeared armed with clubs, wooden scimitars, pikes, and arrows, the points of which were formed of fish bones or flints. On the other, two hundred foot and twenty European horse were supported by a small body of Indians under the command of Guakanahari; but what this handful of Europeans wanted in numbers was added in military discipline — weapons, horse, and — shall I speak it — even in dogs!

Charlotte. Dogs!

Father. Yes, my child. They had brought a number of mastiffs to let loose upon the poor naked Indians, in the same manner as is usual against wild boars and beasts of prey.

Charlotte. Oh, shameful! This was not attacking them like men.

Father. The danger, therefore, you see, was nearly equal on the side of the Europeans and that of the Indians, and consequently the issue of the battle difficult to foresee. Columbus made choice of night for the horrid scene he was preparing ; hoping that darkness would increase the terror with which the Indians would necessarily be seized on an unexpected attack. Night therefore being come, and his little army divided between his brother Bartholomew, the cacique Guakanahari, and himself, he fell upon the Indians at the moment they least expected the attack. The shouts and fury of the assailants, the noise of the fire-arms, the neighing of the horses, the barking of the dogs, struck the Indians with such consternation and terror, that, after a slight resistance, they fled in disorder and dismay. Some fell by the musquetry, some by the sword ; others were trodden down by horses, or torn by the dogs ; and others made prisoners ; the residue fled to the forests. Thus the die was cast, and these inoffensive people constrained to bend beneath the yoke of European slavery ! Columbus, profiting by his victory, over-ran the whole country, the inhabitants of which, in every district, submitted to him without the least resistance ; and thus, in the course of a few months, was this populous isle entirely subjected to Spain.

John. Well, father, Guakanahari is not the man for me.

Father. How so?

John. Because he joined with the Spaniards against his own country.

Father. But do you not admire the steadiness of his friendship?

John. Certainly I do, father; in that respect I am much pleased with him; but he ought also to have been faithful to his countrymen, nay, more so than to the Spaniards; he should, therefore, either not have interfered in the quarrel, or have ranged himself on the side of the Indians.

Father. (*To the others.*) Do you hear what John says? How does it appear to you?

The Children. That is right.

Father. In fact, I am of the same opinion; but it is very hazardous to form a decisive judgment of an affair, when the greater part of the circumstances are perhaps unknown. Can we tell whether the Indians might not, in some rencounter or other, have commenced hostilities against the Spaniards? Do we know if their depredations, on the other hand, in some districts, had come to the knowledge of Guakanahari? Might he not consider it advantageous, for the whole nation, that a man so wise, powerful, and humane, as he conceived Columbus, should be-

come their common chief? I do not however say this to justify his conduct; for what man can ever be justified in taking arms against his country? I mean simply to show, that Guakanahari might have been actuated by a noble motive; and, in that case, he rather merits our pity than resentment. But let us now return to Columbus. Hitherto we have seen him act only in such a manner as to inspire our admiration, and conciliate our friendship; but still he was man. Prepare, therefore, to behold him in his turn degenerate; and may you from thence learn, that it is necessary for man, how strong soever may be his propensities to virtue, to keep a strict guard on his heart and actions, lest he stumble at the moment he reach the goal, and lose the crown which animated him to enter the course. Margarita and father Boyle, Columbus's sworn enemies, were, by this time, arrived in Spain. He was sensible they would spare no pains to persuade the king, who was naturally inclined to suspicion, that the discoveries made were of little importance; in consequence, he saw a storm gathering, which would inevitably overwhelm him, if not timely dispersed. The only probable means of effecting this was, to send the king a considerable quantity of gold, as a specimen of the riches he had given him reason to expect as the fruit of his discoveries; and for this pur-

pose he imposed an enormous tax, on the unfortunate Indians.

Frederic. What is meant by a tax ?

Father. That which the inhabitants of a country are obliged to pay their prince, or those who govern them, for the protection they enjoy ; it is also called a tribute. Columbus, therefore, commanded such of the subdued Indians as inhabited the districts where gold was found to bring him, every three months, a certain quantity of that metal, and the others to remit him, each, twenty-five pounds of cotton ; a demand much greater than these poor people were capable of furnishing. Accustomed, from infancy, to an indolent inactive life, it was insupportable to them to be forced as slaves, to toil the whole day in pursuit of gold and cotton ; productions which, by these very means, must necessarily diminish from week to week. But it was in vain for them to complain ; the order was given, and the obdurate Europeans pressed the execution of it with the utmost rigour. Here we lose sight of the humanity which has hitherto distinguished Columbus.

John. But necessity obliged him.

Father. Necessity ! And what necessity, I pray you, should force the just and virtuous man to deviate from the principles of rectitude and humanity ? Is it virtue to perform our duty as long only as we find it ac-

cord with our temporal interest? True virtue, as I have often told you, demands sacrifices. She requires a willing obedience to her precepts, even when we are certain that our compliance will be prejudicial to us, and that it will draw down the loss of repose, fortune, honour, nay, even of life itself. Whatever may be my inclination, therefore, to justify Columbus, it is absolutely impossible. The voice of truth which is against him, exclaiming more powerfully in my heart than the pleadings of friendship, which would excuse his first error; and I cannot forbear confessing to you, that his conduct, in this instance, was merely selfish, and wholly contrary to the principles of Christian charity.

Mother. But let us not forget, my dear, that fatigues, and a severe malady, had enfeebled the body and mind of poor Columbus. His intellectual faculties might not yet have regained their native vigour.

Father. Your observation, my dear, is just. How easy is it, in passing judgment on our fellow-creatures, to forget those circumstances that may palliate their errors!* I take shame to myself for not having made the

* Circumstances may extenuate, but cannot palliate cruelty and oppression. Our own corporeal and mental sufferings should rather teach us humanity, or we profit but little in the school of adversity.

observation before ; it will teach me, in future, to be more circumspect, and do you, my children, also take warning by my error. The yoke under which the poor Indians groaned was insupportable ; from habit, naturally indolent, they were not in a condition to furnish the quantity of gold and cotton to the amount of which they had been taxed ; the rigour with which this was nevertheless exacted, made them at length have recourse to an expedient which despair alone could have suggested. From the idea they had formed of the voracity of the Europeans, it appeared to them practicable, by ceasing to sow their fields with maize and manioc, in a short time to force them, by famine, to evacuate the island. They united, therefore, unanimously, in destroying the seeds which were already put into the ground, and withdrew into their inaccessible mountains, where, for their own subsistence, they had recourse only to wild fruits and roots. But, oh, my children ! lament with me the misfortune of these victims of oppression, who soon fell the sacrifices to their own plan. It was not long before they themselves experienced all the rigour of that famine which they had prepared for their oppressors. A considerable part died of hunger, another was carried off by epidemic maladies, the inseparable consequence of famine ; and the remainder were so exhausted, that they found

themselves, less than ever, in a condition to support the burden under which they groaned. With respect to the Spaniards, they doubtless suffered also from the execution of this desperate project ; but by their own exertions, and a fresh supply of provisions, which arrived from Europe, they were very soon guaranteed from an absolute scarcity. Thus did the unfortunate Indians lose, for ever, the hope of delivering themselves from their obdurate tyrants.

In the mean time the storm, which had been gathering afar, burst over the head of Columbus. Margarita and Father Boyle, upon their arrival in Spain, had drawn so mean a picture of the countries he had discovered, and had represented his conduct in such odious colours, that they did not fail to inspire the king with strong suspicions respecting him. In consequence of this, it was resolved to send to the West Indies a commissioner, invested with full powers to examine into the state of affairs, and also into the conduct of Columbus. The person chosen to fill this office was far from possessing the rectitude and abilities necessary to the execution of an affair of such importance, having been proposed by the enemies of Columbus, merely as one who would enter into their views, and further their perfidious designs. His

name was Aguado, and he was gentleman usher to the queen.

Puffed up with his own importance, this vain man no sooner arrived at Hispaniola than he made the admiral feel the authority with which he was invested ; he treated him with the most insulting haughtiness, summoning to his tribunal all who had complaints against him, both Spaniards and Indians. Every accusation brought by the malcontents was seized with avidity, to compose a picture proper to represent as a monster the man he had doomed to destruction. The temper of Columbus, as we have frequently seen, was not irritable ; he had been accustomed to bear, — but the mortification which he experienced from the arrogance of Aguado tried his patience to the utmost. He resolved, therefore, to depart for Spain, that he might in person plead his cause at the tribunal of the king and queen, and submit it to the decision of their majesties. With this view he appointed his brother Bartholomew, Adelantado (or Vice Governor,) to command in the island during his absence ; but unfortunately he constituted Chief Justice, Roldan, a man, as you will find, totally unworthy that authority from his great abuse of it. To accelerate his voyage, he sailed with a direct wind for Spain, little conceiving how much this course

would retard him. Poor Columbus was obliged to learn by experience what no mariner is now ignorant of, viz. that this navigation is subject to a thousand difficulties, on account of the trade winds, which in this part of the sea blow almost constantly from the east. It is now well known, that vessels on their return from the West Indies must first steer to the north, to avoid these contrary winds. He soon felt the inconvenience of the course he had chosen ; but not being accustomed to yield to difficulties, he did not pursue it with less constancy. This navigation however was so extremely tedious, that at the end of three months he was still in the open sea, nor could flatter himself with verging towards the end of his toilsome voyage ; and the vexation he experienced on this account was increased by the melancholy observation, that their provisions were nearly consumed. It became absolutely necessary, therefore, to put his men upon so short an allowance of bread, as scarcely to be sufficient to afford them nourishment. Columbus himself, according to his usual custom, invariably observed the same regimen, that no one might have a right to complain. Even this economy did not prevent their small store of provisions from diminishing, insomuch that the distress and despair of the crew increased daily. Hunger soon rendered the sailors outrageous, and

suggested to them the horrid design of killing the Indians who were on board and eating them ; or, if this was not permitted, to throw them into the sea, at least, that they might not share with them the miserable remnant of their provisions. But in this extremity Columbus did not swerve from that humanity, which originally formed one of the most noble traits of his character ; he refused with firmness to consent to their design, representing to them that the unfortunate Indians were men as well as themselves, and that, participating in the common distress, they had a right to their share of the little food that remained. By these and similar remonstrances, he for some time calmed their impatience ; and before they had time to resume such inhuman sentiments, Providence interposed and discovered to them the coast of Spain.

Mathias. Heaven be praised ! I was terribly afraid.

Theophilus. And so was I ; I trembled for the poor Indians !

Father. Rejoice then, that Columbus has a second time escaped destruction, and may this agreeable idea attend you to bed !

The Children. There now, this is always the way — Father has finished already.

DIALOGUE XII.

Father. Let us now see, my children, without further delay, what reception Columbus this time had in Spain. With equal fortitude and modesty he appeared before the throne to defend himself against the calumnies of his accusers. But scarcely had he need of justification, his presence alone reinspiring his august judges with the same esteem they had formerly entertained for his merits, and at the same time overwhelming them with shame for their credulity. When, however, he produced the specimens of the valuable productions of the newly-discovered countries, every suspicion was intirely dissipated, and they hastened to make him amends, by the most distinguished honours, for the affront he had experienced. Thus, my children, will innocence and true merit, soon or late, triumph over the attempts of vile traducers. Provided all be right here (*laying his hand on his heart,*) the calumnies of the wicked are not to be feared. Fogs may sometimes disrobe the sun of its glory ; but sooner or later they will disappear, and the day resume its original splendour. From this time all that Columbus proposed was

agreed to ; but his first care was the colony he had formed in Hispaniola. In order to give it a permanent stability, he procured permission of the king to send over as many men and as great a supply of provisions as he thought necessary ; more especially, a sufficient number of husbandmen, mechanics, and artists of all kinds, that the colony might derive from itself the necessaries indispensable to the support and comfort of life. Thus far his demands were reasonable ; but the proposition that succeeded was not equally worthy of his usual discernment. That Spain might not be depopulated by supplying the new colonies, he proposed clearing the prisons, and transporting the malefactors condemned to death, or to the galleys, to Hispaniola ; there to be employed in exploring the mines. This also was approved, and orders issued to all the Spanish tribunals, to deliver up the criminals actually detained, and thenceforth to condemn to transportation all whose crimes should merit a capital punishment. But can you tell, my children, why I have represented this measure as unworthy the discernment of Columbus ?

Several of the Children exclaim, I know !
— I know !

Father. Henry, tell me your opinion.

Henry. Why, I think, father, that sending

so many bad subjects to the West Indies must increase the disorders of the new colony ; besides, such wicked men might by degrees infect the good, and then Columbus would have a colony of rogues.

John. To be sure he would ; and the savages seeing such depraved characters among the Christians, would be little inclined to embrace their religion.

Father. I am delighted that you have so exactly entered into my sentiments. Sad experience has proved that these fears were not chimerical ; but you will be sensible of this hereafter. At present let us return to Columbus. Notwithstanding the orders which the king had given for the speedy execution of all that he proposed, the equipment of the fleet went on very slowly. This was occasioned by the enemies of Columbus, who had for the most part the charge of executing the king's orders. These base men, seeing they had no longer any means left of doing him a personal injury, resolved, as much as was in their power at least, to retard him in his glorious career. All therefore that depended on them was performed with the greatest negligence, — they took care that he should want first one thing, then another, till, by their repeated delays, a whole year elapsed before the equipment of the two vessels, that were to carry provisions and supplies to the new colo-

ny, was completed ; and when at length these transports had sailed, Columbus had the vexation of waiting another year before he could put to sea with the little squadron destined to the pursuit of fresh discoveries.

Charlotte. Pray, father, what kind of vessels are those called transports ?

Father. They are adapted solely to the conveyance of men, provisions, and other things from one place to another ; consequently are unfit for any warlike expedition. But do you know, Charlotte, what is meant by a squadron ?

Charlotte. Yes, father ; you explained it to us when we were reading the Gazette. Is it not an assemblage of several vessels ?

Father. You are right ; but if the vessels are very numerous, it is then called a fleet.

John. And if the fleet be very small, it is called a flotilla.*

Ferdinand. A flotilla and a squadron are the same thing.

Father. Nearly. The difference is, that the word squadron is sometimes used for a considerable fleet ; whereas by flotilla, we always understand a very small number of vessels. The squadron equipped for Columbus consisted only of six sail.

* This term is peculiar to the Spanish navy.

Frederic. How many sails has a vessel, father ?

Father. Several, as I think you must have already observed ; but when we say that a squadron has six sail, we do not speak of the sail as of a sheet, but of as many entire vessels, each carrying several sails. In this voyage Columbus purposed to take a new course, in which he hoped to discover the continent which he supposed to be India. With this view, having touched at the Canaries, he continued steering in the same direction to the Cape Verd Isles, discovered by the Portuguese. You have not forgotten the situation of these islands ?

Theophilus. Forgotten them, father ! No ; here they are (*pointing them out on the map,*) just under the Canary Isles, opposite Cape Verd.

Father. Very well ; but I have not informed you, that, on leaving the Canaries, Columbus sent one half of his vessels bearing the necessary supplies to the colony at Hispaniola, giving strict orders to the commanders to accelerate their course as much as possible. For himself, having passed the first of the Cape Verd Islands, called the Isle of Salt or Salt, he cast anchor near a small sterile isle, into which the Portuguese then sent their leprous for the re-establishment of their health.

Christian. How so?

Father. On account of the tortoises, which come in great numbers from the coast of Africa to deposit their eggs in the sands; for the blood and flesh of these animals, the one employed to wash with, and the other as aliment, are found to be a specific remedy against the leprosy. Those Portuguese, therefore, who were afflicted with that loathsome malady were sent thither to be healed, these tortoises being easily taken on account of their unwieldy form, which renders it necessary only to turn them on their backs to prevent their escape. Excepting these animals, nothing is found in the island but a prodigious quantity of goats, which have all been produced from eight European goats which a Portuguese formerly conveyed thither. There was neither tree nor fresh water; the poor inhabitants, therefore, I should say the lepers, who awaited their cure, were reduced to the necessity of drinking the standing rain water, which they collected in the sands; on which account only seven persons were found in good health.

From thence Columbus continued sailing to the south, being resolved not to turn to the west till he should arrive at the equator or line, that imaginary circle which divides the globe of earth into equal parts; but having advanced to the third degree of north lati-

tude — You now, I think, all know what this means ?

Nicholas. Yes, father ; Columbus was not more than three degrees, or three times sixty-nine English miles and a half from the line.

Father. Justly observed. Having sailed to this point, he was retarded by a dead calm, insomuch that the vessels remained stationary. In the mean while, the rays of the sun falling perpendicularly, caused a heat so intense as to be quite insupportable. The casks split, the provisions and water putrified, and the crew in the deepest despair, expected every instant to see the vessel catch fire. Here again, my children, was a situation to try the fortitude of Columbus. His own uneasiness, and the despair of his pusillanimous companions, were added to a painful fit of the gout, under which he laboured at that time, brought on by too great application and excessive fatigue. Imagine therefore that you behold him a prey to the most excruciating pains, agitated by the idea of the dangerous state of his vessel, burnt by a scorching sun, and without a drop of fresh water to revive him. What an accumulation of ills ! How much does he deserve our compassion !

Heaven at length had pity on the excess of his misery ; for rain shortly after fell in such quantities, that scarcely any one could

remain on deck. The heat it is true continued with little abatement; but the rain furnished them with a cooling beverage. The calm which had caused them so much uneasiness at the same time ceasing, hope once more revived in the breasts of his almost expiring companions, who earnestly entreated him not to persist any longer in his design of running to the south. Columbus, yielding to their intreaties, tacked about to the west, and had for several days steered in this direction, when on a sudden from the top-mast was heard the joyful cry of "Land! Land!" This sound was like celestial music to the ears of the famished and fatigued navigators, who, struggling against a thousand evils, had so long been tossed between sky and water. The isle now discovered bore the figure of three mountains; from whence Columbus gave it the name of *Trinidad!** which it has preserved to this day. Here it is (*showing it on the map,*) not far from the mouth of the river *Oronoko*.

Frederic. Ah! the country where those droll monkeys are found.

Father. Of what monkeys do you speak?

Frederic. Those, father, that are caught in such a whimsical manner.

Father. Well, tell us how it is performed.

* Now belonging to England.

Frederic. I have read, father, that a bottle of maize is placed under a tree in the woods they frequent ; and when the huntsman is retired, one of the monkeys comes down and puts in his paw, which, when filled with maize, cannot be withdrawn at the mouth of the bottle. You perhaps imagine, that when the huntsmen appear the monkey will let go the maize, and make his escape ; but such is his folly and fondness for the dainty, that he will sooner suffer himself to be knocked down than relinquish his prize.

Mother. Are not these monkeys gluttons ?

Frederic. They are, indeed, mother.

Mother. But are there not monkeys of the same stamp in this country ?

Frederic. Oh, no, mother ; not here.

Mother. The monkeys I speak of, I confess, do not go on four legs ; but should any little two-legged creature be so greedy as to disorder his stomach, and expose himself to sickness, rather than restrain his appetite, what judgment would you pass upon him ? — would he not be as great a glutton as the monkey ?

Frederic. Ah ! mother, mother, you have certainly an eye on me.

Mother. Does the cap fit you, Frederic ?

Frederic. Well, mother, I will never indulge my appetite any more. I promise — mind — I call you all to witness.

Father. Enough, my dear boy. If you would become a strong man, and that you desire it I have no doubt, you must early learn to despise delicacies, and be content with plain, healthful food. This will strengthen you, and create good blood ; while luxuries, on the contrary, will infect your health and enfeeble your whole frame. But to return ; — the Oronoko, in the environs of Trinidad, discharges itself with such rapidity into the sea, that it renders the navigation extremely dangerous. The waves in that part rise and break against each other with dreadful violence, so that a vessel which has the misfortune to be drawn within this vortex, is in great danger of being dashed to pieces. Columbus, before he was aware, found his vessels in this perilous situation, assaulted on all sides by the waves, sometimes tossed on high, and sometimes precipitated into an abyss, driven like shuttle-cocks to the right and to the left with irresistible force. The exertion of his utmost skill was necessary to retreat from this dangerous course by a strait, which had an appearance so horrible, that they called it La Boca del Drago, or The Mouth of the Dragon. Look, my children, (*showing it on the map*) here it is, between Trinidad and the coast of Cumana, which, as you know, is a part of Terra Firma.

Peter. Then Columbus discovered the continent of America also ?

Father. Undoubtedly ; he was also well persuaded this land could not be an island, from seeing so large a river as the Oronoko issue from it, and discharge its waters into the sea.

Peter. But, pray, why was not the country named after him ?

Father. It is certainly an injustice, of which the age in which he lived ought not to have been guilty ; but it is done, and there is now no remedy.

Charlotte. And why is it called America ?

Father. That you shall know hereafter ; for the present let us endeavour not to lose sight of Columbus's vessels. Convinced that he had at length touched at the main land of the New World, he continued sailing westward the whole length of the coast, landing at different times to make his observations. The natives, in general, bore a great resemblance to those of Hispaniola, except that they appeared to have more understanding and courage, and to have fairer complexions. They ornamented themselves in the same manner with plates of gold, and even with fine pearls, which they readily bartered for European trifles. A native one day, unattended, joined Columbus, who was come on shore, and, advancing towards him with con-

fidence, took from his head a crimson velvet cap, and replaced it with a crown of gold. Columbus, judging he was a cacique, took care to have him treated with the utmost distinction. These Indians had their heads wrapped in cotton handkerchiefs of various colours, and the fore part of their bodies from the waist to the knees covered with a piece of the same stuff. Their hair was naturally long, but cut short; and their weapons, bows, arrows, and bucklers.

Columbus would willingly have made a longer stay here to have explored the interior of the country; but the impaired state of his vessels, and his own infirmities, obliged him to leave this research to others, and steer towards Hispaniola. In his way he discovered the Isle of Margarita, now become so important from the pearl fishery which is established there. There it is on the map.

Worn with sickness and the continual exertion of his faculties, he at length landed at his colony, hoping there for some time to repose from his fatigues and anxieties; but alas! — Enough however for to-day.

DIALOGUE XIII.

Father. The time of repose for poor Columbus was not yet come ; on the contrary, he was attended in the very place, where he hoped for tranquillity, with new cares, new toils, and new dangers, capable of shaking the courage of the firmest, and enervating the most robust. His worthy brother, Don Bartholomew, had, during his absence, settled the colony of Isabella more advantageously in a different part of the country, where he had undertaken the building of a city, which he named St. Domingo, in honour of his father Dominico. This city, which has flourished even to our days, was long one of the most considerable in the West Indies, and at length gave its name to the whole island. Bartholomew, having laid the foundation of this new colony, set out with a part of his forces to visit those provinces of the island into which his brother had not yet penetrated, leaving at St. Domingo the chief judge, Roldan, with the rest of the troops ; but this wretch recompensed his confidence with the blackest ingratitude. He had long wished for an opportunity of ruining Columbus and his brothers, and of rendering himself sole master of the

island. The departure of Bartholomew, and the absence of the admiral, appearing favourable to his wishes, he did not fail to profit by the occasion, inciting the Spaniards that were left, by every means in his power, not only against Bartholomew, but against Diego, his younger brother. Unfortunately he succeeded but too well, for the greater part engaged in his interest. He was soon acknowledged as their chief, and, having taken up arms against the Adelantado, seized upon all the provisions, and attempted to carry the fort, which had been constructed at St. Domingo, by assault. This last attempt, however, from the vigilance and skill of the commander, failed, and the rebels were obliged to remove to another part of the island. Here they employed all their efforts to bring over the inhabitants of the district to their party, and were so successful, that the island, in a short time, became a scene of revolt. Such was the desperate state in which Columbus found affairs on his return. Judge, my children, if he could be at ease.

To complete his vexations he learned, with the utmost astonishment, that the three vessels which he had despatched with provisions from the Canaries, were not arrived ; it was but too probable, therefore, that they had, by some accident, perished. Though this mis-

fortune had not, in reality, happened, they were still lost to Columbus. Storms and currents had driven them out of their course ; and, after having attempted different unknown regions, in the end they arrived safe at Hispaniola, but precisely on the coast where Roldan and his accomplices had settled ; when this artful rebel, concealing his revolt from the commanders of the three vessels, had the address to make them land a part of their men, under pretence of conducting them to St. Domingo. As the greater number of these was the refuse of the Spanish prisons, they no sooner learnt the true design of Roldan, than they joyfully flocked to his standard, hoping there would be opportunity for rapine and pillage ; the first proof of that ill-digested council Columbus had himself given.

Some days after the arrival of the admiral, the three vessels appeared in the road of St. Domingo, but with small supplies, the greater part of the troops having already been given up, and almost all the provisions on board consumed. In the mean while the insolent Roldan, proud of the superiority of his numbers, which was but too manifest, openly ridiculed the weakness of Columbus, whose indignation rose to the highest pitch. Had he listened to its suggestions, he would immediately have put himself at the head of the few soldiers who remained faithful, and have

attacked the traitors, preferring rather to perish in attempting to chastise them, than to live in inaction under the flagrant insult he had received ; but, for the sake of the colony which had experienced this violent shock, ere it had acquired strength to sustain it, he reined in his passion, shocked at the idea of a civil war, and generously resolved to pass over the personal affront he had received, and to try if it were not possible, by gentle means, to bring back the ungrateful Roldan and his deluded followers to their duty. With this view he first published a general pardon, for all who repenting of their error would immediately return to their duty. He also made the same offer to Roldan in particular, promising that he should retain the same dignity with which he had formerly been invested. By this condescension, after many disagreeable negotiations, he accomplished his purpose, and enjoyed the satisfaction of having stifled a dangerous rebellion without shedding a single drop of blood.

His next step was to despatch a vessel for Spain, to inform the court of the discovery he had made of a main land, and also of the revolt he had just appeased. To specimens of the productions of the Continent, consisting of pearls, ingots of gold, and a quantity of fine linen of various colours, he added a journal, in which he had exactly noted the course of

his vessels, and every thing remarkable that occurred. Roldan and his associates failed not to write also to the king by the same conveyance, to blacken the admiral and justify their own proceedings; and unfortunately the monarch was so weak and unjust as to give more credit to their representations than to those of Columbus, though truth dignified the one, and the most infamous calumnies disgraced the other. But let us pause here, my children, for a few minutes, and take a glance at another part of the world, where, while the West Indies has been the object of our attention, many things equally interesting have been transacting.

The King of Portugal, too late regretting his blindness to the merit of Columbus, and the disdainful rejection of his offers, in some measure to repair his error, resolved to spare no expence in exploring a passage to the East Indies, by the way of Africa. With this view he fitted out a squadron, and gave the command of it to an experienced navigator of great merit, named Vasquez de Gama.

Difficulties apparently insurmountable opposed this enterprize; but Gama, like Columbus, luckily bore the stamp of a great character, and, like him, never suffered himself to be diverted by any obstacles, how great soever, from the projects upon which he had once resolved. In vain the unknown

coast of Africa presented its long chains of rugged rocks, shelves, and banks of sand ; in vain did the sun dart his most scorching rays, and threaten the vessels with conflagration, or the tempests let loose their fury against them, — to all these difficulties he opposed an unshaken courage, surmounted them, and happily gained the most meridional point of Africa, The Cape of Good Hope. But the pursuits of so great a genius were not to rest here ; he doubled the Cape, sailed up the opposite coast, and at length arrived at Melinda, which, as you may see on the map of Africa, is situated on the coast of Zanguebar. Here he was agreeably surprized, instead of the savage nations he had hitherto met on the African coast, to find a civilized race, in many respects resembling the Asiatics. They entered into an extensive commerce with him, professed the Mohammedan religion, and were acquainted with those arts which were known only to polished nations. Presuming on the happy success of his enterprize, he set sail on the 22d of May, 1498, and had the satisfaction of attaining the object of his voyage, viz. the coast of India.

John. At what place did he land ?

Father. At Calicut.

Peter. Ah, on the coast of Malabar ?

Henry. In the Peninsula, on this side the Ganges ?

Father. The same. He was greatly astonished at the riches of the country in all sorts of valuable productions, the regularity of the government, and the civilized manners of the inhabitants; but unfortunately his vessel contained nothing that he could offer in exchange for the rich merchandizes of the country, — for European baubles, of which the savages were so desirous, possessed little value in the estimation of these civilized Indians. De Gama therefore made a short stay here, and hastened his return to Europe, to inform his sovereign of the happy issue of his enterprize.

Thus, at nearly the same time that Columbus discovered the New World, another part of our globe, already indeed known, but from which the Europeans had hitherto derived little advantage, was, by means of navigation, more immediately connected with Europe. From this time the inexhaustible treasures of India poured in torrents into the little kingdom of Portugal, — to the great mortification of the Spaniards, who could not without jealousy behold their neighbours derive from India such immense riches, while from all their discoveries they had not yet cleared even the expence of their armament. A rage for discovery had now insensibly seized upon all Kingdoms and republics, gentlemen and plebeians, all were desirous of tempting fortune;

all were ambitious of fitting out vessels, and of embarking or causing others to embark in some enterprize. A man named Ojeda, who had accompanied Columbus in his second voyage, persuaded some merchants of Seville to fit out four vessels under his command in this speculation, and permission was asked and obtained without consulting Columbus, though quite contrary to the treaty the court of Spain had entered into with him. The Bishop of Badajos, the king's minister in the department of the West Indies, and sworn enemy of Columbus, not content with thus far mortifying the object of his hatred, had the baseness to submit to the inspection of Ojeda the journal and sea charts which Columbus had sent to the court of Spain.

Ojeda was accompanied in his voyage by an Italian gentleman named Armerigo Vespucci, or, as he is called by the English, from the Latin, Americus Vesputius.

Some of the children exclaim. Ah, ah, Americus !

Father. This Italian soon acquired so much importance among his companions, that every step was taken rather by his direction than that of Ojeda. At length, however, by exactly following the course of Columbus, he arrived on the coast of Paria, on which he made several descents, and entered into some commerce with the natives. He then coasted

farther to ascertain that the land was not an island, but part of a continent. When he had advanced far enough to put this matter beyond a doubt, he returned triumphant to Spain ; where he set so high a value upon his exploits, that it was absolutely forgotten that the discoveries were in reality not his, but merely a confirmation of what had before been discovered by Columbus.

Characters that are truly great, my children, are never vain boasters ; satisfied with performing noble actions, they are in no haste to blazon them to the world, and such had been the conduct of Columbus. He had sent to the court a journal of his voyages for the satisfaction of the king and queen ; but without a single idea of rendering them public. Americus, on the contrary, a vain and ambitious man, no sooner returned to Spain than he published his account, relating his story with so much skill, that those who either heard it or read it, could not avoid regarding him, and not Columbus, as the man who had first discovered the Continent. The falsehood of this relation was known only to the few who had perused Columbus's manuscript ; and as the greater part of these consisted of the courtiers that were his enemies, they took care not to rectify the mistake. Thus, the person to whom we owe the discovery of the fourth

part of the world was deprived of the honour justly his due, and it was named after the presuming boaster, Americus.

Henry. What injustice !

Father. It was so ; but it furnishes one useful lesson, as it proves the injuries that deserving men frequently meet from their contemporaries. They are sometimes wronged, and even hated ; and villains enjoy the reward due to their virtues. If, therefore, as I wish, you mean hereafter to distinguish yourselves by pursuing a line of honour and rectitude, do not build, I conjure you, on the vain applause of men ; but let your object be the approbation of that merciful Being, who, seeing your good actions in secret, will not fail to reward them openly ; for, short will be the reign of the unjust, — sooner or later all will be revealed, and each receive according to his deserts. The instance before us illustrates this truth. What advantage is it now to Americus that the New World was unjustly named after him ? Is not his memory more despised than honoured on that account ? while, on the contrary, that of Columbus is admired and esteemed, and will be remembered when that of his ungrateful cotemporary is sunk in oblivion. Judge from your own feelings, my children, would you rather be Columbus or Americus ?

Nicholas. I would, a thousand times, rather be Columbus.

Henry. And I also, though my discoveries were never known to the world.

All the Children exclaim, And so would I.

Father. You see, therefore, that virtue though deprived of exterior recompense, ceases not to be lovely and desirable. From this time Americus made repeated voyages in search of discoveries; but a detail of them would lead us too far from Columbus, to whose narrative I will return after one more short digression. In order to reap all possible advantage from De Gama's discovery of the way to the East Indies, the King of Portugal fitted out a complete fleet, freighted with merchandize of all kinds, calculated for a lucrative commerce, and gave the command to a man named Cabral. Aware of the little certainty there was by keeping the coast of Africa, when he had passed the line he steered westward across the main ocean, and pursuing this direction, to his great astonishment arrived at an extensive tract of land, which he perceived from afar to be more than an island. What country do you judge this to be?

Some of the Children. South America, I dare say.

Father. But what province?

Henry. Brazil, I should guess.

Father. You are right. It was the rich province of Brazil which Cabral thus accidentally discovered. He immediately took possession of it in the name of the King of Portugal, and sent one of his vessels with the agreeable news to Lisbon. Thus were the different parts of America successively discovered, manifesting still more upon what solid principles the penetrating genius of Columbus had formed its conjectures. Let us now return to the author of these interesting discoveries, whom we left in an uneasy situation in the isle of Hispaniola ; but I scarcely know how to proceed, my tongue is unwilling to relate the miseries that overwhelmed this worthy man, — I will therefore cease awhile. In the mean time, my children, prepare for a recital that cannot fail to draw tears of compassion from your eyes,

DIALOGUE XIV.

PREPARED by the last conversation for the recital of some melancholy event, the whole party awaited it in silent anxiety, until their father at length began as follows :—

God, my children, in his infinite wisdom,

not unfrequently permits circumstances to happen, the cause of which we poor short-sighted mortals are not able to discover ; but numberless examples daily occur, sufficient to teach an attentive observer, that in each of these the ultimate object is the well being of all his creatures. Should, therefore, an event surpassing the comprehension of our feeble reason occur, let us beware of supposing, even for an instant, that the dispensations of his Holy Providence are not always the wisest and the best. I have, my children, for a considerable number of years, been an inhabitant of this world, and have experienced the many vicissitudes mortality is heir to. I have known happy days, I also have been subject to the reverse ; the scene has frequently been so dark and gloomy around me, that my heart shrunk as I extended my trembling views to the future. In these moments the weakness of my nature has prevailed, and I have exclaimed, "Why, O ! merciful Creator of the Universe, hast thou destined thy creature to struggle through so wearisome and thorny a path, while others, perhaps more faulty than myself, are, in all appearance, so prosperous and happy ?" Such, my children, have been the indiscreet murmurings of my ignorance, which could not comprehend the wisdom that chastised me. My doubts are, however, now

vanished ; and experience has taught me, that by supporting misfortunes with fortitude and patience, and firmly relying on the Divine will, the mists of sorrow will disperse when least expected, — the night of tribulation pass like a dream, — and the sun of unexpected pleasure enliven, with its cheering influence, the human soul. For myself particularly, O, my God ! how shall I express the extent of thy bounty ? Learn, my children, and let this truth be engraven on your hearts, that in the hour of trial it may sustain your sinking spirits, that those heavy calamities, which at the time I considered as my greatest misfortune, have been the immediate basis on which Providence has established my future successes. Convinced of this, I have learned to submit with resignation to whatever it shall please God to inflict ; assured, that his infinite wisdom is the best judge of what is proper for the weakness of the creatures he has made. My dear children, I cannot dwell on this subject without tears ; but they are tears of joy and thankfulness, and overflow on the reflection that it is only since I have had this entire confidence in the Divine will, that I have been enabled to enjoy content throughout all the variableness of fortune.

Here the father, surrounded by his children, kneeled down, and prayed earnestly

that God would inspire their youthful hearts with equal confidence in his dispensations. .

My children (at length resumed he,) I thought it necessary to preface my recital of this day in the manner I have adopted, as it might prevent the question that might otherwise naturally arise, Why did God suffer Columbus to experience such heavy misfortunes?

Where is the mortal who has presumption sufficient to reply? Columbus now, doubtless, enjoying the reward of his labours, may comprehend and praise God that, by a short suffering, he prepared him for endless felicity. Let not us, however, presume to judge beyond the limits of our weak understanding, but submit with resignation, and adore the impenetrable decrees of the Most High. But to return to our narrative.

Columbus, as I informed you, had succeeded in suppressing the rebellion which had been excited in Hispaniola; but he could not effect a general or lasting tranquillity. Discontent and discord still smothered among the embers of revolt; and though Roldan had apparently returned to his duty, he lost no opportunity of blackening the conduct of Columbus to the court of Spain. Added to this, the authority of Columbus had suffered greatly by his forbearance, which was denominated weakness by the malcontents, and the dis-

turbances became more general, sometimes in one province, sometimes in another ; so that, with his brothers, he was obliged to be in continual preparation against assault, — a circumstance that so entirely employed him, that he could neither find leisure to take the necessary steps to justify himself to the court of Spain, nor yet to pursue his discoveries, his mind being harrassed with discontent, and his bodily strength weakened by repeated fatigue.

Collecting all the forces that remained in his power, he was endeavouring to re-establish peace and good order throughout Hispaniola, by the most wise and meritorious regulations — at the same time he was also devising means to satisfy the avarice of his companions, and fulfil the hopes of his employers, by opening a rich mine — when the storm that had long threatened burst forth against him in Spain. Roldan and his partizans had, as I before informed you, used their utmost endeavours to clear themselves of the share they had taken in the confusion that had distracted the colony, throwing all the opprobrium on Columbus. A number of malcontents also who had returned from the New World, disappointed in their expectation of gaining immense wealth without pain or labour, loaded Columbus with curses and accusations, as the cause of their failure ; and, supported by his

more powerful enemies, brought their complaints even to the foot of the throne, praying some recompense for the losses they had sustained, and the oppression they pretended to have experienced on the part of the admiral. The rags with which they were covered, the paleness of their countenances, and their half-starved appearance, at once inspired pity and a degree of belief in their hearers. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at that the king, who was naturally suspicious, should at length give ear to such repeated accusations; or that the queen, who had constantly befriended him, should relax in her friendship towards him.

It was then agreed that a commissioner should be sent to the West Indies to examine into the conduct of Columbus. The person appointed to this trust was nominated by his enemies, and called Francis de Bovadilla. The dangerous power with which he was furnished was not only sufficient to displace Columbus, if he found his conduct reprehensible, but also to take his place in the government. Nothing more could therefore be necessary to insure his fall with so unprincipled a man as Bovadilla.

At the period this unworthy commissioner arrived in Hispaniola, Columbus by his indefatigable cares had succeeded in re-establishing peace throughout the island. The malcon-

tents were subdued ; and the Spaniards and Indians had alike returned to their duty, and submitted to the laws. Some very rich mines had been opened, and the earth had also been cultivated with extraordinary success ; a concurrence of circumstances that must unavoidably have justified Columbus, had not his accusers resolved upon his condemnation beforehand. When Bovadilla arrived at St. Domingo, the admiral was at a considerable distance in the island, making some necessary arrangements. Equity and justice, therefore, required that his judge should have awaited his return before he proceeded against him. But neither equity nor justice formed any part of Bovadilla's character ; and he had no sooner landed than he caused himself to be conducted to the admiral's house, of which he took immediate possession, declaring that, and all it contained, to be his. He then publicly announced that the king had sent him to depose the governor, and to give satisfaction to all who should have any complaint against him. Not content with this, he also immediately set at liberty all those whom Columbus had caused to be confined ; desiring they would lay before him an exact account of the rigour and injustice they had experienced. You may judge, my children, whether men of that description wanted much persuasion in such a case.

Bovadilla's conduct was undoubtedly cruel and unjust ; yet it was nothing, comparatively speaking, to the flagitious insults he heaped upon the truly great Columbus. Hear then, my children, and deplore the fate of a man who had such just claims upon both the gratitude and affection of his cotemporaries. What a disgrace to be handed down to posterity, that the man to whom they owed such infinite obligations should be treated like a common malefactor !

The infamous Bovadilla sent a messenger to Columbus, commanding his immediate presence before his tribunal, to give an account of his conduct ; at the same time he remitted to him a letter from the king, which enjoined him to conform to the orders of his plenipotentiary.

The thunder suddenly bursting over the head of the traveller in the midst of his security and pleasure, cannot excite more astonishment than did this news to Columbus. On the first reading of the king's letter he doubted the evidence of his senses, and perused a second time, before he could credit its contents, the paper that was thus defiled with ingratitude and insult. The man who had discovered a **NEW WORLD**, and who had been guilty of no crime, was in effect summoned to appear before the tribunal of a villain, who was not worthy to be his most menial domes-

tic. Columbus, as you may judge, was deeply wounded at this outrage, and felt all the pangs that injured honour and just indignation could inflict on a susceptible heart. He did not, however, hesitate a moment on the part he should pursue. His brother Bartholomew was with him ; he had the command of many armed men, and might easily have increased his numbers, so as to have returned his unjust judge an answer sword in hand. But his great soul disdained every means of defence that was incompatible with the duty and obedience he judged he owed to the King, however he was misguided by false accusations against one whose merits might have claimed a better reward. He, therefore, as I said before, did not hesitate a moment, but took the road to St. Domingo, resolved to receive his sentence, whatever it might be, with resignation and fortitude. On his arrival being announced to Bovadilla, that despicable wretch refused to give him an audience ; exclaiming, Let him be put in irons, and strictly confined. This inhuman order was punctually executed ; Columbus was loaded with chains, and forced on board a vessel, where he was carefully secured.

[Here their father made a short pause, while his youthful auditors gave a free vent to the expressions of compassion, which they could not suppress.]

Represent to yourselves, my dear children, in all its magnitude, this unworthy scene. Behold Columbus treated like a culprit, in the presence of his subalterns, and before his own house, where a villain usurped his right, and refused him entrance, not even deigning to converse with him, but ordering him, unheard, to be chained, and dragged from a land of which his industry and genius, in despite of every danger, and at the imminent hazard of his own life, had given the king possession. The resignation and conscious dignity with which he received these insults proclaimed at once, in a language more energetic than words, his innocence and greatness of mind. His sufferings were not, however, completed ; for, as they dragged him ignominiously along, the Spanish settlers, who, as I have informed you, were composed of the most infamous wretches, accompanied him with shouts and rejoicings.

Bovadilla was, however, not yet satisfied ; for, well knowing that his noble prisoner would suffer doubly in the affronts offered to his brothers, he caused them also to be put in irons, and, in order that they might receive no consolation, by mutual intercourse, commanded that each should be confined in a different ship. He at length proceeded on their trial, and without formality, condemned them to death. Fortunately he had not the

audacity to execute his sanguinary purpose ; he dreaded a future scrutiny, and feared, in his turn, becoming the victim. He had, however, no doubt, but his friend and relation, the Bishop of Bajados, the irreconcilable enemy of Columbus, would take care to put his design in execution ; and, in this persuasion, he resolved to send the admiral to Spain, with an account of the trial and sentence passed upon him.

I dare say, my dear children, that you can scarcely believe such complicated wickedness existed as I have related of Bovadilla ; thanks be to God, such villains are not numerous, and are happily contrasted by good men, who are ever ready to repair the injustice of the bad !

The captain, who was to conduct Columbus and his brothers to Spain, had no sooner set sail, than approaching his noble prisoner with compassion and respect, he offered to release him from his chains ; but Columbus, though sensible of this kindness, refused to accept it. " Leave me as I am," said he ; " I wear these fetters by command of the king, my master, and his orders shall alone remove them." Thus resolved, he continued in irons during the whole of the voyage to Spain.

Bovadilla had commanded that the prison-

ers, on their arrival, should be delivered into the hands of the Bishop of Bajados, in order to deprive them of the means of interesting the queen in their favour ; but an honest pilot, named Martin, grieved at the unmerited sufferings of the admiral, quitted the vessel secretly, and hastened to the court with a letter, in which Columbus informed her of all that had passed.

This information caused the utmost astonishment to the king and queen, as they had never suspected Bovadilla would abuse his power. The unmerited treatment of a man, to whom the country owed such infinite obligations, they had no doubt would render them despicable in the eyes of all Europe, and orders were immediately sent to set Columbus and his brothers at liberty. At the same time he received a pressing invitation to come to court, and also a sum of money, necessary to equip himself in a manner agreeably to his rank.

On entering into the presence of the king and queen, he threw himself at their feet, without power to articulate a word ; so greatly did the remembrance of the injustice he had suffered overwhelm him. It was some minutes before he could recal his spirits ; when, fortified by conscious rectitude, he entered upon his defence with so much energy and courage, proving his innocence so evi-

dently, and the malice and calumny of his accusers, that the king and queen were convinced of his probity, and expressed the most lively regret for what had passed, which they declared was without their knowledge or approbation. To leave no doubt on the mind of Columbus, they immediately gave orders that Bovadilla should be divested of his employment and trust. All this was some reparation for the injustice Columbus had sustained, but when it became necessary to appoint some one to replace Bovadilla in the government, it was evident that they were not entirely free from the mistrust they had formerly entertained. They used their utmost endeavours to avoid the appearance of ingratitude towards him ; but, to re-establish him as viceroy, seemed too dangerous an expedient for them to hazard, as he would then have it amply in his power to revenge all the injuries he had suffered. In consequence, they retained him at court, under divers flattering pretences, and nominated to the government Nicholas Ovando.

It was in vain that Columbus pleaded his right to that distinction, which had been positively decreed to him and his heirs from the commencement of the enterprize. In vain he urged the fresh injustice committed against him, and demanded why, after having been convinced of his innocence, he was still to be

treated like a culprit? These complaints were answered by numberless excuses, and at length, it was finally decided that Ovando should go to Hispaniola.

This was a severe blow to Columbus, whose heart was yet lacerated with his preceding misfortunes. He experienced the most lively indignation, nor did he endeavour to conceal it. Wherever he went he carried the fetters he had worn with him, as a proof of the ingratitude with which his services had been requited; he caused them to be hung constantly in his sight, and even desired that they should be buried with him. Here, my dear children, we will cease for this day.

Some of the Children exclaim, Poor Columbus! He was indeed shamefully treated.

DIALOGUE XV.

Mathias. Did not Columbus afterwards return to the West Indies?

Father. Of that I shall inform you hereafter. At the present period of the history, there was no appearance of his ever more seeing it; for his complaints were disregarded, and Ovando departed.

The fleet that was confided to the new Governor was the largest that had been sent to the West Indies. It consisted of thirty sail, and had on board two thousand five hundred people, the greater part of whom were designed to be established in Hispaniola.

Ovando could not have arrived more fortunately at the new settlement ; for the injustice and imprudence of Bovadilla had nearly brought the colony to utter ruin. This wicked man hoped to confirm, by oppression and illicit measures, the authority he had acquired ; with this view he revoked all the wise laws enacted by Columbus, and permitted the Spaniards to live at their liberty. His predecessor had considered himself as a father to the poor Indians, and defended them against the tyranny of the Spaniards. Bovadilla, on the contrary, had given up this unfortunate people to every species of oppression and violence. Having caused an exact account of the number of the natives to be taken, he portioned them into lots as slaves to his creatures, who employed these wretched men in the mines, and treated them with the most savage barbarity for the smallest failure. The fatigue incurred by this slavery, and the inhuman usage they experienced, in a short space destroyed great numbers of the Indians, who were naturally weak ; and had not

Ovando arrived, in all probability, in no great length of time, this unhappy nation would have been entirely cut off.

The first act of the new governor was to dismiss Bovadilla, and to send him, with his accomplice, Roldan, to Spain, to answer for his conduct. Then, conformably to the orders he had received from the king, he abolished slavery, declaring all the Indians free, and forbidding the smallest violence to be offered to them. By new laws he restrained the atrocities of the Spaniards, whom he permitted to continue their search after gold ; but, with this restriction, that the moiety of their profits should belong to the king, as sovereign of the isle.

John. I am glad, however, that the government was given to a good man.

Father. Let us hope to find him continue such. What he had already done was by the express orders he had received ; when he came to act from himself, we shall be better judges of his merit. But let us return to Columbus. Yet what can I relate of him that will not either excite your pity or concern ? Behold him, bending under the weight of his vexations, demanding justice from an ungrateful court, that was deaf to his complaints ; demanding, not as a favour, but a right, the performance of the contract which the king had signed, and which entitled him,

to the exclusion of all others, to the viceroyalty of the countries he should discover. Behold, also, his unworthy adversaries, laughing in his face at the unheeded representations, and then judge what he must feel from such unworthy treatment !

Henry. I know what I should have done in such a case.

Father. What, my son ?

Henry. I would have given myself no farther trouble with them, but have chosen some spot to pass the remainder of my days in peace ; or, otherwise, I would have offered my services to some other nation.

Father. As for the last alternative, Henry, experience had already taught Columbus that he had little more to expect from other courts than from that of Spain. This noble-minded man also, perhaps thought, that a forfeiture of promise, on the part of the king, could not authorise him to fail in the duty he owed to the country, to whose welfare he had devoted his services. For your first observation, Henry, it was not for a character so great as Columbus, to entirely renounce his plan, and pass his life in inactivity. He was convinced, that in his last voyage, he had discovered the coast of a continent ; and the false idea he had entertained, that India extended so far, if not entirely dissipated, was at least greatly weakened by the observations

he had made. He now conceived, that, in all probability, this continent and India were separated by a large sea, — which of you can tell me, whether this supposition was well founded ?

All the Children. Doubtless it was ! The Great Pacific Ocean.

Father. By this reply, my children, you may judge how much better we are now acquainted with the globe, than at that time were the wisest men. What Columbus could not fathom, a child can now reply to with certainty. By this you may judge of the extent of our obligations to this navigator, without whom, the one half of the earth might have remained unknown for many ages longer.

Columbus also conceived, and not without probability, that near the isthmus of Darien — You doubtless know where that isthmus is situated ?

John. If we did not know that, father, we must be very dull indeed. It is between North and South America.

Father. Very well. He thought then, as I before said, that near this isthmus, the land might be separated by a strait, by which a communication might be opened from the Atlantic into the unknown sea, and from thence to India.

Nicholas. But that idea was erroneous ; for (*pointing it out on the map*) North and

South America are joined by the isthmus of Darien, which is divided in no part.

Father. You are right, Nicholas ; yet you see notwithstanding that the land is very narrow, and that Columbus was not far distant from the truth. It appeared to him of the utmost importance to certify whether such a strait as he surmised really existed ; for how many windings, and how much distance, would it save in the voyage from Spain to India, could they sail through America instead of coasting round Africa, as first discovered by the Portuguese ! The good of mankind overpowered in the mind of Columbus the injuries he had received, and determined him once more to expose his grey hairs to all the dangers and inconveniences of a new voyage. He communicated this design to the court, who were glad of any pretence to get rid of him ; for the presence of a man to whom they owed so much, and whom they had treated so unjustly, was to the king and queen a continual reproach. They also promised themselves he would be equally successful in this enterprize as in his former, and accordingly gave immediate consent, and ordered a squadron to be fitted out for the purpose.

But what a squadron, my children ! It consisted only of four shattered vessels, the largest of which did not exceed seventy tons burden, which is not half the size of an ordi-

nary merchant ship. This was the whole force given him for so important an enterprise, in which he was again to encounter the dangers of a distant and unknown ocean, and endeavour to discover a way, by which his employers promised themselves to readily obtain the immense treasures of India.

Few men would have ventured on so hazardous an expedition under such disadvantages ; but Columbus's first voyage was too firmly engraven on his memory to make him hesitate trusting his life a second time in vessels equally shattered as those in which he had before crossed the main ocean between Europe and the West Indies. He therefore embarked boldly, accompanied by his brother Bartholomew and his second son, Ferdinand, then aged thirteen, and who afterwards became the historian of his father's actions.

They sailed on the 29th of May, 1502, consequently ten years after his first voyage, steering as usual for the Canaries. His voyage this time was peculiarly fortunate, had it not been that one of his ships, and that the largest, was so bad a sailer, that it could not keep up with the rest ; he therefore steered for Hispaniola, in order to endeavour to change it for one in better condition.

Arrived off the island he sent to inform the Governor, Ovando, of his request, and to entreat permission to enter the port ; but the

governor had the insolence to refuse. Columbus then informed him, that being assured from some certain signs, which experience had rendered him mindful of, that they were on the eve of encountering a dreadful tempest, he desired only to remain in the harbour until the storm was passed ; and as the governor was on the point of sending off a considerable fleet for Spain, he also advised him to delay it a few days, that it might escape the danger. His entreaties were, however, rejected ; and his advice contemned as the ridiculous dream of an idle prognosticator. He was strictly forbidden to enter the port ; and the fleet bound for Spain set sail. Thus was the man who had, through numberless dangers, discovered this New World, treated like a suspected character, and refused an asylum against the threatening tempest, which common humanity ought to have granted to a stranger ; a new blow for the susceptible heart of Columbus !

Though Columbus suffered this insult with patience, Heaven, in this case, revenged his cause. The tempest he had foretold effectually happened, and the wise precautions he had used preserved his weak barks from destruction ; while, on the contrary, the rich and well-equipped fleet which had sailed for Spain, and consisting of eighteen vessels, all perished in the storm except three. Roldan

and Bovadilla, who were on board, in this dreadful conflict of the elements, met the reward of their villainy; both were lost, and with them the ill-earned riches they had acquired in the Island of Hispaniola. A remarkable circumstance in this event is, that the only vessel which received no injury, and was able to continue its way to Spain, was that in which the shattered remains of Columbus's property were embarked, and which the malice of his enemies had chosen as the most likely to founder. The other two which had escaped, regained St. Domingo in a very wretched condition.

Mother. Behold, in this event, my children, the hand of Providence, that, sooner or later, frequently even in this world, repays to each according to his deeds!

Father. Remember this circumstance, and observe, in your own journey through life, if you do not experience what I have frequently proved in mine. Whenever I was perfectly satisfied with the uprightness of my own conduct, I was certain to be successful, and scarcely remember a single failure of any consequence;—on the contrary, if I had given cause to the upbraidings of my conscience, nothing prospered entirely with me, and I was in continual expectation of some impending misfortune. This observation is an undeniable proof, and let me entreat you,

my dear children, to remark, at the end of twenty or thirty years, if you are not of the same opinion ; and should I not be in a state to recal to your mind your duties, do not forget to thank God for having familiarized you, through me, with the decrees of his providence, at a time when you could not fathom them yourselves.

The destruction of the Spanish fleet, instead of impressing the minds of the people with the justice of the Almighty, in whose power alone is the destiny of man, inspired them with the foolish and superstitious idea that Columbus was a magician, and that by his art he had raised this tempest, in order to be revenged upon his enemies ; — “ Or how,” said they, “ would it have been possible that the only vessel which escaped should be that which had his property on board ?”

Columbus with just indignation quitted a coast that had refused him a shelter in so heavy a calamity, and, with his vessels in a very shattered state, steered westward for the Continent.

This voyage was attended with many dangers ; at length they reached an island called Guanaia, not far distant from the Coast of Honduras. There, my children, (*pointing it out on the map,*) is the coast, and near it the isle.

Having cast anchor, he sent his brother Bartholomew with some men to reconnoitre the country. On approaching the shore, they perceived a large canoe constructed far more mechanically than any they had yet seen among the savages. It was of considerable length, eight feet in width, and had in the middle an awning of palm leaves, so that it must in some measure have resembled the gondolas in which we sometimes take our pleasure on the Alster.* Under this covering were seated several women and children, besides whom they counted twenty-five men in the canoe.

They endeavoured to join them ; which was executed without much difficulty, though the Indians were armed. On examining the cargo of this canoe, they found some mattresses, a kind of shirts without sleeves, made of cotton, some other articles of clothing, and a sort of mantle for the women. They had also large wooden swords, the edges of which were made of stone, let into a joint, and rendered firm by a kind of thread and rosin ; hatchets of copper, and different utensils of the same metal. Their food was similar to that of the natives in Hispaniola, except that their drink was a kind of beer made from

* A river in Hamburg, which forms a spacious basin, on which parties of pleasure are frequently made.

boiled maize. They had also a good store of cacao, which being their representative of coin were proportionably valued. This was the first species of money that Columbus had discovered among the Indians.

I must not here forget an observation respecting these savages that will give you pleasure ; they appeared to have a due sense of modesty, which praiseworthy decorum of manners caused them to cover the parts of the body which decency requires to be concealed. The admiral, pleased with these people, treated them with the utmost kindness ; exchanged European goods for such of theirs as he wished to obtain, and at length dismissed them, well pleased, in their canoes. He, however, detained on board his own ship an old man, who appeared the most intelligent of the party, and who made no scruple to remain with him. His intention was to obtain from him what information he could, and to use him as a kind of interpreter with the savages he might hereafter meet. This old man informed him, that, towards the west, there was a great country where gold was to be found in large quantities ; and plainly made him comprehend, by his signs, that the inhabitants there wore crowns of that metal on their heads, as also rings on their arms and legs, and that they decorated their household furniture with it. On being shown some coral,

spices, and other valuable articles, he assured them that the country he mentioned abounded in them. Need I tell you he meant the rich country of Mexico ?

However great the inclination of Columbus's men to procure these treasures, he had a wish beyond them,—it was, to attain the end for which he made the voyage, and to discover the passage he had supposed to be situated near this spot ; therefore, without deliberation, he relinquished the immense riches which he was assured were so near him, and deaf to the murmurs of his crew, steered eastward, veering along the coast of the main land.

Mother. This last trait of character proves Columbus truly great. To have it in his power to enrich himself, yet to withstand it in order to fulfil his duty, and, in spite of the murmurs of his companions, to be useful to the world in preference to himself, cannot be too much commended. Oh, my children ! should any of you hereafter encounter such a trial may you act with equal nobleness of mind !

Father. I am convinced they will do so, my dear ; I think I may venture to promise for them. If I did not judge thus, I would pray to Heaven to remove us from this world before we witnessed their first dishonour. My dear children, I hope, will remember my counsels, and shun every species of disgrace ;

and rather prefer to pass through life poor and despised, than for a single moment to forfeit their honour and duty. Should interest ever prompt them to a mean action, they will say to themselves, "Our father warned us to beware of this; and he well knew what is good for man below, and to procure his everlasting happiness hereafter. He had no motive but our welfare, and we will follow his precepts." Will you not think thus, my dear young friends, and endeavour through life to stifle all evil propensities, and to act with rectitude and unblemished honour?

The children threw their arms around their parents, the elder ones exclaiming — Should we disgrace such a father, we must be unpardonable indeed.

DIALOGUE XVI.

Father. Columbus, following his first intention, steered eastward towards the coast of Honduras, in search of the strait, which the savages had informed him he would really find in that direction.

John. They had then deceived him, father ?

Father. Not intentionally. They had misunderstood each other. Columbus had shown them the drawing of a strait, which they had mistaken for an isthmus, and under this supposition they had directed him to that of Darien. During this voyage on the coast, they discovered that the natives were far more savage than those they had before seen. They were entirely naked, and ate their meat and fish raw, without the least preparation. Their ears, by the weight of the ornaments they wore, were lengthened to their shoulders ; and their whole bodies were indented with fire in figures of elks, lions, and other animals. The most considerable among them were distinguished by cotton caps of different colours. Some had their faces painted black, others red, and some of divers colours, others had only their lips, nostrils, and eyelids stained. The holes pierced through their ears were so large, that a hen's egg might easily have been passed through them. Columbus named this part of the coast *La Costa de la Oreja* (that is, Coast of the Ear,) in reference to the remarkable ears of the natives. From hence he pursued his voyage, though but slowly, having continually to struggle against contrary winds and currents, until he reached a promontory, where

the land trending off to the south gave him an opportunity of prosecuting his voyage with a trade wind. Never forgetting to attribute every fortunate event to the Giver of all good, he named this cape Gracias a Dios (that is, Thanks to God.) Look for it upon the map.

Some days after, having cast anchor farther on the coast, several canoes filled with armed natives attempted to prevent their landing, until perceiving that they were pacifically inclined, they approached them with confidence, and offered to sell their merchandize, which consisted of different kinds of weapons, as bows, spears made of a black and hard wood, and pointed with fish bones, also clubs, &c. cotton, and small gold ornaments which they wore on their necks. The admiral presented them with several European trifles, refusing any thing in exchange — a compliment that did not appear to please them; and as the ship's company also declined going on shore, they appeared to consider it as a want of confidence in them, — they, therefore, deputed an old man of a respectable appearance, and two young girls with gold plates on their necks, to go on board of Columbus's vessel. The old man carried in his hand a sort of banner, doubtless as a token of peace, and being introduced to the admiral, they were highly pleased with their reception, for, after entertaining them with great hospitality, he

sent them back with a present of clothes, and several articles that had attracted their attention.

The brother of Columbus going on shore the next day, saw all the articles that had been presented to the natives piled together in a heap! — doubtless these poor people did not like to accept presents without making some return. On his landing he was received by two of the principal of the natives, who each took him by the arm, and invited him to sit with them on the grass. Don Bartholomew did as they desired, and by the assistance of his interpreter asked them divers questions, ordering his secretary to take down their answers in writing. But they no sooner saw the pens, paper, and inkhorn, than starting up they fled, with all those that had accompanied them, with the utmost precipitation. The ignorance and superstition of these poor people caused them to imagine that the materials for writing were implements of sorcery, which were to be employed to do them injury. This ridiculous idea was not eradicated without some trouble, nor would they again approach the Spaniards until they had, according to their own opinion, secured themselves from the magic art of the secretary. The means they used were as follows: — they threw towards the Spaniards a certain powder, which raising a smoke, they blew it towards

the supposed magician to prevent his charm taking effect. Bartholomew after this accompanied them to their city. What he there saw most remarkable was a large building of wood, which served as a burial-place. He found in several of the tombs bodies enveloped in cotton cloth, one of which was embalmed. Over each of these sepulchres was a board carved with the figures of beasts, or the effigies of the deceased, with the native ornaments.

The admiral, the next day, in order to procure what information he could, entertained several of the natives on board his vessel; when their companions, concluding it was only to obtain ransom for them, sent deputies with two young pigs, requesting the release of the prisoners. Columbus made them at length understand that their companions were not captives, and should be sent back in safety without ransom; he then purchased their pigs, and sent them on shore perfectly satisfied.

On the deck where they had put the hogs, was a wild cat of a grey colour, and in size as large as a young greyhound. It had been taken by one of the sailors, after having one of its paws cut off. This animal was as quick in its movements as a squirrel, and in a similar manner would jump from tree to tree, sometimes suspending itself from the branches

by the tail. The pigs no sooner saw this creature, than with the utmost fear they endeavoured to escape ; one, however, was stopped and given to the cat, who immediately twisted her tail round his snout, and with her fore paws on each side of its throat would infallibly have killed it, had it not been taken from her. It is said that in Spain the wolves use the same means to despatch their prey. After some few days sail, the admiral cast anchor at the mouth of a river, and sent some soldiers to the shore, but a multitude of the natives opposed their landing ; more than a hundred entering into the sea as high as their middle, presenting their lances, sounding a horn, beating a kind of drum, throwing water at the Spaniards, and spitting chewed herbs at them, in token of hatred and disdain. The Spaniards had received orders to behave with the utmost moderation ; and, in consequence, after a short time, a more pacific communication took place, and the savages entered into traffic with them, by which they procured sixteen pieces of gold, of the value of 150 ducats, in exchange for a few bells. Would men in general behave as the Spaniards did in this instance, how many sorrows and misfortunes would they prevent !

It certainly will sometimes happen, that we meet with people on whom reason has no power, and that our endeavours for peace will

fail in their effect. It is, then, doubtless, justifiable to take measures to secure ourselves from injury or insult, even by employing violent means. In this case, we should be particularly careful to guard against suffering resentment to degenerate into passion and vengeance, and to restrain it within the bounds of a just and honourable defence. Of this Columbus has given us a proof, which may serve as an example.

The very next day the savages appeared to consider the patience with which the Spaniards had received their insults as marks of fear and timidity, and therefore gave full rein to their petulance, so much so that, when the ship's boat endeavoured to reach the shore, they attacked them with their zagyas, or long darts. The Spaniards could not now avoid showing them that they neither wanted courage nor strength to defend themselves. Columbus, therefore, ordered a cannon to be fired; which caused them to fly in the greatest precipitation, more particularly as one of them was also wounded by an arrow from the vessel. The Spaniards then landed, but did not pursue the runaways, on the contrary, by amicable signs, entreated them to return; an invitation they at length accepted, convinced that the strangers had not, unprovoked, wished to do them injury, though they possessed ample means. At length they laid down their

weapons, returned to the shore, and changed their plates of gold for European goods, without the least hostility.

Columbus, after taking information of the nature of the country, its soil, its inhabitants, and productions, set sail, and continued to steer along the coast, still hoping to discover the strait he was in search of. In this course he at length reached a bay, which formed a spacious and secure harbour, near which the Indians had built a town, which was very populous, and surrounded with well cultivated lands. Columbus named this port *Porto Bello*, (that is, *Beautiful Port*,) on account of the fine harbour.

The inhabitants of this town appeared very peaceably inclined ; they brought fine cotton and provisions to the ships, willingly exchanging them for nails, needles, bells, and other commodities of the same sort. Eight miles farther, Columbus reached the spot where the town of *Nombre de Dios* (*Name of God*) now stands. You will find it on the map. The bad weather obliged him to remain some days in this place, which time he employed in repairing his vessels. At length he set sail, but was again prevented from proceeding by the stormy weather, which obliged him to put into a small port, which he named *El Retrete*, or *Retiring Place*.

The natives at first appeared very familiar ;

but the imprudent conduct of some of the sailors, so exasperated them, that, trusting to their numbers, they prepared for a general attack, with a design, no doubt, of gaining possession of the vessels. The admiral had, alternately, recourse to gentleness and threatenings, to engage them to remain peaceable, but in vain ; and finding all other means unavailing, he ordered some cannon to be fired with powder only, concluding that the noise would alarm and disperse them. In this he was, however, mistaken ; for, observing that they received no injury, they became only the more daring, expressing their derision by loud cries, striking the trees with their clubs, and other actions, to show how little they feared the noise of the artillery.

Columbus was then necessitated to show them it consisted of somewhat more than merely noise, and therefore ordered a cannon, with ball, to be fired against a hillock, where a number of them were assembled. The effect of this second stroke soon convinced them of the dreadful power of the thunder they had contemned, and, struck with horror and dismay, they fled into the forests.

These Indians were the handsomest of any they had yet seen, being well shaped, and of a good stature. There was, in this port, a great number of large alligators, which came

on shore to sleep, and emitted a strong scent of musk. They were cowardly when attacked, but used their utmost skill to surprize any one, in order to devour them.

Columbus, at length, despairing to find a passage from the Atlantic Ocean into the South Sea, and being also continually detained by the bad weather, resolved to return, and steer for a land called Veragua, (that is, Real Water,) where the savages had informed him there were many gold mines. Look for it, some of you, on the map.

A dreadful storm, that lasted several days, added to a great scarcity of food, rendered this navigation both dangerous and toilsome. All the provisions that remained, after being eight months at sea, now consisted of a little biscuit, so spoiled by the heat and moisture of the climate, that nothing but the most extreme hunger could force them to eat it; it was, literally speaking, alive with maggots, so that those, who were obliged to have recourse to it, seemed rather to swallow a mass of insects than bread, and took the precaution to eat it in the dark, in order to avoid seeing the disgusting morsel with which they were obliged to alleviate the cravings of nature. From this example, my children, you may surmise to what dreadful extremities hunger may reduce men. Heaven be praised! you have hitherto known it only by name.

At this time the vessels were surrounded by a great number of sharks.

Charlotte. Excuse my interrupting you, father ; but pray what are sharks ?

John. They are sea monsters. Do you not remember the account of them, when we were reading natural history ?

Charlotte. It is so long since that I have forgotten.

Father. Relate, my son, what you recollect respecting them.

John. Willingly. In the first place, they are very large ; some are said to be from twenty to thirty feet long, their bodies are very thick and their mouths are monstrous, being armed both at the top and bottom with three rows of teeth, with which they easily, at one snap, bite off an arm or a leg ; added to this, they have such prodigious strength in their tail, that a stroke from it will break a limb, and even sometimes kill a man on the spot.

Frederic. What a dreadful monster it must be, brother !

Father. It is also very voracious ; indeed so much so, that it greedily swallows whatever presents itself, even to iron hooks and hatchets that chance to drop from the vessels. I have read an account of a sailor, who was thrown overboard, wrapped in a large piece of coarse cloth, (as is the cus-

tom at sea, where they have no other means of burial,) being found entire in the belly of a shark, which the crew had taken the day following. The flesh of this creature is bad tasted, and smells of oil, notwithstanding which, the African negroes eat it with great pleasure ; and, in order to render it more delicious, expose it to the sun, for seven or eight days, until it begins to stink and putrify.

Charlotte. How nasty it must be !

Father. The superstitious companions of Columbus regarded the appearance of these sea monsters as an evil omen ; yet their fears and disgust at length gave way to hunger, and they fed heartily upon them, in preference to their nauseous biscuits.

Ferdinand. But how did they contrive to take them, father ?

Father. Nothing more easy. Their voracity makes them an easy prey, and leads them, as improper passions do mankind, to their destruction. As they snap at whatever is thrown from the vessels, the sailors only put a piece of red cloth on a large hook fixed to an iron chain, and throw it into the sea, and they are certain to catch these gluttons, who eagerly swallow it, and by means of the chain are dragged into the vessel. One was taken by the crew of Columbus's ship, and when cut open, there was found in his stomach a live turtle, which, when released from

his prison, walked upon the deck. In another shark they found the head of one of its own species, which the sailors had thrown overboard. From this circumstance you learn, that they will even devour each other. But surely we have talked of sharks long enough for this evening ; to-morrow we will return to Columbus.

DIALOGUE XVII.

Father. Before they reached Veragua, so much extolled for its gold mines, Columbus was frequently obliged, by the bad weather, to cast anchor on different parts of the coast, in order to shelter himself from the sudden squalls of wind.

In one of these spots where he anchored, a particular circumstance struck him ; it was that the inhabitants, instead of living on the ground, constructed their houses in the air.

Frederic. I wonder how they managed that.

Father. Much in the same manner as it is said Queen Semiramis formerly constructed

her gardens. You remember that account ? Do you not, Frederic ?

Frederic. Oh, yes, father ; the hanging gardens at Babylon.

Father. Well then, in the same manner as these gardens are reported to have been constructed, on terraces supported by arches, were the huts of these savages erected on the branches of great trees ; so that they might truly be said not to dwell on the earth, but like birds, in the air.

Charlotte. What could be their reason for this ?

Father. Perhaps they did not think themselves safe on the ground ; they might dread inundations, wild beasts, or the attack of enemies.

Charles. I wonder how they mounted up to their houses.

Father. By ladders, which they drew up after them ; thus securing themselves from intrusion.

Theophilus. They were cunning, however, father.

Father. At length Columbus reached Veragua, to the great joy of his companions, who already anticipated the treasures they expected to find there. They cast anchor at the mouth of a river, to which the admiral, in compliment to the day, (being twelfth day,) gave the name of Bethlehem ; but being in-

formed, that by a few days sail up the river, they would reach the residence of their king, who was called Quibia, he determined to proceed. Columbus sent his brother Bartholomew first, with some manned boats, to compliment his Indian Majesty ; who was no sooner informed of his arrival, than he came to meet him with great kindness.

The next day the king resolved to pay a visit to the admiral, who received him with the distinction due to his rank ; and making him a present of some European baubles, his friendship was entirely obtained. In the mean time Bartholomew had cautiously informed himself of the situation of the gold mines, and, with some of his men, went to examine the spot. Near the roots of the great trees he found some gold dust, and no farther proof was necessary to convince him, that the soil contained abundance of that precious metal. After collecting some scattered grains, they returned to the admiral with the agreeable news of their success.

The design Columbus had conceived of forming a colony in this country, was strengthened by this event, and he immediately gave orders for some dwellings to be constructed near the mouth of the river. This work was carried on with such diligence, that, in a short time, the houses were completed. They

were built of wood, and covered with palm leaves.

Columbus chose, in order to form this colony, eighty men from his crew, appointing his brother the Governor. He also furnished them with weapons and tools necessary for their defence and labour; together with a large quantity of fishing tackle, as there were great numbers of fish, both near the coast and in the river; and, among others, a kind of pilchard, or anchovy, of a most exquisite flavour, and which the natives caught in a manner which I must relate to you. These fish, when they are pursued by any other, leap out of the water, and lodge themselves on a dry spot, until the danger is past; when they return to their element. In consequence of this observation, the Indians cover the middle of their canoes with palm leaves, and, as they cross the river, make a loud noise with their oars, to alarm the fish, who, taking the usual leap, mistake the canoe for land, and thus are caught.

All being arranged, Columbus was about to depart for Spain, when he learned, to his great astonishment, that King Quibia, jealous of the establishment the Europeans had made in his country, had formed the project of burning all the dwellings they had erected. He consulted with his brother how to avoid this misfortune; when both were of opinion,

that the only means to prevent the attack, was to seize upon the person of the cacique — a resolution that had the most fatal consequences.

Don Bartholomew engaged to put this plan in execution, and accordingly, with a good number of soldiers, repaired to the town of Veragua, near which, on a lonely hill, stood the dwelling of the cacique. As they approached, Quibia sent them word that he would come and meet them ; upon which Bartholomew, taking only five men with him, left the rest, with orders to follow at a distance until they heard the report of a musquet, when they were to hasten forward, surround the cacique's dwelling, and prevent any person from making their escape. The cacique unsuspecting the evil that threatened him, advanced to receive his visiter, and found himself in a few moments a prisoner. The signal was given, the dwelling was surrounded, and all within partook of their master's fate.

Some of the Children. What shameful treachery !

Father. Indeed, my children, I must perfectly agree with you, and would willingly, if it were possible, efface from the history of our friend Columbus, in many respects so noble and disinterested, this disagreeable stain upon his character.

Henry. The cacique, father, had first given the offence, and he only meant to secure himself from his designs.

Father. That is true, my boy ; but pray, what right had the Spaniards to make a settlement in his country without his permission ?

Henry. They did wrong in that.

Father. Undoubtedly they did ; for who can attribute it a crime in a sovereign, to expel strangers whom he thinks dangerous to his subjects and kingdom ?

Henry. It can be no crime, father.

Father. Where then was the great injustice the Spaniards complained of, and which authorized them to violate the sacred laws of hospitality ? All that can be said in this case to excuse Columbus is, that he perhaps had a good intention in founding this colony. Under the direction of his brother, he perhaps hoped to civilize the natives, and teach them the worship of the true God ; that his design in seizing the king was perhaps only to enter into some negotiation for the security of his people, and to endeavour to gain the friendship of Quibia. If such indeed were his motives, we must allow they were praise-worthy ; but the means which he used to accomplish them were nevertheless unjust, and unworthy in the utmost degree of a man of sense and humanity. Thus much for his motives. Whatever they were, this precipitate action

involved him in a number of disagreeable events, that concluded only with his life ; and those I shall relate to you.

Their prisoner, the cacique, was put into the boat, in order to be conveyed to the vessel, with his hands and feet bound, and fastened against the side. It was dark, — and he complained so heavily of the pain he endured from his hands being too straitly tied, that one of the party loosened him from the boat, but used the precaution of letting him remain bound ; notwithstanding which he leaped overboard, dragging the guard who held him along with him, and by favour of the night escaped all pursuit. How he managed to swim with his hands and feet bound is difficult to be conceived by us Europeans, who have little skill in that art even with our limbs at liberty.

The rapacity of the Spaniards made this event a pretence to seize upon whatever belonged to the cacique, imputing his escape as a crime. His dwelling was pillaged, and the gold they found amounting to the value of three hundred ducats, shared among them, reserving a fifth for the king of Spain. Quibia, in the mean time, prepared to take vengeance upon his oppressors, and, when least expected, having traversed thick woods, with his people uttering hideous yells, fell upon the colony with a shower of heated arrows,

with which they hoped to set fire to the combustible roofs of the newly-erected dwellings. The distance, however, prevented this design from taking effect, and an obstinate combat ensued, which must have ended in the destruction of the colony, had not the courage and skill of Bartholomew saved it ; for, with a small number of his men, he repulsed the enemy so vigorously, that at length he put them to flight.

The Indians lost many men in this encounter. On the side of the Spaniards one man was killed, and several were wounded ; among them was Bartholomew, who was struck with an arrow in the stomach, — the wound, however, was not mortal.

It was hoped that this defeat would have deterred the cacique from any fresh hostilities. But they mistook his character ; he became doubly furious against them, and appeared resolved on vengeance, so that the colony must doubtless have fallen a victim to his resentment, had not the settlers unanimously declared that they would sooner trust themselves to the fury of the waves, in the shattered vessel that was left them, than remain on a spot where they should be daily exposed to the vengeance of a cruel and implacable enemy. Columbus, informed of all that had passed, was therefore obliged to relinquish his undertaking, and ordered them to come on

board ; a command they gladly obeyed, reaching his vessel in a boat moored between two canoes, for the ship that was to be left for their use was so dreadfully shattered, that it was scarcely better than a wreck, it was therefore left behind, and the other three set sail.

The admiral's utmost desire was now to be able to make the Isle of Hispaniola in his crazy vessels, for it was not to be supposed that they could ever reach Europe. But even the very elements seemed to conspire for the destruction of this great navigator. He was assailed with constant hurricanes, which were rendered yet more terrible by the storms which are frequent in those climates, and which, agitating the ocean to its very bottom, tossed the vessels with such furious velocity, that the crews became bewildered with fear. In vain did Columbus endeavour to enforce every measure that his experience suggested ; they were deaf to his orders, or, if attended to, the general perplexity prevented their execution. Thus one of the ships perished, and the two that remained were so leaky, and had so many feet water, that the united strength of the crews, who laboured constantly at the pumps, could scarcely keep them afloat.

In this distressing situation Columbus steer-

ed for the Isle of Cuba, in hopes of being able to make the most necessary repairs to his vessels ; but this intention was speedily frustrated, a fresh storm arose when he was in sight of the coast, and soon threw him at a considerable distance. In this tempest, the two vessels struck against each other with such dreadful violence that the crews of both expected to be instantly overwhelmed.

Notwithstanding this extreme danger, it pleased the Almighty to prolong the toilsome life of Columbus, and to exercise his fortitude by fresh trials.

The joints of the ships, however unexpectedly, had withstood the shock they had received ; and as they in the mean time had gained the coast of Jamaica, the admiral succeeded in running his vessels aground at the very moment they were on the point of sinking. By this skilful manœuvre he saved his own life, and also those of his companions.

Henry. Poor creatures ! but how could they get from thence when they had no ships ?

Father. That care Columbus left to Providence, contenting himself in fulfilling those indispensable duties the present danger required.

It was now totally out of the question to think of refitting the vessels, as they were shattered beyond all repair ; yet it was of the utmost importance to the admiral that they

should not go to pieces, as two powerful reasons made him conclude that it was better to stay with his unhappy companions on the wreck, than to venture to reside on shore. First, he was in greater security against the attacks of the natives ; secondly, he could more easily prevent his people from insulting or ill treating them, as their friendship, in the present crisis, was of the utmost importance to him. He ordered the vessels, therefore, to be cleared as much as possible, erected sheds upon the decks for his men, and strictly forbade any one to go on shore without permission.

A number of Indians soon came on board ; and as, by order of Columbus, they were very civilly treated, they showed the utmost confidence and affection for the strangers, bringing provisions in abundance to barter for their European gewgaws. With great satisfaction they received a sheet of tinsel for two geese, a loaf of maize they gave for a glass bead, and what they held in the highest estimation they readily parted with for a bell.

Among the many deliberations Columbus held with his friends how he should get from this island, one plan alone appeared feasible ; which was, to inform the Governor of Hispaniola of their distress, and to entreat him to send a vessel to take them on board. But the question was, how to convey the intelli-

gence to him ; for they had not even a single boat remaining, and from Jamaica to Hispaniola was a distance of above thirty leagues, as you see upon the map. This was a difficulty hard to be surmounted ; yet perseverance at length overcame it.

Columbus had, by his cautious conduct, so entirely conciliated the friendship of the natives, that they consented to sell him two of their canoes. It must be confessed that they were poor vessels, not even deserving the name of boats, being only the trunks of large trees simply made hollow in the roughest manner, and at most only proper to sail along the coast, as the smallest gust of wind would overset them, or the lightest wave overwhelm them.

Notwithstanding all the disadvantages attending so long a voyage, in such miserable barks, among the companions of Columbus were two men sufficiently courageous to offer to hazard their lives for the safety of the admiral and his unfortunate men. One was named Mendez, the other Fiesco ; the first a Spaniard, the second a Genoese.

It is with pleasure, my dear children, that I mention those brave men to you ; their courage, and attachment to the commander under whom they served, render their names worthy of being handed down to posterity, and remembered with honour. Each em-

barked in a separate canoe, accompanied by six Spaniards and some natives to work the oars. It was agreed, that if they should be fortunate enough to reach Hispaniola, Fiesco should return and inform the admiral, while Mendez should proceed by land to St. Domingo to perform his business with the governor.

Thus they departed with the warmest wishes of their friends for their safety ; but after having steered for forty-eight hours the course that had been prescribed them, and suffering the most intolerable heat, they began to fear that they had mistaken the course, and entered the main sea beyond Hispaniola. You may easily surmise the alarm this caused them, and more particularly as they had already consumed all their stock of fresh water, and were equally exhausted with drought and fatigue. Some of the poor Indians fainted and died ; while the survivors, considering their deaths but as a prelude to their own, gave themselves up to despair. The only relief they could procure was to fill their mouths with sea water to cool their parched tongues ; but this temporary relief only the more increased their thirst. In this terrible situation a gleam of hope at length beamed on their desponding minds. It was night, and as the moon rose they perceived an elevation.

which they knew to be a rock. This sight made them conjecture that they were near some island ; a hope that inspired them with strength sufficient to work their oars to reach it. At length they attained it, but, alas ! found only a barren mountain, apparently destitute of the smallest necessary either to eat or drink. What a dreadful disappointment !

They notwithstanding left their canoes, and walked over this island, or, more properly speaking, this mass of stone, with the most poignant despair in their hearts. I must here digress, to observe how erroneous it is to give way to despair. Even when all human resources appear to fail, how frequently is the hand of the Divine Providence stretched out to help us, at the very moment we least expect it, and most need it ! Who would have judged, my children, that God had destined this same mountain to furnish what alone could preserve them from perishing ? And yet it was immediately so. The hollows of the rock were full of rain water, as clear and fresh as if taken from a river. The discovery of this blessing was unfortunately not received with the moderation it ought ; parched with drought, they swallowed such quantities, that some died in consequence, and all were greatly disordered. Of the first mentioned, many fell dead on the spot ; the second were after-

wards attacked with fevers, consumptions, and dropsies. So true is it, my children, that excess of the best and most wholesome things may be converted into poison, and that the imprudence of man frequently turns the blessings of Heaven into a curse.

Notwithstanding the most pressing want of our adventurers was satisfied, yet the dread of hunger still remained. Fortunately, on the shore of this desolate spot they found some fish which the waves had thrown upon the coast ; and these sufficing to remove the cravings of nature, the conductors resolved to remain during the heat of the day, and take some rest, and in the evening re-commence their toilsome voyage, uncertain whether they should ever reach the object of their pursuit. Here we will leave them, my dear auditors ; to-morrow I will let you know the event of their labours.

A number of the Children exclaim, Oh, dear, dear father, at least tell us whether the poor fellows ever reached Hispaniola ?

Father. Why, surely, you would not be cruel enough to wish me to disturb these poor men, who are just taking a nap after their fatigue ?

Frederic. Oh, no, father ! but only tell us.

Father. Well, if I must — Towards evening then, they embarked, and, after having rowed all night by the light of the moon,

landed at length, to their inexpressible joy, on the western coast of Hispaniola. Are you satisfied now, my young friends ?

The Children. Oh, yes, father.

Father. Well, then, good night.

DIALOGUE XVIII.

Father. Let us now, my children, as we have safely landed the two noble fellows, Mendez and Fiesco, in Hispaniola, return to Jamaica, and see how our friend Columbus has passed his time. My heart whispers that perhaps we may soon lose him. Let us therefore make much of the interval he has to remain with us.

Theophilus. I hope he is not going to die, father ?

Charlotte. If I thought he was, I believe I should run away before I heard any more.

Frederic. And so should I.

Father. Reluctance is vain, my dear children ; we cannot fly from the will of Heaven, nor reverse the decrees of the Almighty. Thus, instead of repining at the death of those we love, it is best to hold ourselves prepared for such events, that we

may support them with fortitude, and submit with becoming resignation.

Day after day the crews of the vessels cast their anxious looks towards the coast, from whence they expected Fiesco to return with the agreeable news that his companions had safely reached Hispaniola. Alas ! their eyes were strained in vain ; Fiesco did not arrive, and the unhappy crews were plunged in despair. They had no doubt but that the two deputies had perished in their hazardous attempt, and all hope of deliverance expired with them. This idea overwhelmed them with sorrow ; — but this was not all, as usual, they considered Columbus as the author of their common misery, and cursed the hour when they committed themselves to the direction of so bold an adventurer, who was predestined to involve all in ruin who joined his pursuits. Weary at length with complaints and useless imprecations, an inclination to revolt began to show itself, and the death of Columbus was sworn among them. Indeed this great man, who had escaped so many dangers, was on the point of falling a victim to the blind fury and murderous designs of his subalterns. He was confined to his bed with the gout, and a number of his crew were also ill ; the greater part of those in health had joined the conspiracy, the chiefs of which were two brothers named Porras.

In this situation the elder of these miscreants came to the admiral's bed, and insolently demanded the reason why he did not return to Spain. Columbus, with his usual forbearance, replied, that however great his desire was to return, it was now impossible; but that if he, or any of his companions, could point out the means, he would willingly listen to them. Nay, more, it was his intention to call together all his officers, to consult them on the subject. This answer, however reasonable, made no impression on Porras, who replied, that there was no longer time to lose in consultations, and that for his part he wished to sail immediately. "Let those among you," added he, addressing the crews that had assembled, "who mean to join me, now declare yourselves."

This question was the signal for a general revolt; the greater part of the men immediately crying out, "We are ready to follow you." Columbus, though disabled with the gout, and exhausted with repeated vexations, at this insult leaped from his bed, with the view of forcing the mutineers back to their duty; but his attendants, who with reason feared they would murder him, withheld him, as they also did his brother Bartholomew, who, armed with a pike, rushed among them. The revolters then seized upon ten canoes, which the admiral had purchased of the sav-

ages, and embarked in them ; a sight which shook the fidelity of the few that had remained firm to their duty, and the greater part eagerly entreated to join them.

Columbus, his brother, and his son Ferdinand, were spectators of this vexatious scene, and beheld themselves abandoned by all but the sick, who were unable to go, and their few faithful domestics. Columbus having called these around him, in the more energetic manner thanked them for the proof of attachment they had given him, exhorted them to continue in their duty, and to fix their thoughts upon a speedy termination of their sorrows, through the means of Him who has promised a recompense both in this world and in the next to those who strictly pursue the path of rectitude. The rebels steered towards the eastern point of the island, in order to make for Hispaniola, rending the air with their exclamations of joy, and every time they landed, during this navigation, robbing and ill treating the natives ; at the same time telling them, that as the admiral was the sole cause of what they did, they must apply to him for redress, — adding, that if he did not make amends to their satisfaction, they were welcome to kill him. It was thus they endeavoured to embitter the minds of the Indians against their betrayed and much-injured commander ; and at length having overpow-

ered a number of these poor savages, they obliged them to embark with them to work their oars, and again put to sea.

They had hardly made four leagues, when the sea became so agitated from a contrary wind, that their miserable boats began to fill with water. In order to lighten them, I shudder with horror to relate it, these monsters did not hesitate to murder some of the defenceless Indians, and to throw them into the sea ; a sight which made others leap from the canoes, struck with terror and despair, swimming around them and crying aloud for mercy. But, barbarity unparalleled ! when these unhappy sufferers, exhausted with swimming, endeavoured for an instant to relieve themselves by catching hold of the canoes, these European fiends, can you credit it, my children ? cut off their hands, and left them to perish miserably ! Not less than seventeen were thus barbarously sacrificed ; and in all probability not one would have escaped, if the Spaniards, despairing of being able to proceed, had not formed the resolution of returning to Jamaica, and, on this account, kept them to work the oars.

If it be possible, my children, efface this horrible relation from your memories ; or, if you cannot, whenever it may intrude, deplore the disgrace that humanity sustained by such monsters bearing a human form, — wretches

destitute of every sentiment that ennobles man.

Columbus's conduct in this distress was equally as great as in his former trials. His fortitude never forsook him. Though ill himself, with truly paternal care he considered the necessities of his people, and took the best measures in his power for their recovery. Heaven seconded his designs, for in a short time he had the satisfaction to see all his invalids re-established.

Fresh difficulties however attended him ; the Indians who had hitherto supplied his people with provisions, began to dread lest these voracious strangers meant to fix their residence among them, and should devour all the produce of their lands. This apprehension, added to the bad treatment they had experienced from the rebels, filled their minds with fear and hatred against the Europeans, and made them suddenly desist from supplying them with provisions.

The knowledge and understanding of Columbus, even in this dilemma, furnished a resource. By his skill in astronomical calculations he knew there would speedily be an eclipse of the moon, and took advantage of this circumstance to bring back the natives to their former sentiments of respect and benevolence, which he did as follows : —

By means of a savage that he had brought with him from Hispaniola, he convened the chiefs of the natives, informing them that he had something to communicate of the utmost importance; and on their being assembled, by means of his interpreter he addressed them to this purport. That himself and his companions were men who served the God that created the heaven and the earth; the God who protected the good and punished the wicked, and would not fail to punish them, if they continued to refuse to supply his worshippers with food for their subsistence. To prove the truth of what he averred, even that very evening they would see the moon rise with an angry aspect, and of the colour of blood; from which they might judge of the punishment that hung over them, if they did not hasten to supply the Europeans with food as before.

This prediction was at first a subject of derision to the savages; but when in reality the moon arose as Columbus had foretold, and they saw the darkness overspread it, their ridicule gave way to universal terror. Crying and howling they sought Columbus, and entreated him to intercede with his God, that the chastisement that threatened them might be removed, and they would faithfully promise, never more to let the Spaniards want food.

Columbus, on these conditions, promised to do all in his power, and retired to his cabin until the time when he knew the eclipse would begin to decrease ; when returning to them, he bid them not make themselves uneasy, — “ Since God,” said he, “ sees with pleasure that you have changed your conduct, he will not punish you for the past ; and to prove his pardon, the moon will speedily put off her angry appearance, and resume her usual lustre.”

This new prediction being accomplished by the termination of the eclipse, the natives praised the God of the Christians, and provided ample for the man who had announced his will to them in so marvellous a manner. Well, my children, what do you think of this ? Was it right and prudent of Columbus thus to work upon the ignorance of these poor folks ?

None of the children replying, their father continued ; — What say you, John ? — will you not give me your opinion ?

John. Certainly, father. The action might undoubtedly be prudent ; but for right, indeed, I cannot think it.

Father. And why so, friend John ?

John. I do not very well understand how to explain my meaning ; yet I think the name of God should never be used to a falsehood.

Father. In that case I think as you do,

yet I know not whether from the same cause ; you will therefore give me your reason.

John. Because, father, we may lead others into erroneous opinions by representing him falsely.

Father. You are right, my son. You all know of how much importance it is to have a just and true idea of the Divinity. The erroneous opinions of weak minds is superstition ; thus what Columbus on this occasion made the Indians believe, deserves that name, and was calculated to lead them into error. We cannot, therefore, approve the conduct of Columbus ; yet surely if ever a fault, blameable in itself, deserves to be excused, this does. He saw himself and his people reduced to the greatest extremity ; and though the idea he impressed was erroneous, yet it inculcated into the minds of these ignorant men the existence of a God, and, by that means, disposed them in future to receive better instructions. If any palliative can be found for his deception, it must be this : —

As eight months had passed since the departure of Mendez and Fiesco, no doubt remained but that they had perished ; an event that reduced the companions of Columbus to despair, and gave rise to the idea of abandoning their chief, and joining the rebels, who continued their depredation throughout the island, living by rapine and violence.

But at the moment these revoltors were on the point of putting their design in execution, they were agreeably surprized by the sight of a small European vessel, which cast anchor at a short distance from the coast. The commander soon landed, and brought to the admiral a letter from the Governor of Hispaniola, a cask of wine, and two fitches of bacon, which he had no sooner presented, than, re-entering his boat, he soon reached his vessel, and set sail. The letter he brought contained nothing more than some unmeaning compliments. Doubtless you cannot guess, any more than did the crew of Columbus, the meaning of this sudden appearance; I must therefore explain it to you. Ovando, the Governor of Hispaniola, whom we have already spoken of, desired nothing more than to see Columbus, whose right he usurped, perish in his distress: for he feared, that, should he live to return to Spain, he would again solicit to be reinstated as Viceroy to the West Indies; in which case he, Ovando, must lose his government; he therefore wished to learn the real situation of the man whom he so sincerely longed to get rid of, could he effect it by retarding, yet some time longer, the vessel which was to be sent for his deliverance. Thus say some historians, in accounting for the sudden departure of the

deputy, as soon as he had examined into the distress of the admiral. Others allege a less criminal motive. Ovando, say they, feared that the wreck of Columbus's ship was only a pretence, in order that he might return to Hispaniola, and re-establish himself, by force, in the situation he had been deprived of ; he therefore sent a spy, to be exactly informed of the truth. You are now at liberty to adopt which of those opinions you choose. To which do you give the preference ?

Some of the Children. To the last, father.

Father. Why so ?

Henry. Because we have it only upon conjecture, that Ovando was so despicable a character ; and, in doubtful cases, you have ever taught us to believe the good, in preference to the evil.

Father. Very well ; preserve that principle, my son, and you will never repent having adopted it, should you even suppose your fellow creatures better than you in reality find them. I had rather be mistaken ten times, in that case, than a single one in the other.

Columbus, as it is said, suspected that Ovando was actuated by the first mentioned motive ; but too noble minded to sink under calamity, he carefully concealed, from his people, the vexation that preyed upon him, and the desperate situation to which he considered himself reduced. Assuming, there-

fore, an air of serenity, he informed his companions, that the reason of the vessel so speedily setting sail was, that it was found too small to receive their effects; that Mendez and Fiesco had happily reached Hispaniola, and had orders to procure, on his account, a vessel capable of conveying them all, and which would, in a short time, arrive. Columbus had, in reality, obtained information of the two brave men who had devoted themselves to the service of their companions. You have already heard that they arrived safe in port. The reason that Fiesco had not returned was as follows:—

Notwithstanding he had caught a severe fever, in the rocky island where they had cast anchor by the way, yet, faithful to his promise, he was anxious to return to Columbus, in order to inform him of the success of the enterprize; but he found it impossible to persuade a single man among his comrades to attempt, a second time, so dangerous a voyage. Entreaties and threats were equally unavailing; and he was obliged however contrary to his inclination, to accompany the rest to St. Domingo, where, joining his solicitations to those of Mendez, he earnestly entreated the Governor to sell him a vessel, that he might hasten to the assistance of his admiral; but the Governor, whatever were his motives, constantly, by

some frivolous excuse, deferred the accomplishment of this request.

During this interval Columbus had been endeavouring to bring the rebels back to their duty, but in vain; they not only persisted in their revolt, but also demanded of the admiral half of the clothes, and other effects, on board the wrecked vessels, threatening, in case of a refusal, to enforce their request in a more hostile manner. Their demand being rejected, they were preparing to put this threat in execution. As Columbus still remained indisposed, he sent his brother Bartholomew, at the head of his men, armed, to meet the revolters, ordering them, however, to try the most conciliatory conduct, before they had recourse to harsher measures. Bartholomew scrupulously observed these commands, once more offering a general amnesty; but the rebels, who regarded this overture but as a proof of weakness and timidity, replied only by a commencement of hostilities. Six of them had engaged, upon oath, to confine their attack to Bartholomew, until they saw him fall; but, with the same intrepidity he always possessed, he repulsed them so vigorously, and was so well supported by his men, that he gained a complete victory. Some fell by the sword, others were made prisoners, and the rest fled. Among the prisoners who were put in irons, and taken on board, was

the leader of the rebels, Porras, whom Bartholomew had seized and disarmed, at the trifling expence of a wound in his hand.

Those who had fled, speedily after the defeat, sent to supplicate the admiral's pardon, who, more ready to forgive than revenge, easily yielded to their entreaties. Thus, contrary to all hope, tranquillity was again re-established. All returned to their duty; all were pardoned, except the leaders of the mutiny, who were kept in irons, in order to undergo the fate they had justly deserved.

During this interval Mendez and Fiesco had not ceased to importune the Governor of Hispaniola for a vessel to fetch their admiral from Jamaica. For a considerable time he put them off with vague excuses; but at length, fearing he should meet reproofs from the Court of Spain, for his neglect, he consented that they should purchase a ship. Thus was Columbus's distress relieved at a moment when he least expected it; a corroborating proof, my children, that we should never despair, even though earthly hope appears lost, but, relying on the assistance of our Creator, persevere in our duty to the last extremity. Thus did Columbus, and thus may we act, should it ever be necessary to exert ourselves, in a similar situation.

The purchased vessel at length arrived at

Jamaica, where Columbus had, for a whole year, been enduring repeated trials and vexations. You may, therefore, readily believe how joyfully the whole party embarked, and sailed for St. Domingo.

In order to conceal his baseness, by mean and despicable servility, the governor received Columbus with the most distinguished honours; yet while his lips flattered the man whom his heart detested, he could not entirely restrain the rancour he internally felt, and which showed itself in a manner highly insulting to his guest. The leaders of the mutiny, whom the admiral was taking with him to Spain, in order that they might be tried for their misconduct, he commanded to be set at liberty; and even threatened those who had remained faithful to their commander, with a severe investigation of their conduct.

Columbus had patiently sustained too many vexations to sink under this; and, hastening to leave a country, which he appeared to have discovered only to overwhelm him with unhappiness, he set sail for Spain as soon as two vessels could be prepared for his departure.

In this last voyage he experienced the same fate, which the impenetrable decrees of Providence had ever destined to pursue him in all his enterprizes; he was overtaken by most dreadful storms, which so entirely

damaged the vessel in which he had embarked, that it was obliged to return to Hispaniola. A more than common stock of courage and skill was therefore necessary to proceed on the voyage in the other, as that had also suffered severely in the tempest; it having lost both main and fore-mast, and had received considerable damage in its hull. Notwithstanding this, Columbus continued his course, and sailed seven hundred marine leagues in a ship little better than a wreck; and after the greatest dangers, reached the harbour of St. Lucar, in Andalusia.

And now, my dear pupils, you doubtless expect to find his misfortunes happily terminated. But the hope is vain; for he had scarcely set foot on land, before he was apprised of the most melancholy event that could have happened to him — his firm friend and protectress, the Queen Isabella, was just dead. In her he had placed his whole hope of obtaining either justice or recompence for the repeated injuries he had sustained, and now, alas! that hope was entirely destroyed; for he could promise himself no success from the suspicious contracted temper of the king, who had never entered cordially into his views.

Notwithstanding this severe disappointment, as speedily as his health would permit he repaired to court, in order to acquaint the king with the success of his voyage, and

every occurrence that had happened to him. He was, however, received with the most ungracious coldness ; his just complaints of the ill treatment he had received were disregarded ; and his equally just request to be reinstated in his rights and privileges, was answered by pitiful and frivolous excuses.

Thus this deserving man, who had merited so greatly from the Crown of Spain, was necessitated to devote the close of his laborious and useful life to the fruitless humiliation of soliciting justice from an unjust judge, and supplicating the bare performance of his rights from a king who withheld them, until at length it pleased Heaven to terminate his sufferings and vexations. Exhausted by the numberless difficulties and sorrows he had encountered, he died at Valladolid, in the year 1506, in the 59th, or, as some authors say, in the 65th year of his age.

The close of his life was worthy the manner in which he had lived ; the same tranquillity of mind and pious resignation, that he had shown in the most disastrous situations, did not now forsake him ; and his careworn spirit appeared joyfully to take its flight to the mansion of that Being, before whose judgment-seat kings themselves must bow.

[*The Father here made a pause, but at length continued.*]

Would you wish, my children, that I should describe the person and character of

Columbus, as we have received it from his historians?

Some of the Children. Oh! yes, dear father!

Father. He is reported to have been tall and well formed, his deportment noble and commanding, his face long, his nose aquiline, his complexion fair, his eyes blue and animated. In his youth his hair was inclined to red, but labour and sorrow had turned it grey at an early period; for his whole life was a mingled scene of happiness and misery, of applause and disgrace, of the highest honours and the most humiliating degradations. His hours of satisfaction were few and fleeting; but seldom did a day pass in which he had not to support the extremities either of pain, sorrow, or vexation.

He naturally possessed a good constitution, and great strength and activity. His deportment was easy and prepossessing, his manners mild and unaffected; he was affable to strangers, humane to his domestics, and cheerful with his friends, — but what I think particularly distinguished him was, the fortitude and patience he showed in every reverse of fortune.

His conduct in all the perilous events of his life plainly demonstrates that he possessed an elevated mind, a strong genius, and a penetrating knowledge; to which was add-

ed, a heart that nobly withstood the calamities that assailed it. Few have equalled him in prudence and perseverance, none have surpassed him in fortitude and patience.

Notwithstanding he had passed two-thirds of his life in an inferior station, yet he had no sooner risen by his merit, than he naturally assumed the behaviour proper to his rank, and appeared born to command; he was distinguished by a becoming gravity, and no one possessed more perfectly that impressive and persuasive eloquence so necessary to inspire respect and obedience. He spoke little, but always with energy and effect.

He was abstemious in his diet, modest in his clothing; and in all those expeditions that were attended with scarcity or danger, he willingly resigned all indulgences that his companions could not partake.

In his youth he had carefully applied to study, and therefore surpassed most of his cotemporaries; but what more than all renders him worthy our esteem and emulation, was his unaffected piety and unshaken probity, of which he gave evident proofs on various occasions. He was naturally passionate; but combating this vice by the principles of religion, he so entirely subdued it, that the utmost insolence and repeated affronts of his enemies could not provoke him to anger. Such was the man to whom Spain was guilty of such flagrant injustice, but

whose fame will be held in remembrance to the latest posterity, and excite admiration in the hearts of all those who properly appreciate such virtue as dignified Columbus.

Their father ceased, and the young people for some time remained in melancholy silence, until Charlotte, clasping his neck, said, — But, my dear father, is there no continuation of this history? You know not how anxious we are on the subject.

Father. Of that I shall think at some future period; enough has been related for this day, therefore I must bid you good night.

DIALOGUE XIX.

At the close of the last dialogue, the young people had easily discovered that there was some relation yet to follow, though they could not devise the subject, and eager to satisfy a laudable curiosity, Charlotte said to her father, as they were seated around him in the evening, — My dear papa, will you be good enough to continue your narrative a little? We are all so anxious, that we shall scarcely sleep if you do not gratify us.

Father. I should be sorry to break your rest, and, as I love to oblige you when you

have cheerfully fulfilled the duties of the day, am willing to resume my recital.

Some of the Children. Thank you, thank you, father!

Others. Silence! let my father begin.

Father. Columbus being dead, I shall hereafter relate to you the life of a man who has rendered himself scarcely less conspicuous in history.

Frederic. Dear father, what was his name?

Father. Patience; that I shall not mention yet. I must first relate to you what happened after the death of Columbus; until this personage became publicly known, should I neglect which, you would not comprehend his history. I must first lead you back to Hispaniola, in order to see how affairs were situated under the administration of Ovando; but I shudder to relate, as you will also to hear, the atrocious barbarities committed in this unhappy and devoted country.

Ovando, with regard to the Spaniards, was not a bad regent. He made several wise regulations, and succeeded in re-establishing peace and good order in the colony. By the opening of several mines he enriched the king, his companions, and himself; and what has proved of the greatest advantage to this island, as well as to all Europe, he introduced the cultivation of the sugar cane,

the plants of which he procured from the Canaries. Happy thought!* How many millions of pounds of sugar have since been produced in those climates, where none before that period grew ; and how many thousand people have been supported by this important branch of commerce !

Thus far all was well. But why was it necessary that a man, who in some cases made such prudent regulations, should conduct himself towards the unhappy natives of this country, as a monster deserving only the abomination of every mind susceptible of humanity ? Listen, my children, and judge whether I speak too severely of him.

Not content with having subdued the legitimate owners, and reduced the innocent inhabitants of the island to slavery, and with having condemned them to furnish a yearly

* The translator must differ in opinion from Mr. Campe. and consider it as a pernicious thought, for those millions of pounds of sugar cannot surely be put in competition with the numberless barbarities the culture of that plant has occasioned, any more than can the luxury of Europeans be considered of sufficient consequence to be purchased at the yearly expence of the lives of thousands of their fellow creatures. In the eye of the world, the death of a few negroes may be immaterial ; but in the eye of God, will it not be the death of men and brethren, who, however destitute of external advantages, and deficient in the refinements of education, are equally estimable in his sight as the polished European ?

tribute infinitely above their ability to collect, he treated them as beasts of burthen, which he could dispose of at pleasure, therefore to render himself popular with his avaricious companions, he gave to one twenty, to another fifty, and to a third an hundred of these unfortunate Indians, with the same unconcern as a proprietor would distribute sheep or pigs among his dependants. At the same time he gave permission for them to be employed as their owners chose, and to be treated according to their inclination.

In consequence of this distribution. this weak and inoffensive people were so inhumanly treated by their barbarous tyrants, that the greater part died from fatigue or other oppressive causes ; and many others, weary of a life so replete with wretchedness, sought relief in an untimely death. When Columbus discovered this country, the number of natives was estimated at one million, and only fifteen years after, sixty thousand souls alone remained. Thus, you see that in this short space not less than nine hundred and forty thousand persons had perished by the barbarity of the Europeans.

There was still in the island a district, the inhabitants of which, though they were tributary, yet enjoyed the satisfaction of being governed by their own queen. Her name was Anacoana. She was the decided friend of the Spaniards, and regularly paid the

tribute they had imposed upon her subjects. Unhappily, in the district she governed, several of the unprincipled partizans of Roldan had settled; and though received and treated by the queen and her subjects with the utmost kindness, yet they could not restrain their natural propensity to evil, committing repeated acts of injustice and violence against the natives, until the queen was at length necessitated to reprove their conduct. This deserved reprimand so highly exasperated these villains, that they resolved upon revenge, and in consequence formed the abominable project of destroying this inoffensive people. To accomplish their purpose they applied to Ovando, at St. Domingo, informing him that the Queen Anacoana had a design to revolt, and speedily to free herself from the yoke of Spain; they therefore counselled him to prevent her, by seizing upon her person, property, and territories.

Ovando possessed too much penetration not at once to discover the dark design of these wretches. He well knew the falsehood of their accusation; but coveting to possess the wealth and territories of the queen, he was vile enough to pretend a belief of this accusation, and took steps accordingly.

The queen's power was, however, not to be contemned; her district was extensive,

and not less than three hundred caciques were said to be her vassals.

Frederic. What are vassals, father?

Father. It is proper you should learn that, being one yourself.

Frederic. I! father?

Father. Undoubtedly you are, as are also your brothers, my vassals. Have I not given to each of you a portion of ground for a garden? In return for which, have you not engaged to dig, sow, weed, or water my garden when I require it? Do I not protect you, so that no one dare injure your land, or take any thing from it without your permission? And should any of you quit me, or chance to die, should I not have a right to take back my ground, either for my own use, or to give to another?

Frederic. Certainly, father.

Father. I then am your lord, or chief, and you are my vassals or dependants. Do you comprehend the meaning of the word, now, Frederic?

Frederic. Perfectly.

Father. The Queen Anacoana had, as I before informed you, three hundred caciques, that were her vassals, and consequently were engaged to assist her whenever she required their services. Ovando was apprised of this circumstance, and consequently feared to show his intention by open hostilities, as his own soldiery were greatly re-

duced by the unwholesome air of the climate ; he therefore resolved to have recourse to the most mean and despicable treachery.

With this view he sent word to the queen, that in order to strengthen the bonds of friendship between her and the Spaniards, he had resolved to pay her a visit, with a retinue suited to her high rank, and speedily after departed for that apparent purpose, attended by three hundred foot, and seventy horsemen.

The queen, far from entertaining any suspicion of the people to whom she was sincerely attached, was delighted at this visit, and, in order to receive them with the more distinguished honours, assembled her numerous vassals, and prepared to meet the perfidious Ovando.

On his approach, Anacoana, according to the custom of her country, received him with singing, dancing, and every token of satisfaction ; then conducted him to her dwelling, where she endeavoured, with unwearied kindness, to render every thing convenient and agreeable, both to Ovando and his companions, ordering, for several days successively, a repetition of diversions, which were usual to the nation.

Ovando testified the utmost satisfaction, and at length requested the queen to suffer him to entertain her and the court, in his

turn, with an European entertainment. This offer was accepted with thanks, and the day following the whole court, as well as great numbers of Indians, assembled, to see the promised diversions. Ovando, in the mean time, retired, as he said, to make the necessary arrangements for the entertainment, which was to consist of a tournament.

He soon afterwards returned with his cavalry, followed by the infantry, who, without the appearance of design, took possession of all the avenues, while himself, at the head of the horsemen, in close ranks, advanced towards the place of entertainment, which consisted of a spacious hall, simply covered with a roof, supported by a great number of pillars, and where the whole court was assembled. The unsuspecting Indians, delighted with this warlike spectacle, testified the utmost pleasure, until Ovando gave the appointed signal, by laying his hand on a cross which he wore. In a moment every sword was drawn, and the treacherous guests fell upon their betrayed and panic-struck entertainers with the most savage barbarity, slaying an infinite number, without distinction of age or sex. The queen was seized and loaded with irons, and the caciques tied to the pillars of the building; when, to complete the tragedy, the fiend-like Ovando ordered the edifice to be set on fire, which being executed, the unhappy

victims of his cruelty were consumed in the flames.

You shudder, my dear children, and with reason ; but reserve a portion of your sympathy for the unfortunate queen, who was far more to be pitied than those who perished by the fire or sword. Like a defenceless lamb, in the fangs of a ferocious wolf, she was dragged by her executioner, to St. Domingo, not to spare her life, but in order to lengthen her suffering, and to give his barbarity, the specious appearance of justice. At length she was brought to trial ; and without the smallest proof of guilt, on the deposition of the treacherous villains who accused her, she was condemned to be hanged ; and this execrable sentence was executed.

The emotion of the young people, for some minutes, caused their father to remain silent ; at length he resumed :—

From this time, fear, despair, and horror, possessed the minds of the Indians ; nor had any the courage to attempt shaking off the tyrannic yoke of the Spaniards. Queen Isabella, during her life, showed herself a zealous protectress of these unfortunate people, and in some measure, restrained the cruelty of their oppressors ; but, after her death, they were left to the mercy of their unfeeling tyrants. It is true, that a worthy priest, called Bartholomew de las Casas,

boldly spoke aloud in their defence, not only in the West Indies, but in Spain; but the voice of one man crying for mercy on these sufferers, was soon stifled by the united clamour of their barbarian masters, who easily refuted the just complaints and humane reasoning of Las Casas, by the ingots of gold they transmitted to Spain.

The few Indians their cruelty had left, decreased so visibly, that they had no longer a sufficient number to work the mines; Ovando, therefore, proposed to the king, to transport thither the inhabitants of the Lucayo Islands. You doubtless remember that Columbus discovered these on his first voyage?

Nicholas. Perfectly, father.

Father. Ovando's proposal was, to transport the natives of these islands to Hispaniola, in order, as he said, that they might, more commodiously, be instructed in the Christian religion. The king consented, and Ovando devised a new artifice, the more easily to entrap these innocent victims — an artifice worthy of his degenerate soul. Some vessels were equipped with the utmost despatch, and sent to the Lucayos, where the creatures of Ovando, who perfectly understood the language of the natives, with hypocritical knavery held out the following falsehood to the credulous Indians.

“Hearken, good people, to the agreeable

news we bring unto you. We are just arrived from the land of souls, where your deceased ancestors lead a life of such exquisite felicity, that it is impossible to describe it. By us they entreat you to repair to them immediately, and partake their happiness; to which request, if you are wise enough to consent, we are willing to conduct you to them."

Thus spoke these unprincipled hypocrites; and the Indians, too simple to suspect the treacherous plot that was devised against them, without deliberation, rushed by multitudes into the vessels, delighted with the supposition that they were going to be reunited to those who had been most dear to them. The number of these unfortunate victims amounted to forty thousand.

They no sooner arrived at Hispaniola, than they found their mistake. Some died from sorrow and vexation; others made a last effort to withdraw themselves from the fangs of these tigers; among these last mentioned, some were met and taken up by a Spanish vessel, on the open sea, at the distance of fifty leagues from Hispaniola. They were seated on the trunk of a tree, and endeavouring, by the help of their oars, to regain their native land. All their provision consisted of a few calabashes, filled with fresh water, which they had tied to the trunk.

Frederic. What is a calabash, father ?

Father. The calabash is the fruit of a tree that grows in the West Indies, not unlike our large gourds. Its skin is tough ; but beneath it is a pulpy substance, rather acid, and not unpleasant to the taste. The outside is used by the Indians for several purposes, such as drinking vessels, dishes, &c.

But to return to our narrative. When the Spaniards discovered the poor Indians, and intercepted their voyage, they had nearly reached their island ; and their grief and despair may be more easily imagined than described, when they found themselves again obliged to bend their necks to the yoke of slavery, from which they had escaped at the imminent hazard of their lives. Artifice was now out of reason ; the Spaniards had recourse to violence ; and thus these well-peopled islands were, in a few years, left without a single inhabitant.

Henry. What abominable wretches ! Had I lived in those days, I would have devoted myself to punish such villains.

Father. My dear boy, in all probability, you would not have succeeded better than Las Casas, who also devoted himself to the service of the unhappy Indians ; therefore, rather let us thank God that we exist in an age when such atrocities are not committed.

Las Casas tried all possible means to save

the wretched creatures, whose defence he had undertaken ; but his kindness was unavailing, and at length his zeal so far blinded his better judgment, that he involved, in their destruction, another species of men. He advised, that, for the most laborious works, the Spaniards should purchase negroes from the coast of Africa, as they were more healthy and robust than the Americans. This counsel was adopted ; and thence arose the inhuman practice of purchasing slaves, which for some years past has deprived above forty thousand of our negro brethren of their liberty, happiness, and often their lives. However, this vile traffic now appears to be declining, as the legislature of the first commercial nation in the world, has nobly stepped forth, and decreed its extinction.

Henry. Pray, father, what is the present state of Hispaniola ?

Father. Rather say, Haiti ; for it is now called by its former name. But to answer your question satisfactorily, it will be necessary to recount the events of a few years that have passed away. Haiti then, as you all know, was first discovered and possessed by the Spaniards ; but, for a long time past, the most considerable part has been in the power of the French, to whom also the Spanish possessions in the island were likewise ceded

by a treaty between the two nations, in the year 1795.

The French towns are Cape François, (the capital;) Fort Dauphin; St. Mark; Leogane; Petit Goave; Jeremie; Les Cayes; St. Louis, and Jacmel.

The population of the island, in the year 1788, was estimated at twenty-seven thousand, seven hundred and seventeen white people; twenty-one thousand, eight hundred and eight free people of colour; and four hundred and five thousand, five hundred and twenty-eight slaves. The importation of negro slaves being, that year, in this island alone, twenty-six thousand, five hundred and six; they were sold for eight millions of dollars.

In the night between the 22d and 23d of August, 1791, a most alarming insurrection commenced on the French plantations, marked by the most horrid cruelty. In a short time, an hundred thousand negroes were in open rebellion, and all the manufactories and plantations, of more than half of the northern part, appeared in flames. Plains and mountains were filled with carnage, and deluged with blood. From that time to this period there have been most dreadful conflicts, in which the people of colour, have proved, in general, successful; retaliating, with vindictive cruelty, upon their oppressors.

Their chief, proceeding upon the model of an European usurper, of great notoriety, assumed the title of Emperor, and for several years exercised tyrannical sway over his black brethren, till they, grown tired of cruelty and arbitrary rule, divided into factions, brought about another revolution, and are now (1826) governed by President Boyer.

But it is now time to conclude for the evening. Farewel.

DIALOGUE XX.

Henry. Dear father, shall we hear no more of Don Bartholomew, the brother of Columbus?

Father. I am glad you have reminded me of him;—we should not forget the afflicted family of our deceased friend.

The eldest son of Columbus, whose name was Diego, insisted, after the death of his father, that the contract he held from the king, should be fulfilled, demanding it as his right, to be acknowledged as Viceroy of the West Indies, which was stipulated to be hereditary in his family. Ferdinand was, however,

equally unjust to the son as to the father, and all representations on the subject were fruitless. At length Don Diego commenced an action against the king, in the tribunal appointed to examine into all American causes; and let it be remembered, to the immortal glory of this court, that the judges had the probity and courage to decide against the monarch, and to declare that justice demanded that the promise made to Columbus should be ratified to his son.

Some of the Children. I am glad of that, however.

Father. Notwithstanding this decree, the king probably might have paid little regard to the injunction, had not Don Diego found means to strengthen his legitimate right, by a yet stronger interest. Raised by the decree of the court to the highest rank of the Spanish empire, he asked in marriage the daughter of one of the first lords in the kingdom, and niece to the Duke of Alba, and found no difficulty in obtaining her. This powerful family did not cease importuning the king in favour of Don Diego, until at length he was compelled to do him justice. Ovando was therefore recalled, and the family of Columbus, triumphant over malice and injustice, embarked for Hispaniola.

Nicholas. Ah, I wish Columbus had been alive to see it.

Father. The soul of the just man, my son, is superior to earthly pleasure. In the enjoyment of celestial happiness, should a thought intervene of worldly things, they must be regarded as a dream, or only give cause for rejoicing; as the soul, purified from the grossness of mortality, can only regard sufferings on earth as the preliminaries of happiness.

Accompanied by his brother, his uncle, and his wife, Don Diego departed with the utmost magnificence for Hispaniola, where he resided in a style of splendour proportionate to the merits of his father. A number of people of rank and fortune followed him, and in a short time, gave a very different appearance to the colony. Several respectable families that at this day flourish in Spanish America, are descendants from these companions of Don Diego.

Let us now examine how the territories of the Spaniards were, by degrees, extended.

During the government of Ovando, a man, named Juan Ponce, had asked permission to establish a colony in the Island of Porto Rico, which was discovered by Columbus. On obtaining leave he sailed thither, accompanied by a number of adventurers, attracted by the hope of making their fortunes, as this island was said to abound in gold.

The natives resembled those of Hispaniola,

in the mildness of their disposition. They also received the strangers in an hospitable manner, regarding them as beings of a superior order ; and one of the caciques, particularly to show his veneration and friendship, caused himself to be immediately named after the Spanish commander, Juan Ponce Agueynaba. But these supposed celestials soon threw off the mask, and by their brutality and inhumanity speedily undeceived the Indians, who could scarcely suppose them men, but monsters, from their atrocious deeds. In order, however, to be assured whether they were in reality mortal, the chiefs of this unhappy people resolved to make an experiment on one of them as soon as possible ; and the opportunity was not long wanting.

A young Spaniard, who rambled about the island without fear or precaution, one evening entered the hut of a cacique, in order to request a lodging for the night ; he was received and entertained with the utmost hospitality, and the cacique next morning sent some Indians with him as guides, whom the cacique had previously instructed how to act.

They conducted the Spaniard to the banks of a river, where one of the Indians offered his services to carry him over ; which being accepted, he took him upon his back, but, having reached the depth of the water, pur-

posely made a stumble and threw the young man under him, where, with the assistance of his companions he held him until there were no signs of life, and then dragged the body to the opposite shore.

Notwithstanding the appearance of death, the prejudice the Indians had imbibed of the immortality of the Spaniards was so strong, that they could not persuade themselves but that he would yet revive, and accordingly asked him a thousand pardons, and made as many excuses for the accident that had happened ; protesting that they had rendered him every assistance in their power. Although the body was entirely bereft of life, they continued with it three days, repeating their protestations, and momentarily expecting to see it revive. At length the putrid smell which began to exhale from the corpse, convinced them that he was in reality dead ; when, losing no longer time in excuses, they hastened to the cacique with the joyful tidings that the white men were not immortal, as they had succeeded in killing one !

This discovery was of the utmost importance, and information was in consequence sent to the other caciques, who unanimously resolved to deliver themselves from their tyrannical intruders. But, alas ! what success could be expected from a naked and unarmed multitude, opposed against experienc-

ed warriors, furnished with swords, fire-arms, horses and dogs? It is true that they succeeded in cutting off about a hundred that were straggling in different parts of the island; but this success was dearly earned, by the total loss of their liberties and happiness,—for Ponce, collecting his army, which was entirely composed of veteran soldiers, pursued the Indians into their retreats, where those who did not fall by the sword, were taken prisoners and condemned to slavery.

During this engagement with the natives some reinforcements having arrived from Spain, the Indians were simple enough to believe that the Spaniards they had killed were come to life again, and that in consequence opposition was vain. This superstitious idea completely overpowered their courage, and tremblingly they submitted to receive the heavy yoke which the cruelty of their tyrants imposed upon them without mercy. In describing the carnage made at Porto Rico, the historians of that day speak highly of the sagacity and courage of a large dog, called Bezerrillo, who, as they recount, performed wonderful execution among the natives. "He could perfectly distinguish," say they, "which of the Indians were friends, and which were enemies; and so ferocious was he, that they were more afraid of ten Spaniards with this dog, than of a hundred without him."

In order to ingratiate themselves with so tremendous an enemy, before the commencement of hostilities they never failed to present him with the same portion of food, gold, and number of slaves as they presented to each Spaniard ; a circumstance that rendered him very profitable to his master. Among other proofs of the discernment of this animal, the following anecdote is related, of which you may believe as much or as little as you please. Some inhuman Spaniards wishing to destroy an old Indian woman, who had by some means displeased them, sent her to a distance with a letter, and immediately despatched the dog after her in order to worry her. The poor creature seeing him run furiously towards her, threw herself upon her knees, and holding out the letter, said, " Ah, dear master, I pray your greatness to spare me ; I am taking this letter from our lords, the Christians." At these words (says our grave historian) the dog appeared pacified, caressed her, wagged his tail, and turned back without doing her the smallest injury.

But enough, my children of this unfortunate people. We will now turn to other parts of this oppressed country. As the Spaniards continued to extend their discoveries and conquests, I shall confine myself to the most considerable. The first step that Don Diego took to increase his own authority, and enlarge

the possessions of the king, his master, was, to establish at Cubagua, an island discovered by his father, a colony for the pearl fishery. Look on the map — there is the island, near that of Marguarita, on the coast of Cumana.

Frederic. Do they fish for pearls, father?

Father. Pearls are formed in oysters and muscles, that are found in particular parts of the sea, and in some rivers, from whence they are collected. Some authors think they are produced from sandy concretions; the effect of a disorder to which shell-fish are subject, as stones sometimes form in the bladder of the human body. Others suppose that pearls are composed of nothing more than a superfluity of the fluid which forms the shell, and that issuing from the fish remains in drops, and coagulates into pearls. Thus much for opinions. The pearl fishers, who are usually poor slaves, stop their nostrils and ears with cotton, and hold in their mouth a piece of sponge dipped in oil, and by the assistance of a cord are let down into the sea, in order to gather up the oysters and muscles. It is easy to conjecture that this perilous business costs many unhappy creatures their lives; yet ladies who affect great sensibility do not scruple to ornament their necks and arms at the expence of the lives of these devoted victims.

Don Diego thought that the Indians, ac-

customed to dive and swim, would find this employment less laborious than working in the mines ; he therefore sent a considerable number, under European inspectors, to Cubagua, where his father had observed the sea to abound in pearl oysters. The advantages which the king, as also his emissaries derived from this fishery were immense ; but the miserable Indians who were employed nearly all perished, which, added to the barrenness of the island, in a short time obliged the Spaniards to remove to that of Marguarita.

At nearly the same period Don Diego took possession of Jamaica. Colonies were established there, and the ancient possessors were condemned to endure the same oppression to which the neighbouring islanders had submitted.

Diego then turned his thoughts on Cuba, and intrusted the conquest to a man named Velasquez, who, during the life of Columbus, had frequently distinguished himself. Numbers of people, led by the hope of making their fortunes, joined in the expedition, and landed with Velasquez on the eastern part of Cuba.

This country was then under the dominion of a cacique, named Hatuey, who, to escape from slavery, had quitted Hispaniola, and established himself at Cuba. Sworn enemy to

the oppressors of his country, he had for a considerable time expected this intrusion, and therefore constantly kept spies in Hispaniola, to apprise him of the approaching danger. When informed of the mischief he dreaded, he assembled his subjects and allies, and having communicated the alarming news he had received, entreated and encouraged them to defend their liberty, and rather to lose their lives than submit to the yoke of the Spanish invaders. This request they unanimously promised to fulfil.

“It is well, my friends,” said Hatuey, “but if you resolve to keep off these tyrants, one thing is still necessary. Do you know what is the cause of their coming hither? It is to seek for the God whom they adore; and if any of you are yet ignorant of what that God is, behold it there.” Thus speaking, he pointed to a basket which contained some gold, assuring them that that metal, which was in reality good for nothing, was the God for which the Christians exposed themselves to every danger, and for whose sake alone they wished to take possession of the island. “Let us hasten therefore,” added he, “to do honour to this power, in order that we may obtain its protection.” They then began to sing and dance round the basket; in which devotional act they continued, as is the custom of the Indians, until the night was far

advanced, and fatigue and intoxication obliged them to separate.

On the following day Hatuey again assembled his people, and, addressing them, said, that having maturely reflected upon the subject of their fears; he conceived, that notwithstanding the homage they had paid to the God of the Spaniards, there would be no security for them as long as it remained upon the island. "Vain," added he, "would be the attempt to conceal it; should you even swallow it, they would not hesitate to rip you open, and tear out your bowels to obtain it. Let us, therefore, without delay, clear our country of the temptation by throwing it into the sea." This plan was unanimously adopted, and all the gold that could be collected was disposed of according to the advice of Hatuey. Notwithstanding these precautions they soon discovered the Spanish flag waving on their coast, where Hatuey, with manly resolution, opposed their landing. A battle in consequence ensued; when the army of the unfortunate chief, after a short resistance, was put to flight, himself taken, and, in order to intimidate the other caciques of the island, condemned to be burned alive.

Some of the Children exclaim, What dreadful monsters were the Spaniards!

Father. He was tied to the stake, and the fagots piled round him, when a Franciscan

friar drew near, in order to describe to him the joys of Heaven. Hatuey having listened to him for some time; asked, — if there were any Spaniards in that region of delights? “Doubtless!” replied the friar, “all those that are worthy.” “The best are good for nothing,” returned Hatuey, “it is therefore in vain to persuade me; I will not go to a place where there is the least danger of meeting a single man of them.”

The inhuman death of Hatuey occasioned so universal a dread among the Indians of Cuba, that without farther resistance they submitted to the yoke of slavery. Thus the Spaniards in a few days became masters of one of the most extensive and richest islands in the world, without the loss of a single man.

During this interval there were many voyages made to the continent discovered by Columbus, and the Spaniards began already to form settlements and enslave the natives; but of this I shall speak hereafter. One remarkable event, however, at this period, I must not forget. Ponce, who had conquered the island of Porto Rico, had frequently heard from the natives that northward there was an island, in which was a fountain, whose waters possessed the miraculous property of restoring youth to those who bathed in them. Notwithstanding the absurdity of this fable, it

excited the curiosity of the credulous Spaniard, who, without further deliberation, resolved to go in search of this wonderful fountain. With this intention he left Porto Rico, and steered towards the north, on the coast of the Lucayos, according to the account he had heard, until reaching the twenty-sixth degree of north latitude, he changed his course for the west, where he found, to his great joy —

Frederic, interrupting him. The fountain, father?

Father. No, Frederic, not the fountain, but an extensive and beautiful country, which we at present know to be part of the continent of North America, and to which Ponce gave the name of Florida; either from its blooming and flowery appearance, or because it was discovered on Palm Sunday, alluding to the name of that day in the Spanish language. Thus did a ridiculous tale occasion a discovery of the greatest importance.

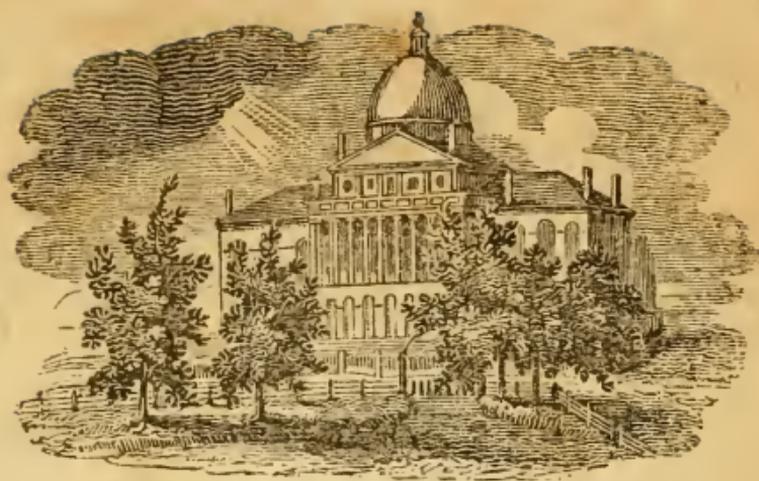
From this period the attention of the Spaniards was turned to another part of the world, which till then had remained unknown. They had before reason to suppose, that in the region where the populous and rich city of Mexico lies, there was a country hitherto undiscovered, but no one had yet attempted to search. This enterprize was, however,

now resolved upon, and a man presented calculated to be intrusted with so important a commission, but whose name is yet a stranger to you.

Frederic. Dear father, what is it ?

Father. CORTÉZ. But enough for the present, I may sometime hereafter gratify you with his history.

END OF COLUMBUS.



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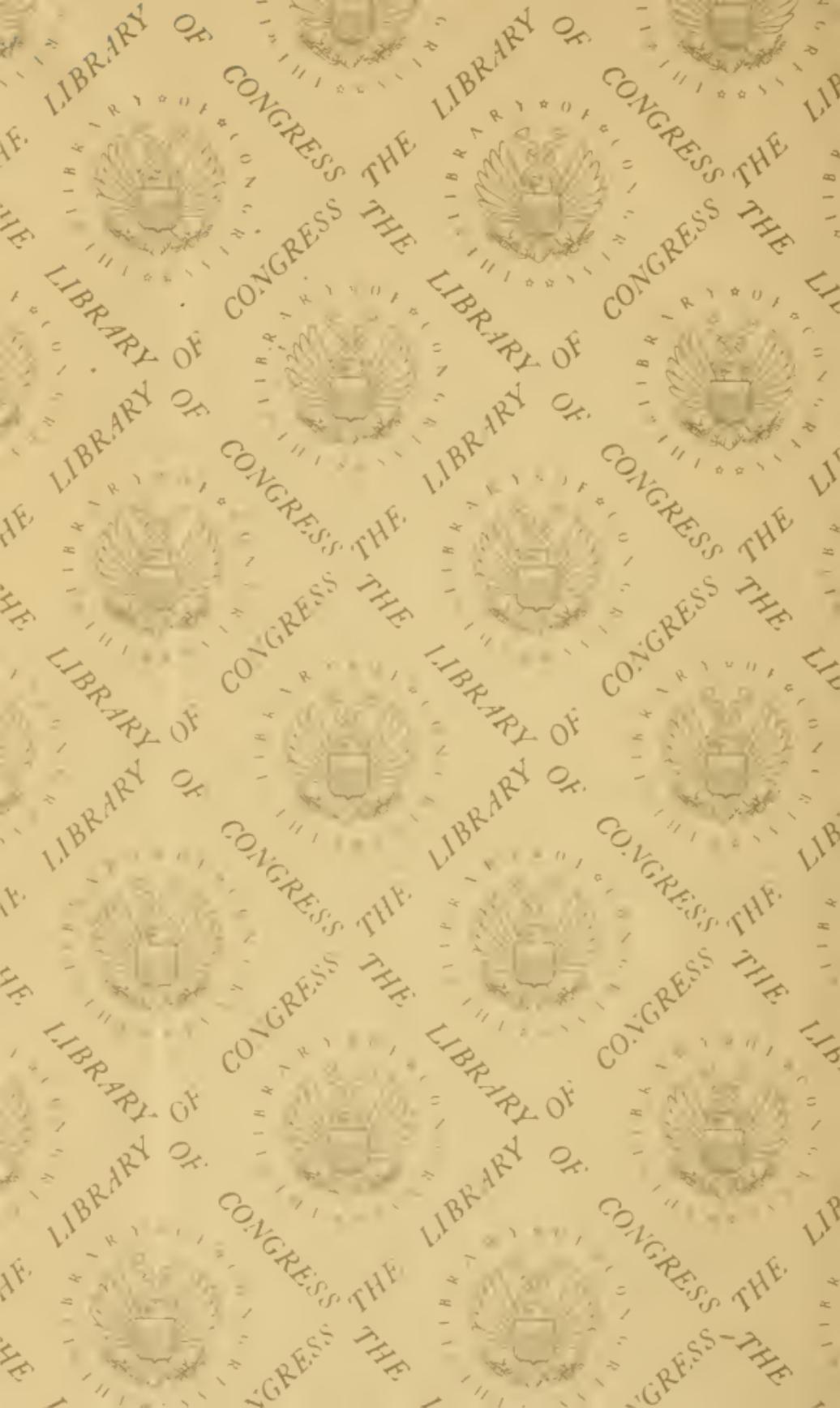
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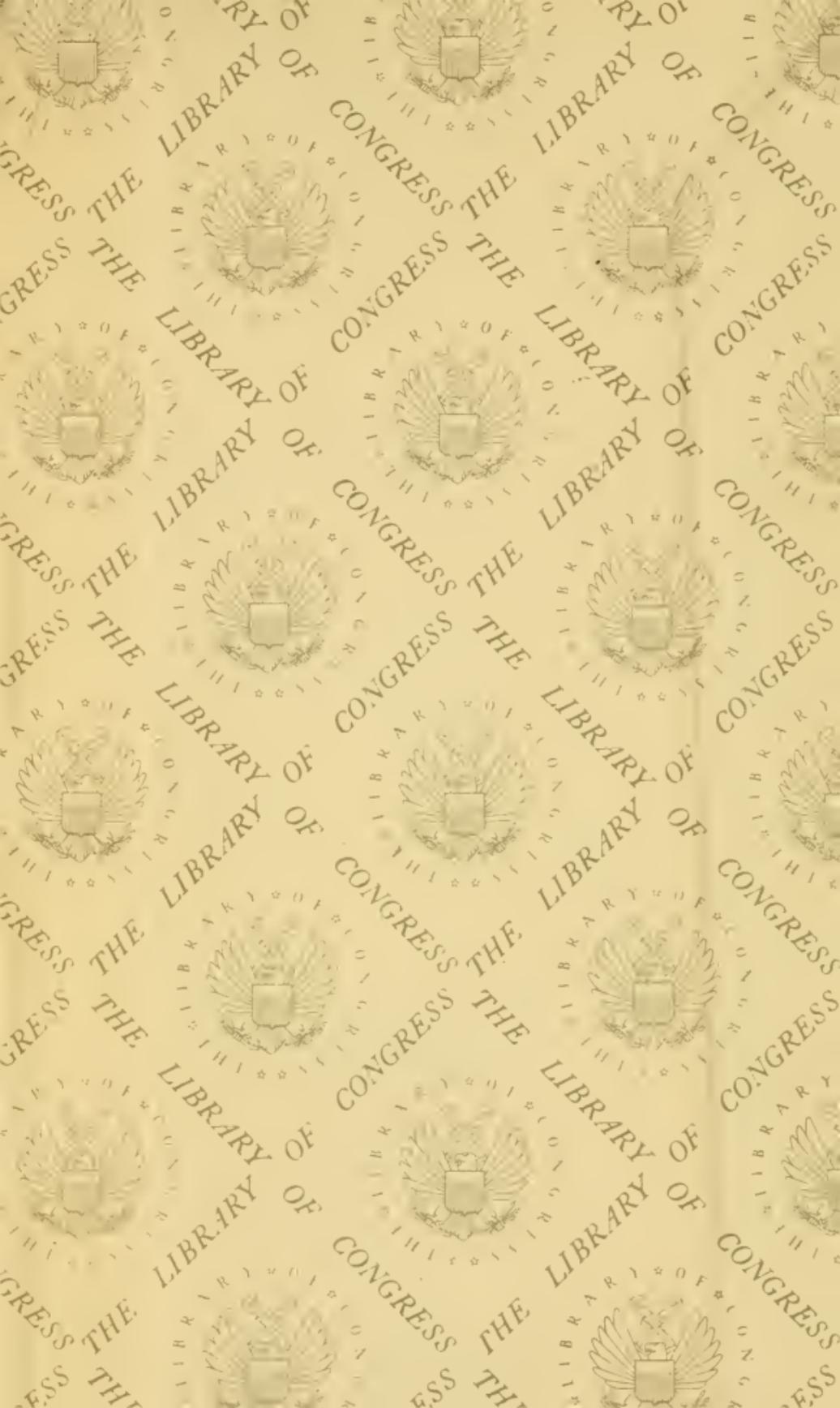
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