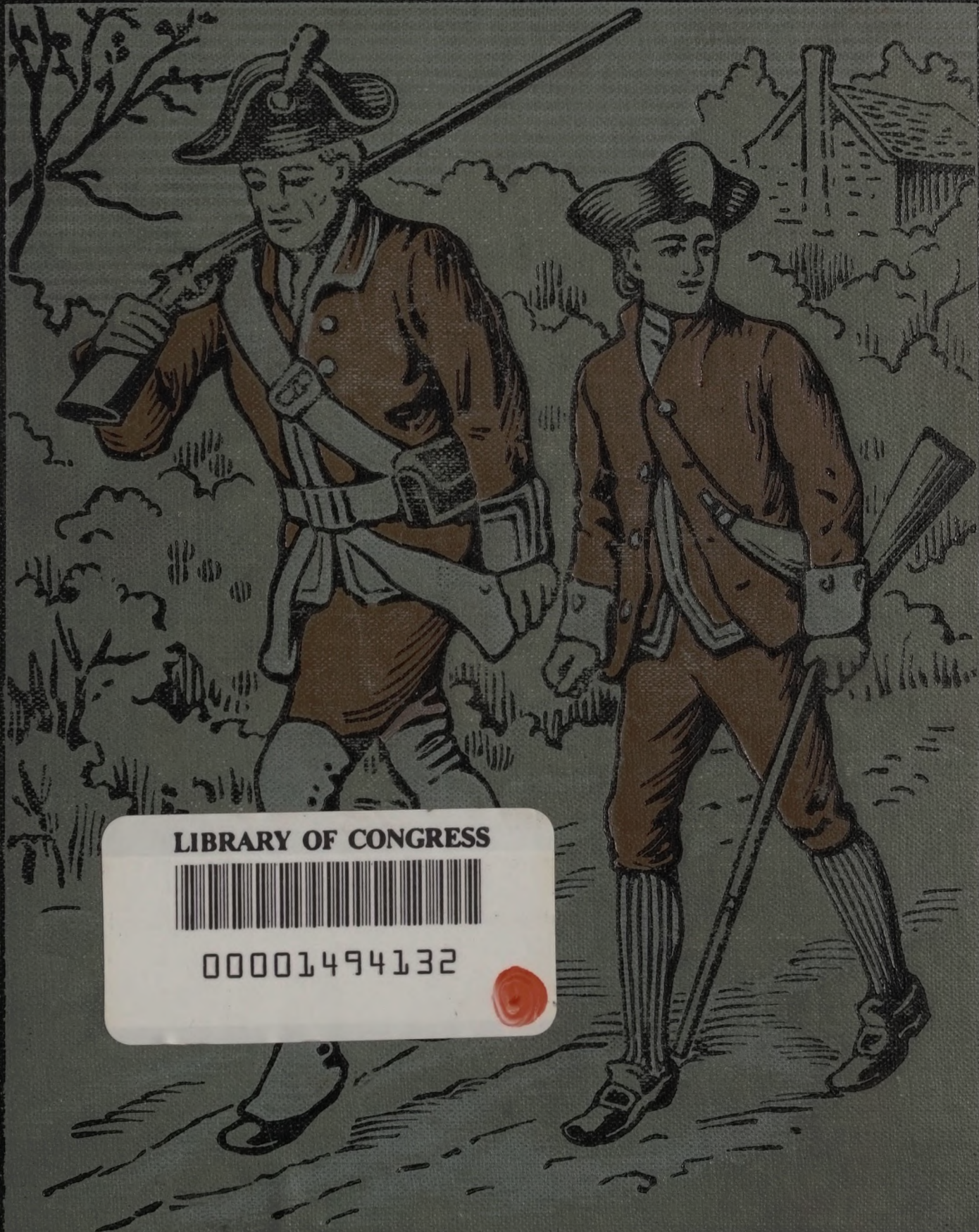


A VOYAGE WITH COLUMBUS

BY FREDERICK A. OBER

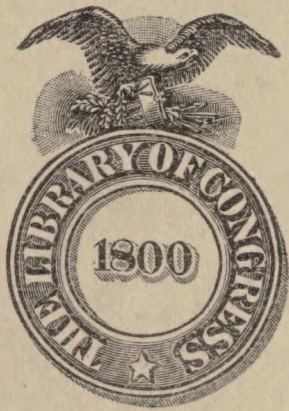


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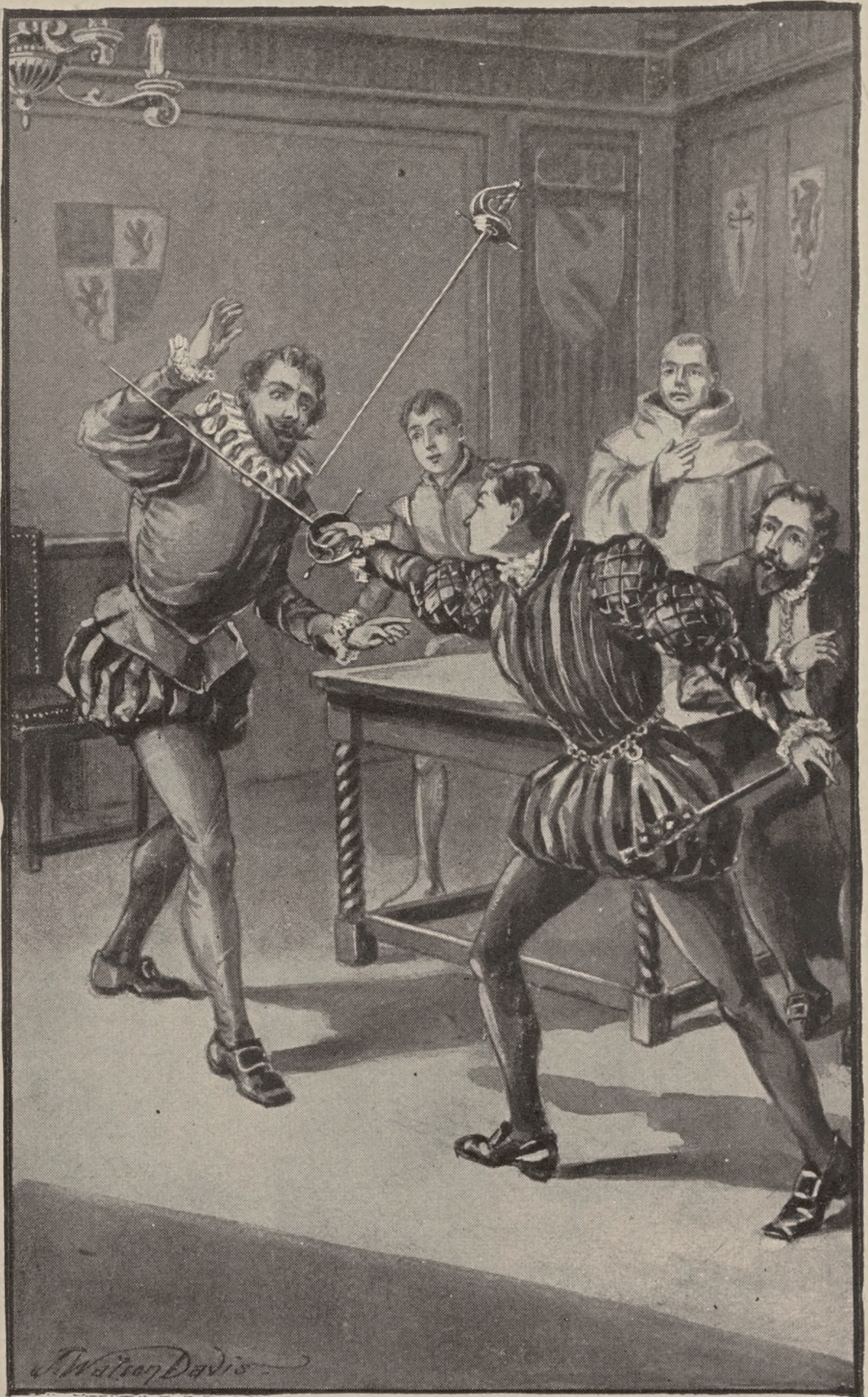


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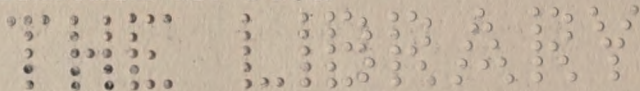
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The blades clashed—and then Captain Pinzon's sword flew through the air, leaving the worthy man standing, perplexed and seemingly ashamed, but weaponless.—Page 29. *Frontispiece.—A Voyage with Columbus.*

A VOYAGE WITH COLUMBUS

A STORY OF TWO BOYS WHO SAILED WITH
THE GREAT ADMIRAL IN 1492



By FREDERICK A. OBER



With Six Page Illustrations by J. Watson Davis

NEW YORK:

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By FREDERICK A. OBER.

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A VOYAGE WITH COLUMBUS.

CHAPTER I.

THE PORT OF PALOS.

ONE morning in the latter part of May, 1492, the port of Palos in Spain was greatly perturbed. Nearly all its male inhabitants and many, too, of its women and girls, were gathered in front of its ancient church of Saint George to hear the reading of a royal proclamation. And this proclamation, from the sovereigns of Spain to their subjects resident in Palos, came as a sentence of doom to some and distressed them all, for the little *pueblo* was called upon to furnish seamen enough to man at least two caravels for an unknown voyage of discovery. At some time in the past the port of Palos had incurred the displeasure of Ferdinand and Isabella, the "most Christian sovereigns of Castile and Leon," and had been condemned by royal council to serve the Crown for a year with two

armed caravels. The seafaring men of the port had known this for a long time and had sullenly acquiesced, backed as was the decree by all the armed forces of the kingdom, if need be; but they had hoped, after this lapse of years, that they might escape the penalty. But when the royal notary read the order in the porch of the church, on that morning in May, they knew that all their hopes were in vain. The fiat had been pronounced, and instead of sending them on a short voyage to the coast of Africa or along the Mediterranean shores, to fight their ancient enemies the Moors, from whom they might gain great plunder, the sovereigns ordered them to make ready for a venture into unknown seas, where man had never sailed before, and from which the chances were they would never return. They were to receive wages, to be sure, but only those generally paid to men on service in armed vessels, and with no prospect of plunder or glory. Instead of sailing under some one of Spain's great admirals, whose name would have given luster to the expedition, they were to go forth at the orders of a beggarly adventurer, whose very name was unknown, even to the town authorities, some of whom had served the sovereigns for years and had kissed their hands at court.

Little wonder, then, that there was protest loud and deep, and that the men of Palos were incensed at this adventurer, Columbus, who stood calmly by while the notary read the proclamation and who was surrounded by the *regidores* and *alcaldes* of Palos and Moguer, together with other high functionaries of the twin towns. On one side of Columbus, as if to give him the sanction of his holy office, stood Friar Juan Perez, of the neighboring monastery of La Rabida, and on the other sturdy Captain Pinzon of Moguer, under whom many Palos men had made voyages coastwise, and who was regarded with respect for his many sterling qualities. Had Columbus not been so well supported by these men in authority, the chances are that he would have been mobbed at once and his adventures ended then and there; but as it was, the entire population rebelled at the order, not only such of the common people from whom the drafts of sailors would be made, but even the town authorities, who were commanded to furnish the caravels as well as to arm and provision them for the voyage. They were promised payment at full values for all they should supply the Crown and all penalties of whatever sort against the port were to be remitted and canceled; but even these inducements were not sufficient, for

the owners of vessels were convinced that if they furnished the caravels they would never return; and as to the sailors, they were horrified, veteran salts as they were, at the very idea of sailing into the wilderness of waters. Captain Martin Alonzo Pinzon himself, though he now gave Columbus the moral support of his presence, had often told them tales of the monsters to be encountered in the ocean to the westward of the Azores and Canary Isles, which this adventurer, Columbus, purposed to cleave with his keels:—of the mermaids and mermen, the chimeras, the creeping leviathans, the winged dragons that guarded the coasts of the lands beyond the ocean sea; and above all of the terrific storms that swept the waters, amid which no craft, however large, could live.

There were few strangers in the crowd assembled before the church, save the court officials who had accompanied Columbus, for Palos was an obscure place rarely visited by outsiders, and the sovereigns had expected such complete compliance with their demands that they had not sent any soldiers to guard their messengers; so that those not native to the region were very conspicuous and were marked individuals. Among the few not known to the residents of Palos and Moguer who mingled with the

people at the church was a boy of about seventeen, whose dress proclaimed him wealthier than the average Spaniard, and whose countenance had a foreign cast. He was tall and slight of stature, but well knit and muscular, with a high-bred intelligent face lighted by eyes in which lurked the light of authority. He moved amongst the throng with an easy grace of carriage which gave assurance that he was accustomed to have others give way before him when in public; and yet he seemed anxious to avoid observation as much as possible. Had the Palos people been less engaged with their own affairs, just then, they might have noted this youth as a possible spy upon their movements; for they were by nature suspicious and prone to assault any stranger who visited their town without some obvious errand as an excuse. As it was, the young stranger did not escape observation, for more than one malevolent glance was cast at him as he walked about, and mental notes were made to look him up when the flurry was over. Aside from his air of general superiority, there was something in his costume which marked him as one accustomed to higher society, for it was rich and very evidently of the kind never worn save by those in attendance at courts. If he were a royal spy or allied with

royalty in any way he made a great mistake in wearing that doublet of rich velvet with slashed sleeves, the silken hose with jeweled garter clasps, the plumed hat, and the embroidered belt with a jaunty rapier carried at his side. He had not evidently counted upon such disparity between his costume and that of his new neighbors at Palos, or he would not have come among them so attired. He seemed to know no one there, and that again was a suspicious circumstance, in the eyes of the Paloese, who at once set him down—such as observed him at all—as a friend, doubtless, of the cause of their troubles, Columbus, and entitled to scant mercy should he be caught alone and could be set upon unawares.

At first sullen and resentful, the crowd finally burst into open denunciation of the proclamation and the men who had been instrumental in having it read to them. Having heard it, they would be bound to obey, unless they could evade its provisions by deserting their households and escaping to some other part of the land where they would not be known. Few of them were so desperate as to follow such an inclination, and knowing their predicament they were like caged wolves, in their fury. They looked about for some one upon whom they

could wreak their rage, and in their anger fell upon one another, until at last the crowd was split up into little groups waging verbal battles which, if actual weapons had been used, would have quickly decimated the community. The enraged men dared not attack Columbus, surrounded as he was with the prestige of power bestowed by the sovereigns, and so he was allowed to draw off in the direction of the monastery, whither he went attended by the friar and Captain Pinzon. Then it was that some of the people took note of the young stranger, who was left quite conspicuous by the withdrawal of the functionaries, and one of them, a burly mariner with a low-browed, bewhiskered visage, a squat shape and broad, bent shoulders, singled him out for conversation.

“And you, *Señor Como se llama* (Mr. What’s your name)” said the squat sailor addressing the youth, “peradventure you are a friend of the low-born foreigner who has brought all this trouble to Palos?”

“I have never had speech with him, if you mean *Señor Don Colon*,” answered the boy courteously; “but he appears the gentleman, and I am a friend of all who behave themselves.”

“Oho, *si?* So you do not know that this usurper

is not entitled to be addressed as Don, eh? He is no gentleman, fine sir; he bought that title, cheap as it is, when he signed the capitulation with our king and queen, over in Granada, three months ago! 'Señor Don Colon,' forsooth! Why, he is a base-born cur, and a foreign cur, at that."

"But what of it?" asked the youth, somewhat impatiently. "I am not the sponsor of Señor Columbus. Go have your quarrel out with him; it is no affair of mine."

"Then I will make it your affair," shouted the sailor, drawing a back-handed slap across the boy's cheek and sending him staggering against a bystander. He recovered himself quickly and his hand went to his side where hung the jaunty rapier, which was whipped from its sheath in an instant. Seeing this movement, quick as it was, the sailor drew his knife from the back of his belt and made at the youth before any one could interfere. In sooth, there seemed no one there willing to interfere, for a fight, paltry as this one promised to be, was what above all else the crowd was spoiling for. A woman or two murmured shame, seeing the boy on the defensive, and opposed to the sailor, grown man that he was; but the protests were unheeded, all the men and boys standing about giving a quiet

acquiescence. They were a brutal lot, those men and boys of Palos, and if they ever had any ideas of chivalry and fair play they had nearly lost them in the general oppression to which they had been subjected for years. So there was no real remonstrance offered when the sailor threw himself upon the boy with his knife. The latter was alone, utterly unsupported, and he knew he had no friend in sight.

But, if the fight had been left to those two, it was soon shown he needed no assistance, this strippling of seventeen then opposed to a stalwart antagonist. As the man threw himself upon him he made a deft motion with his rapier and turned the knife-blade upward so quickly that the blow failed in its aim and the man's arm shot over his shoulder. It was drawn back again, however, and another lunge was made at the boy's breast. This too was parried with a skill that showed long training in the manual of arms and itself told of the youth's rank in society,—or at least that he was not of the commonalty. His eyes flashed, his cheeks were pale his lips compressed; but he uttered no sound, being well aware that this was a duel to the death, in which he was engaged, unless he could disable or disarm his opponent, and do it quickly, too,

At the third attack he pricked the sailor's arm so sharply that he winced, and then by an upward stroke knocked the knife from his hand. It fell amongst the encircling crowd which, as soon as it was aware the sailor was disarmed, raised a shout of rage, mingled now and then with a note of approval. The sentiment of fair play had not entirely disappeared from among the people of Palos, but it had so nearly died out that few dared to give expression to their approval of it. They had hoped to see a fight to the finish, and when the sailor, instead of advancing upon his opponent, whom he could have crushed by the mere weight of his body, halted and then retreated before the gleaming rapier, there went up a growl of disappointment. He was still in a rage, for his eyes gleamed with hate; but he was discreet, and so fell back before that shining blade.

CHAPTER II.

TWO HEADS BETTER THAN ONE.

THERE seemed then a disposition to allow the youth to go free, for he had fought his antagonist well, and certainly deserved his liberty; but in the heat of the moment one of the sailor's companions threw a stone which struck him in the forehead and brought him to the ground, insensible. He had already got his back to a wall and was standing at bay in an attitude of defiance, still without saying a word but seeming to dare the whole assemblage, with his rapier held menacingly before him and a look of desperation in his eyes. But this untoward event changed at once the prospect of affairs and he was immediately at the mercy of his enemies, and if they had quickly availed themselves of the opportunity the story of his ending would have been short, indeed. At this juncture, however, he received succor from an unexpected source, and was rescued for the time being by a youth younger than

himself. It happened that the wall against which he had so sturdily set his back had an opening in it, a sort of half door, half window, only a foot or so from the ground, and in that opening stood a boy of Palos who at least had the sentiment of mercy in his breast. He threw open the wooden shutter that had closed the window and reaching out drew the young man inside, before the brutal crowd had time to recover from their astonishment and then shut the barrier in their faces.

Of course there at once arose a great clamor, and those nearest the window threw themselves against it, led by the baffled sailor who had lost his knife. Like all the houses of Palos, however, this one into which the youth had been so unceremoniously drawn was massively constructed, with walls of stone and mortar two feet thick, and there was no other opening visible. By the time the attacking party had swarmed around the house and discovered the doorway, which faced in a different direction, the boy inside had dragged his captive into an upper room, through a narrow and tortuous passageway and barred the door by shooting across it the great iron bolts with which it was provided. And while the excitement was at its height, most fortunately, the king's herald once more appeared at the church

porch and by a loud blast of his trumpet imperiously summoned the people to another conference.

Knowing that there was no escape possible from the house, and if from the house, none from the town itself, and that they could wreak their vengeance at their leisure, the men and boys sullenly withdrew to the church, leaving the boys for future attention.

Inside the dwelling, meanwhile, no time was being lost by the rescuer in attempting to bring his captive to consciousness, and before the noise had wholly died away the latter sat up and looked about him. He was dazed and weak, but was soon able to stand erect, though for a moment sorely perplexed at finding himself alone in a darkened room with a single companion and no foes to fight. He still clutched his weapon of defense, which at first he seemed disposed to make use of with effect, and backed against the wall of the room, while his captor looked on perplexed.

“You may put by the *espada*, señor, for there is no one else here than myself, and I am unarmed,” said the boy.

“But where is the man who attacked me, and where am I?” asked the stranger. “The last I remember he was in retreat, and then happened

something that took away my senses. Am I safe from the crowd? ”

“ For the present, señor, yes; but not for long, unless you are willing to follow me to quarters more secure. Can you walk? ”

“ Oh, yes, I am only a little faint, but my legs can carry me. ”

“ *Bien* (well). I will take you a short journey underground. Know, then, that this house is connected by a subterranean passage with the old monastery of La Rabida, which stands on the bluff above the river, and where lives a good friend of mine, Friar Juan Perez, who will without doubt succor you and see that you get away from the place before the people return to the attack. Still, there is no time to lose. Descend with me quickly, soon as I throw back these bolts. How fortunate it was that I happened to be in the old house and looking through the cracks in the shutter, when that stone felled you to the ground. Just by chance it was, too, and *gracias a Dios* (thanks be to God), I am a coward and fear being drawn into a fight, else I should not have retreated to this place of security. ”

“ Thanks to God, indeed, my dear friend, for you have saved my life! Still, I cannot think you a coward, since you must have risked your own life,

in a sense, to rescue me from the people. Were you not afraid, when you exposed yourself at the window and drew me into safety ?”

“Oh, as to that—I had no time to be afraid. I could not but have done as I did. It was nothing, señor; though I did tremble, surely. You are so heavy, you know, and my muscles all but failed to lift your weight. But I think the dear God helped me, for it was done before the people knew what was going on.”

This conversation was carried on while the two were groping in the passageway which they had entered from the cellar of the house, and which of course was dark and damp. The boy of Palos carried the stump of a candle, by the dim light of which they placed their feet; though there was no danger of their going astray, the passage was so narrow and so low. This *subterraneo*, as the boy called it, was made, he said, when the monks owned both the monastery and the greater portion of Palos, and since they had confined themselves, of late years, to the monastery, it had fallen into disuse. He had discovered it while investigating the cellar of the old house, one day, and had kept the secret of its existence to himself. He doubted if any one else in Palos knew of it; and if any one did

it would not matter, because by the time the entrance was found he and his friend would be safe with the good friar. Just as the candle end sputtered and gave out there was a glimmer of daylight ahead, and carefully parting some vines that grew over the exit the boy led the way into a walled enclosure.

“This is the old cemetery of the monks,” he whispered, as they emerged into daylight. “It has not been used for many years, for there is another burial-place over on the hill, and so it is never visited. See, beneath these mounds sleep the good fathers who alone knew of the *subterraneo*, so the secret is safe with them—and with us. Now, before taking you before the friar I am going to lead the way to the *mirador* (the balcony-tower) where we may rest ourselves.”

They entered an abandoned corridor by means of a break in the half-ruined wall and thence ascended a winding stairway which ended at a balcony projecting from the seaward-facing tower of the monastery, outspread from which was a view of several rivers and the distant sea. The stranger uttered an exclamation of pleasure when he looked upon this view and sank contentedly down upon a stone bench against the wall in the shade. As the boy sat

down beside him he placed an arm around his shoulders and looking into his face, said with emotion: "I have you to thank for saving my life, for bringing me out of darkness into this blessed sunlight. What, now, can I do for you? Know you that I can well afford to give you almost anything you desire, for though I am now alone and seemingly friendless, I have rich and powerful connections in my home province. More than this I cannot now tell you; but riches, even honors, I can sometimes bestow, my brother."

"Oh," said the boy, with his cheek reddening and looking down at his bare feet, "I desire nothing at all. What less could I have done? I too am alone, and unlike you I have few if any friends; but my wants are few, since I never had much at any time. If you care to give me your friendship, that is all I ask."

"That you have, surely, and shall have, all my life," answered the stranger, drawing the boy against his shoulder in a close embrace. "If indeed you are all alone, why not join your fortunes with mine and go with me from this place when I leave, seeking something better?"

The boy's eyes lightened up with a happy smile and he said quickly: "That I will, if you will take

me, for I am an orphan and have no ties that bind me to Palos. I would like to see the world."

"And you shall; leave that to me. You can return to Palos, later, can you not, and secure what belongs to you there, or arrange to leave it in safe hands?"

The boy laughed heartily. "Yes, I can return to Palos; but, señor, I have nothing there at all. Only what you see me wear—that is all I possess. I shall be a sorry companion for you, I fear."

"Is that true?" asked the youth, joining in the laugh. "Well, in that case there will be the less to leave behind, and the more to provide. It pleases me to know that you have so little, since you care so little for it, for now I know what I can do."

Little, in truth, the boy had, to all appearances, for his scanty garments, though clean and neat, were worn and even ragged. They consisted of merely a shirt, a short jacket and trousers reaching to the knees, below which his stout freckled legs were much in evidence, while his feet, as already mentioned, were bare. But his merry face belied the belief that he was poor, being an index to that richest of possessions, a contented mind. It was round and red-cheeked, with laughing blue eyes, a tip-tilted nose and wide mouth with white even

teeth, and was surmounted by a shock of yellow hair, which, being covered by no cap or hat, was tanned, as well as his skin. He was sixteen years old, or just a year younger than his friend, and for the five years past had been practically a waif, without a home or friendly relatives.

After he had told his short story, ending up with the statement that his name was Pablo Santos, his friend related his—or as much as he chose to tell,—evidently reserving much that would have been very interesting, and giving merely scanty facts as to his name and life.

“My name is Adolfo,” he said, “and—well, you may call me Sanchez, for the other part. Yes, that will do as well as any name, for though I am not ashamed of anything I ever did, yet for reasons sufficient to myself, I would rather not reveal my patronymic, my family name. Sometime I will tell you, sometime I shall hope to make you acquainted with my home; but now—now I must continue incognito. I have not run away from my home and friends, but on the contrary am here with their full approval. In short, friend Pablo, I am here for the purpose, which perhaps you may have already divined, of going with Don Cristobal Colon on his voyage of discovery!”

“Does he know it?” interrupted Pablo. “And will you take me, too?” he added eagerly. “Oh, I too have wished to go with that great man on that voyage which my friends fear so much; but I am afraid he would not take me, a boy, when men only are wanted.”

“No, he does not know it,” answered Adolfo; but all the same, he is going to take me, if I have to raise heaven and earth to compel him; and if you care to go, he must take you, too; so that is settled.”

“Is it?” exclaimed Pablo joyfully. “Oh, it must be, because, do you know, the good God has led us along until the way seems paved for it. How? Why, if the signs mean anything, that is. Don’t you know, that great man, Columbus, is right here in this very building, and that he is even now a guest of good Juan Perez, the prior of La Rabida, who interceded with Isabella our queen and procured the order upon Palos which my neighbors resent so much? And, Juan Perez is my friend; at least he always treats me well and knows I am an honest youth.”

“If this be true,” said Adolfo happily, “we are indeed most fortunate. Let us lose no time in seeking the Prior and Don Colon.”

CHAPTER III.

AN INTERVIEW WITH COLUMBUS.

THE boys descended the winding stairway of stone, Pablo in the lead, until they arrived again at the great corridor which ran around the inner court of the monastery. This corridor was surrounded on three sides by cloister cells where the monks slept by night and meditated by day, and on the fourth side was the great refectory or dining hall where they ate their simple meals. To this refectory Pablo led the way, pausing as he heard voices within and timidly knocked on the massive oaken door. So earnestly were the people within conversing that they did not hear the faint sound and continued without interruption. They were evidently discussing the possibility of providing the necessary vessels for the voyage, for the boys heard Captain Pinzon's voice ring out:—"The third caravel? I tell you, I will provide that, since by our sovereign's commands you are furnished with the others. I have just the vessel for

the voyage, a little boat called the 'Niña,';—small to be sure, but trim and snug and able to weather any gale; she shall make the third one of the fleet, and my brother, Vicente Yanez, will go along as her captain, while I, with your permission, will command the 'Santa Maria,' which, as the largest of the fleet, should be the flag-ship."

There was a murmured remonstrance at this announcement, evidently from Columbus, the boys catching only a fragment of it, the voice was so low; but they gathered that he himself had counted upon furnishing the third vessel of the fleet, and did not wish to be forestalled. At the same time, he expressed his gratitude to Captain Pinzon for so promptly coming to the rescue, being unaware whither to look for such a vessel as he desired.

The real truth, as afterward revealed by legal inquiry, was, that Columbus at that time had no means whatever with which to provide the third caravel, and was inexpressibly relieved by Captain Pinzon's offer. When the king and queen had said they would furnish two vessels for the voyage, in their conference at Granada, his pride and ambition had prompted him to offer the third, although well he knew he had not a *maravedi* to spare for such a venture.

“Well, let that go,” rejoined Captain Pinzon, in answer to his murmured protest. “I will send the little ‘Niña,’ armed and equipped, manned with men of my own choosing and captained by my brother, and we can settle afterward for the expense.”

“Yes, yes, that is well,” said the voice of Friar Perez, addressing Columbus. “Captain Pinzon is well able to do all he promises, and moreover he is the greatest navigator and most powerful landowner in these parts. I congratulate you, Se or Don Colon, upon acquiring such a stout ally and friend at the outset. You remember, that he said he would aid you, when we had our consultation here, before I sent you on the last journey to court; and sooth, I knew he would make good his words. The next thing we have to provide for is the manning of the other vessels; for verily, my people of Palos are averse to volunteering for the voyage. If some one, or some few, of them would volunteer, I feel assured the rest would follow, like a flock of sheep after their leader, jumping over a wall. But where to get those first few,—that is the question.”

At this juncture Pablo knocked again at the oaken door, and there being for the instant a pause in the conversation, Friar Perez heard the sound

and called out "Come in." As the boys timidly entered the gaze of the trio was centered on them and they were indeed abashed to find themselves in the presence of the men. But Juan Perez knew Pablo, having often employed him on errands between the monastery and the town, and being a kindly-dispositioned person at once relieved his embarrassment by saying: "Oho, little man, so you have come to join us in consultation on matters of weight to the world? Well, you are just in time to give us good advice, my friend. What is thy business, *chiquito*, (little one), tell me without delay."

"Good father," faltered Pablo, "we were passing through the corridor and could not but overhear that you were in need of men for the voyage that Señor Don Colon has in mind, and we,—that is, I—no, we, I mean—have come to offer our services as sailors."

Pablo stood up stoutly before the great men and looked in their faces with direct and honest gaze, while his companion beside him, equally in earnest but less ill at ease, also met their expressions of astonishment without flinching.

"*Hola!*" cried the Friar. "So that is it, eh? You would go with Don Colon on his mighty voyage

across the ocean sea? *Ciel!* But I admire your courage, little men. *Mira* (behold), Almirante Colon, the volunteers I alluded to. Heaven has provided them ready at hand. Can you longer doubt the will of Providence as to your undertaking? They are small, to be sure,—*muy chiquito*;—but their hearts are valiant, not a doubt of that!”

“*Es verdad*,—it is true,” assented Columbus, with an amused smile playing about his mouth. “But I wish their bodies were in proportion to their hearts. What we want is men, grown men, every one an able bodied mariner; and even then there will be no room to spare.”

“Pouf!” exclaimed Captain Pinzon with a snort of disdain. “Take those children along with us on such a voyage? The idea is preposterous. I tell you, every man must be a giant; children and pigmies, women and babies—all, must stay at home. We have no use for them.”

“*Señor Capitan*,” said Adolfo, now speaking for the first time, “I must beg to differ with you. While it is true you will have no use for babes or children, still I would remind you that we are not to be classed with either. If we go we shall expect, each, to do a man’s work, and this we pledge ourselves to perform.”

“Nonsense,” burst in the choleric Captain. “Do you imagine I have passed forty years of my life at sea for nothing? I know a man when I see him, and I also know a boy big with pride. Go home, my boy, and tell thy mother she has let thee loose too soon from her side. We respect thy desires; but what we want is men, full grown and able.”

“It may be true,” rejoined Adolfo courteously, “that I am not a man full grown; but time will remedy that defect, if defect it be. Only the respect I entertain for my elders, for the holy office that the Père Marchena represents in his person, and for the achievements of yourself and Don Colon, prevents me from offering to prove myself a man in deeds, if not in stature, if so be it is your will.”

“What? Do you mean that you would put thy valor to the test of the sword?” cried the Captain, with a loud laugh; while Columbus and the Prior could not but smile at the absurdity of the proposal. The youth nodded, not at all abashed by the attempt to make him the butt of ridicule, while Pablo looked his admiration. “I do not wish to seem presumptuous or bold,” said Adolfo; “but I will meet with the sword any man you may bring

against me, provided you will allow my success or failure to disarm him to decide our going on the voyage,”

“Any man, say you? Why, as to that matter, I have the name of being fairly good with the blade; but, faith, I would not like to harm thee, lad; and it would be no credit to me to disarm thee. Still, as you have got the maggot of pride in thy brain, it may be as well to extract it now and in this manner, peradventure it might grow. “Good father,” said the Captain addressing the Prior, “hast thou a pair of ‘Toledos’ in the monastery. Not over large, remember, but a pair of medium weight and length, for if so I would have it out with this youth, now and here, for if we do not rid ourselves of him he may be pestering us forever; and if he should perchance disarm me—though the mere thought is an absurdity—he will be worthy to go along.”

Both the Prior and Columbus ventured remonstrance; but the captain was seriously set upon the test, promising that he would not harm the boy, only disarm him and put down his pride; so the Prior sent out a servant for a pair of blades he wot of, hanging in the porter’s lodge.

“It becomes not one of my calling to have in his

possession such weapons," the good Prior explained; "but they were left here by an old soldier who died in our hospital, years ago, and have continued here ever since. But do not harm the boy, my worthy Captain, for of a truth he hath a good face and his valor is unquestionably great."

"Not I, indeed," answered the Captain; "for I too love a gallant soul, unafraid to put his mettle to the test, and already have half a mind to let him go, from the mere fact that he is willing to withstand me."

"Then, Señor Capitan, I entreat you to allow of it, without giving yourself unnecessary humiliation," said Adolfo; "for surely I do not desire this thing. Call it pride, or what you will; but I made the proffer only in order that we might be sure of consent, for my friend and I desire above all things to accompany you on the voyage."

"And that you shall, both of you, if you disarm me twice out of thrice," rejoined Pinzon, passing the youth a sword and warning him to be on guard. Adolfo took the blade, bent it nearly double to assure himself as to its temper, and then assumed the position of defense. The refectory was large and in one corner of it there was sufficient space for their play, while the spectators gathered at one

side, apparently more agitated than the two contestants.

“It ill becomes me to witness such an encounter,” protested the Prior with a sorrowful air, yet with a twinkle in his eye that told of some latent longing for a bout now and then with other things than with the “world, the flesh, and the devil.” “But no bloodshed, Captain mine, remember, not even a pin prick; for such a thing cannot be within these walls, you know.”

“Have no fear, I will not harm a hair of his head,” exclaimed the Captain. “Now, lad, have at thee! Stand well on guard, for I intend to take thy sword, right now.” The doughty Captain advanced upon the youth, who, standing easily balanced, with legs well apart, met the impact confidently. The blades clashed, struck fire in fact, and then—Captain Pinzon’s sword flew through the air and landed on a far side of the room, leaving the worthy man standing perplexed and seemingly ashamed, but weaponless.

“Faith, but I don’t see how he did it,” he exclaimed, ruefully. “But, certes, he cannot do it again; that was a mere accident. Hand me the blade, Pablo. Now, boy, this bout shall settle thee,

and I'm not so sure I shall not prick thee in the arm a bit, just for revenge, my lad."

Adolfo said nothing, but smiled reassuringly into Pablo's anxious eyes, and again assumed the defensive, this time repeating the performance with equal celerity and effectiveness. The Captain's "Toledo" whizzed through the air and sought the same part of the room as before, as if drawn there by a magnet; but the Captain stood transfixed with surprise. "Again! again!" he shouted. "Pablo bring me the blade again. I cannot believe this youngster has it in him to defeat me at the sword play, old as I am. *Diablo!* but my muscles must be stiff. Perhaps another bout will relax them, so another we must have, my friends."

But both the Prior and Columbus protested against proceeding further. "He has done it, my Captain," quoth the Prior. "He has won his right to go with thee and Don Colon. Now stand by thy word and let well enough alone."

"Yes, worthy sir," added Columbus; "no doubt his skill was the result of some sleight of hand with which you are not familiar; but he has proved himself, and without boasting, so forsooth he shall, with your consent, he and his companion, sail with us across the ocean sea."

The Captain grumbled heartily at first, and declared himself outwitted and overborne; but in the end his generous disposition asserted itself and he advanced with outstretched hand. "Thou art a valiant lad and a skilful, too; so let it go at that. But, tell me, was it not by a trick that the thing was done? Tell me, truly, now."

"Yes, Señor Capitan, it was, and by a trick taught me by—well, by an ancient retainer of a noble family, who if his name were mentioned would be recognized as one of the first of swordsmen in Portugal—I mean in Spain," he quickly corrected, and seemed confused that he had let slip the word.

"Ha, in Portugal, say you?" asked Columbus, eyeing the youth with a sudden suspicion born of the thought that perchance he might have come from King John's court and so betray the fact of the projected voyage to Spain's greatest rival. "His name, kind sir?"

"I meant in Spain," answered Adolfo, returning the glance without quailing; "but his name I cannot at present give you."

"Faith, I have a mind to recall the promise given you," said Columbus, "for we want no people with us who cannot give a clear record of their past, and

it seems that yours, brief as it must have been, is veiled in mystery.”

“As you wish it, great sir,” rejoined Adolfo. “But you will not recall your promise, and you will find that though my past is not an open book, yet I shall serve you faithfully.”

“Perhaps; we shall see,” said Columbus, still with suspicion in his looks and tone; for the great man, as history has clearly shown, was not great enough to rise above suspicions of his fellows.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BOYS TALK IT ALL OVER.

WHILE Columbus was questioning Adolfo as to his credentials, the prior of the monastery, Juan Perez Marchena, was having a little chat aside with Pablo, who confided to the friar all he knew of his companion. He told him about the fight at Palos and gave the details as to the rescue without making his own share in the adventure more prominent than was actually necessary, but portraying his friend's acts in lively colors. He hesitated when it came to telling how they got to the monastery, for he rightly inferred that the friar would not like it known that there was a secret passage from the town. However, it all came out, and the worthy Prior was very vexed, indeed, not with Pablo for discovering the passage, but that the knowledge of it should become the property of any one outside the monastery and the order to which he belonged. But he forgave the boy the use he made of it, on his promise that neither he nor Adolfo would impart the informa-

tion to any one else, and was warm in his expression of admiration for the deeds of both. "You did well, you two," he said at the end of their conversation, "and as you have escaped the fury of the people over there, the only thing you can do now is to remain in the monastery without showing yourselves, until the time comes for the departure. You say that no one saw you, probably, to recognize you; and in that case you might venture outside the walls, now and then; but your friend must lie concealed. Now you may go, for we still have an important consultation in order and scant time for arranging the many things that press preliminary to the voyage. It may be that we shall have to send for aid from the royal troops; but I trust all may be arranged without resorting to extreme measures, especially as we have enlisted Captain Pinzon in the cause, and he is truly a tower of strength."

As the two youths left the refectory the Prior warmly pressed Adolfo's hand and told him to make himself at home in the monastery until evening, when he would assign him a room; but under no circumstances to show his face outside the walls, nor even where it could be seen by anybody not an inmate of La Rabida.

Thus it was these two were given the freedom of the monastery, and became members of the Prior's family, while the work went on that resulted in the discovery of America. They sought the mirador again and made this balcony projecting from the tower their place of rendezvous, whence they could watch all that was going on outside while themselves unseen, or, at least, unobserved. The outlook from the mirador commanded the now historic Rio Tinto and the Domingo Rubio, down which sailed the caravels of Columbus when finally made ready for sea. Beyond the confluence of the rivers gleamed the waves breaking upon the bar of Saltes, which was the point of final departure for America, when at last all was finished preparatory to sailing forth upon that ocean journey which made history for Spain and sent the name of Columbus down to posterity crowned by the halo of his great achievements.

At the time of which this is written, however, it must be borne in mind, Christopher Columbus, hero of history, was a comparatively unknown personage, and to the people of Palos he really appeared, as the sailors said, a foreign adventurer dependent upon the bounty of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella. It mattered not to the Spaniards that he

himself felt sure of bestowing upon Spain a country at that time undiscovered, hardly surmised to exist, —half a continent, in fact; for his brain alone contained the scheme and in his heart only lived the faith that it would be achieved. There were a few, to be sure, like Friar Marchena, who had interested Queen Isabella in the scheme, so that she had promised to pledge her jewels, if need be, to carry it out; and also Captain Martin Alonzo Pinzon, but for whom it might never have been successful.

When the boys found themselves alone in the mirador, they fell to talking over this man Columbus, and his visionary scheme. Pablo then discovered that his new friend had more information concerning both the man and his plans than he himself had ever dreamed of. He, Pablo, had received no schooling since he was ten years of age, and had never heard of Columbus before the day the proclamation was read in Palos. Then he thought, with all his townspeople, that he was merely an unscrupulous adventurer who had inveigled their sovereigns into his schemes and brought trouble to their quiet little town. He might have been as ready as any of them to cast a stone at him, if an outbreak had occurred, and this much he frankly

admitted to Adolfo, who smiled wisely and shook his head.

“That shows what savages you and your people are,” he said. “This man, Columbus, comes to you with a great project and asks your assistance, and your only answer is to throw a stone at him! Why, my friend, do you know, this voyage he has in mind is going to make not only himself, but your little, miserable pueblo, famous forever. The time will come when travelers will come here from the uttermost parts of the earth to see the place from which he sailed and to have pointed out to them the spots hallowed by association with his name. Yes, I believe it, truly,—” as Pablo doubtingly shook his head. “But I can only say so, for of course I cannot prove it. I will tell you, though, the story of his life as I have learned it, and then you may think of him what you will. He is not over well disposed toward me, thinking I am a spy, perhaps, come to watch his movements. And between us, friend Pablo, he is not far wrong. I can trust you, for though you are a little savage and ignorant as a child, yet you are honest and true and would never betray a friend. But I shall not trust even you too much, for as the saying is, you know, the very walls have ears, and monastery walls in particular.

I have not the slightest doubt that at this very moment there is a hooded friar on the top step of the stairway leading hither, drinking in every word I say. Dart out suddenly, Pablo, and see if I am not correct.”

This last was said in a whisper, and acting on the suggestion Pablo quickly ran out through the doorway, where he came up against a brown-frocked and rope-girdled friar, who turned back without a word and shuffled silently down the stairs.

“Just as I thought,” laughed Adolfo. “There is no harm in his listening, however, so long as we say nothing worth carrying away, and you may be sure I shall be careful as to that. But here, you ought to be enlightened as to what and who Don Colon really is, and as there is nothing committal in the little I know of him I will proceed to impart it. First of all, he is a foreigner, as you have heard him called; though that is nothing against him, as you might infer from what those *ignorantes* over at Palos said of him. He is not a Spaniard, but an Italian and was born in Genoa. Just when he conceived the idea of discovering some far country by sailing westward into the ocean, I don't know; but it is nothing new, for the famed Toscanelli taught that many years ago; and there be some who say

Columbus corresponded with him and has merely imbibed his ideas. Toscanelli was a Florentine, but Columbus was living in Lisbon when he wrote to him, and he also married his wife in Portugal; but she is now dead. After wandering about for some years Columbus suddenly appeared in Spain, and in some manner obtained an introduction to the court. It did not avail him much, however, for he hung upon its skirts for years, following the King and Queen from camp to camp and from place to place, as they pursued their enemies, the Moors, until finally he broke with them while they were engaged in the siege of Granada. He has been accused of being mean and lacking in spirit, owing to his continued attendance upon the court, when it was plainly evident to all that he was by no means acceptable to our sovereigns, and was an object of derision to the courtiers as well as the wise men of the kingdom.”

“But he has not a mean appearance,” interposed Pablo. “He is tall and stately, and his smile hath something in it that is winning, despite his stern and forbidding aspect. He seemeth to me a great man, greater than ever I have yet looked upon. But then, I am poor and ignorant, perhaps my opinion is at fault.”

“That it is not, friend Pablo; for once, if for no more, thou art right. Señor Don Colon *is* great, one of the earth’s noblest men; but at present he is under the cloud of adversity, from such as which few natures however noble emerge without some taint of moroseness. But to our story: Finally, having hung about the court for years, Columbus pursuing the sovereigns from Cordova to Salamanca (where he had a memorable interview with the wise men of the kingdom summoned for the purpose), thence to Cordova again, to Seville, and to Baza, where he witnessed the surrender of that mighty stronghold, and yet again going with them to and through the siege of Malaga, he at last held an interview with Queen Isabella at Santa Fé, near the city of Granada. Nothing daunted by the rebuffs he had received, he held out for such a great portion of the prospective rewards he expected in the new world he was to discover, that your beloved Queen became disgusted and dismissed him from her presence. Then indeed Columbus was convinced that nothing remained for him in Spain, after so many years, nearly ten in all, devoted to his purpose of securing aid for a single voyage of discovery. But he was not discouraged, and though he left the court and set out for the coast intending

to leave Spain forever, it was with the resolve to revisit Portugal and make another effort to enlist the favor of the king of that country, who is a scholar, unlike King Ferdinand of Spain, and much given to explorations. It so chanced that Columbus had a brother-in-law living in Huelva, that town we can see shining white across the bay, and there he hoped to find a vessel in which to take passage for Portugal. Palos and La Rabida lay right in his way, and late one afternoon, after having walked all the way from Granada, a distance of nearly one hundred miles, Columbus tarried at the gate of this monastery to ask for bread and water for his son, who was with him. The porter gave him the refreshments asked for, and it happened that while he halted at the gate the prior, Marchena, our own good friend, Juan Perez, looked out and saw the distinguished-looking stranger standing there. Struck by his dignified appearance, even though he was covered with the red dust of the country and very much fatigued, Juan Perez invited him to enter and to pass the night at the monastery. Engaging him in conversation Juan Perez discovered in Columbus a man of infinite intelligence and was impressed with his great and novel views. Learning that he was about leaving the country for the

purpose of offering his services to another king, he begged him to tarry yet awhile as his guest in order that he might make one last appeal to the Spanish sovereigns. Juan Perez sent, that very night, for a learned doctor of Palos, Garcia Fernandez, who was versed in geography, and for Captain Martin Alonzo Pinzon (the same with whom I had my little bout), and together they held a consultation here, the result of which was that Juan Perez dispatched a messenger to the court, imploring the Queen to have yet another talk with Columbus.

After fourteen days the messenger, stout Pilot Rodriguez, who had made many voyages and knew whereof he spake, returned from Granada with a command for Juan Perez to appear at court and explain to the Queen more fully what was desired. Without losing any time, forsooth, Juan Perez called for his great white mule and departed at midnight for Granada (or rather, Santa Fé) where he was at once admitted to audience with the Queen. Juan Perez was once the Queen's confessor, and his influence with her was so great, his pleadings of the cause of Columbus so eloquent, that the Queen at once ordered the Genoese back to court, and sent him twenty thousand maravedis for expenses. So Columbus hastened back again, in much better

plight than he had left, being well mounted on a fine mule instead of on foot, and suitably garbed for his reappearance at court. His little boy was left here while he was away; and in fact one might say that this very monastery of La Rabida, where we now rest in peace, was the turning point in Don Colon's career."

CHAPTER V.

ON THE EVE OF DEPARTURE.

“WELL, there is not much more to tell, Pablo, and you can almost guess the rest, for the coming of Columbus to Palos with that proclamation showed that he was successful. But he didn't get all he desired, though in sooth he was most insistent upon what he thought should be his rights. He declared he must be forever after addressed as “Don,” which you know is a title few men out of the nobility are privileged to bear, and moreover he was to be the Lord High Admiral of the Ocean Sea, he and his descendants after him. He had a stiff fight with the Queen, telling her to her face that he was going to add to her kingdom more lands and countries than she already possessed, and not abating one particle of his high pretensions. In fact, as the Queen saw fit to demur a little at his demands, he at one time went out and got on his mule again and set forth for the coast, and if a messenger had not

overtaken him at the Bridge of Pines, several miles from Santa Fé, he might have been away by this time and Spain be robbed of its coming glory.

“ But finally all was decided, pretty much as he wanted it, with the exception of the third caravel, which the King and Queen refused to furnish. Then Columbus declared that he would find that and fit it out; though to tell the truth, he relied upon our good friend, Captain Martin Alonzo, for every maravedi which will go into it, as well as for the vessel itself. The fact that the Queen had to send him the money for his return journey to Granada tells the story of his poverty; and yet his pride was so great that you would have thought, seeing him parading about the royal camp before Granada, that he already owned the half of the world, with a mortgage on the other half. That was when I saw him first, though I afterwards caught a glimpse of him in Granada, after the Moors had surrendered their last stronghold, the great and glorious Alhambra, to the King and Queen.”

“ What, Adolfo? were you there, you yourself?” asked Pablo.

“ Yes, I may as well tell you now; but you must not repeat it, and moreover I walked alone from

Granada to Palos, after the capitulation was signed between Columbus and the sovereigns, knowing that the vessels were to be furnished by this port and wishing to be on hand."

"Then,—then," added Pablo doubtfully, "you must have had some secret information of the plans, Adolfo. It looks to me as though you had some friends at court, for we common people knew nothing of the matter until the appearance of Don Colon with the royal notary, when we were summoned to the church of Saint George."

"That is true, my little heathen. I did have some information from court; but not from the court of Spain. But hush, I am liable to get into trouble if I reveal more to thee. Let it go, that I had the information; that I acted on it, came to Palos and La Rabida, and with but one determination, which was to go on the voyage with this man.

"Now you have had the story in brief, my little *ignorante*, and you see now how wrong, not to say wicked, you and your friends were to resist the command of your King and Queen, to repel the offer of Don Colon to win you fame and glory,—and all for the mere going with him on a journey of a few months' duration. Neither you nor your

friends in Palos knew anything of the great plans concealed behind that royal proclamation, yet you and they were ready to mob this wonderful man at sight. Really, you should feel ashamed.”

“And I do,” confessed poor Pablo, hiding his honest face behind Adolfo’s shoulder; but he added, after a pause, “I don’t believe the men of Palos can see the scheme in this light, and if any of them go it will be only through force applied by the alcalde or the King’s regidores.”

“That may be so; but we shall soon see, for Don Colon is not one to wait very long, now that his plans, deferred for years, have ripened. He is determined to discover that country which he says lies beyond the vast ocean sea, and in my heart I believe he will do so. He is not a fighting man, but he values his great idea more than life itself, and will stop at no sacrifice in carrying it on. He wants to live to prove his scheme correct, though for the mere fact of living he cares not a straw; but if any man gets in his way he will ride right over him, such is his power of will and belief in his destiny. His head is held high among the stars, but his feet are of brass and are heavy upon the sons of earth; let them beware, say I.”

That Adolfo’s idea of Columbus was the correct

one, was shown in the energy and fierce zest with which the explorer pushed forward preparations for the voyage. Delayed and thwarted at every turn, first by the men who owned the caravels, then by the common sailors who were drafted for the voyage, finally by the merchants who were to provision the vessels, and the caulkers who refused to make them water-tight, yet Columbus overcame every objection and beat down every obstacle in his path. He was ably assisted, to be sure, by the three brothers Pinzon, Martin Alonzo, Francisco, and Vicente Yanez, the bold navigators who resided at Moguer (and whose ancestral dwelling, by the way, still stands intact in that town). But for them, in fact, he might have had to appeal to the Spanish sovereigns for armed soldiery to enforce his demands; but with their aid, at last, every difficulty was surmounted; though it was nearly ten weeks after the reading of the proclamation before the caravels took water and drifted down the Rio Tinto to their moorings in front of La Rabida.

That, indeed, was a memorable day, not only for Columbus, but for the two boys whose acquaintance we have made. They sat, as usual, one morning, in the mirador, engaged in putting the final touches to their simple outfit for the voyage. The Admiral

had restricted them to a common sailor's canvas bag of clothing and blankets, though Adolfo had urged that inasmuch as they were only half the size of the able-bodied mariners and hence would occupy only half as much room, they should be entitled to twice the space for luggage. But Columbus had put his foot down heavily upon that ingenious scheme, and so, as Adolfo had money in plenty, Pablo had been busy in searching out the richest apparel and the best sort of small arms, as well as trinkets for traffic, that the town contained. It had been decided unwise for Adolfo to show himself outside the monastery until the time set for departure, and nobody besides the inmates knew of his existence. There had been much speculation in Palos as to his mysterious disappearance; but as the brief glimpse some of the sailors had caught of Pablo, when he drew his friend inside the building, was not sufficient to identify him with the stranger, the people were entirely in the dark.

In picturing the vessels composing the fleet of Columbus, with which he set sail on a voyage of several thousand miles across a body of water which no navigator was then known to have attempted, it must be borne in mind that the craft were very small indeed. The largest of the trio,

the "Santa Maria," which was chosen by Columbus as the flag-ship of the fleet, was only one hundred tons burden, but sixty-three feet over all, twenty feet beam and ten feet draft. She would be considered a small craft for a coasting vessel, to-day, and few sailors would have cared to venture in her on a voyage across the Atlantic; though as to that matter the great ocean has been crossed in recent years in much smaller vessels, even in open boats. But the two other vessels, the "Pinta" and the "Niña," were smaller yet, and what we of to-day would call merely river craft, being open boats of large size without real decks, but with a cabin in the stern of each and a forecastle in the bow for the crews. They had short masts and square sails; though the "Niña" had at first lateen sails, which were changed to the former shape early in the voyage, as being easier to manage. One of them is said to have had banks of oars, being in fact a sort of galley, such as the Romans and the Barbary corsairs formerly used, with from two to six galley slaves at each oar. Upon a high forecastle at the prow were carmounted the guns of the vessel manned by the fighting crews, and in a castle at the poop the captain or admiral, with other officers, lived. The term Caravel is derived from the Spanish *carabela*,

meaning literally a galley or small vessel carrying sails. But at their best these craft were very uncomfortable in a storm and in a rough sea there was no protection amidships for the crews.

Never having sailed in any larger craft, however, the men who were at last impressed into service on this voyage were not anxious on account of their size, or rather lack of size; but were fearful because they were to venture forth upon an entirely unknown sea which was shrouded in mystery and probably filled with terrible creatures awaiting their advent merely to devour them.

But at last, thanks to the unremitting labors of Columbus and the Pinzons, assisted by the good friar and Doctor Fernandez, the craft, such as they were, lay at the confluence of the Rio Tinto and the Domingo Rubio, moored to the wharf right beneath the hill on which stood the monastery of La Rabida. From their aerie, in the monastery mirador, the boys could look down upon them as they lay there and could watch every movement of the men as they fitted up the vessels and carried aboard the munitions and provisions. They longed to take a hand in the work of preparation, but were forbidden by the Prior to show themselves until all was ready, in order that there might be no undue excitement at

the sight of Adolfo. So they waited at the monastery, chafing with impatience and wondering what their reception would be when they finally appeared. More than once Columbus had appeared to be wavering in his mind as to the advisability of taking them along, and indeed had several times intimated to Pablo and Adolfo that he would much rather they remained at home. Although they saw but little of him, in the press of preparation, standing in such awe of him that they never sought his presence and only caught an occasional glimpse at meal times, his attitude at such times was not reassuring. He did seem to have a liking for Pablo, and on one rare occasion even smiled on him ; but for Adolfo he had at first an aversion he took no pains to conceal. As it turned out, later in the voyage, when they were off the coast of Hispaniola, it would have been better for poor Pablo had Columbus turned him the cold shoulder, also, for it was through his expression of confidence in him that was the means, indirectly, of wrecking the "Santa Maria," the largest vessel of the fleet. But of this in due course. We will not anticipate events, but follow after the boys as they sailed, taking their adventures as they met them and sharing in them also, as much as possible. It was no pleasure trip they had embarked on, as they

found soon after getting aboard the "Santa Maria," into which they were smuggled after dark, the night previous to the day of departure.

It was the night of the second of August, 1492, and the boys remembered always the gathering in the monastery of the great men of Palos and Moguer, together with the officers of the fleet and the dignitaries sent along by the King and Queen to look after their affairs. Besides Columbus, the Prior, Doctor Fernandez and the three Pinzons, there were the three pilots, men of mark if not of rank; Don Diego de Arana the chief alguazil, Roderigo Sanchez the inspector-general of the armament, and Roderigo de Escobar the royal notary, who was sent, much against his will, to make an official report of all happenings. Prior Marchena had a great feast spread in the refectory and the long tables groaned with a burden of viands such only as fruitful Andalusia could provide, with wines from the famed vineyards of Palos and dainties from Seville and Cordova. Attentive monks in cowl and sandals waited on the guests, and naught was spared to make the feast attractive; but despite the allurements of the festive board, an air of gloom pervaded the refectory and little was said more than the actual business called for.

The boys sat in a corner and looked on while their superiors ate and drank, occasionally enlivening the gloom with a remark or two, and they were unnoticed until near the end, when one of the King's officials chanced to catch Adolfo's eye. He started, as if alarmed, and then resumed attention to his plate, but a moment later dropped a remark to Captain Pinzon, who chanced to sit at his left. What he said the boys could not hear, but that it was something that referred to them or at least to one of them, was apparent by the Captain's turning as he answered and looking in their direction. This official excused himself a little later and went out, being absent several minutes. It will be no betrayal of confidence to state that he sought his esquire, who had a steed saddled at the door, and by him sent a message to Moguer, to the King's procurator there, telling him that the youth he desired to find was at the monastery and to hasten if he would catch him alive and unawares.

After the feast was over, much to the relief of the guests, all present wended their way to the chapel, and those who were going on the voyage confessed themselves to the Prior and remained till midnight engaged in prayer. It was a solemn occasion, made more impressive by the lamentations

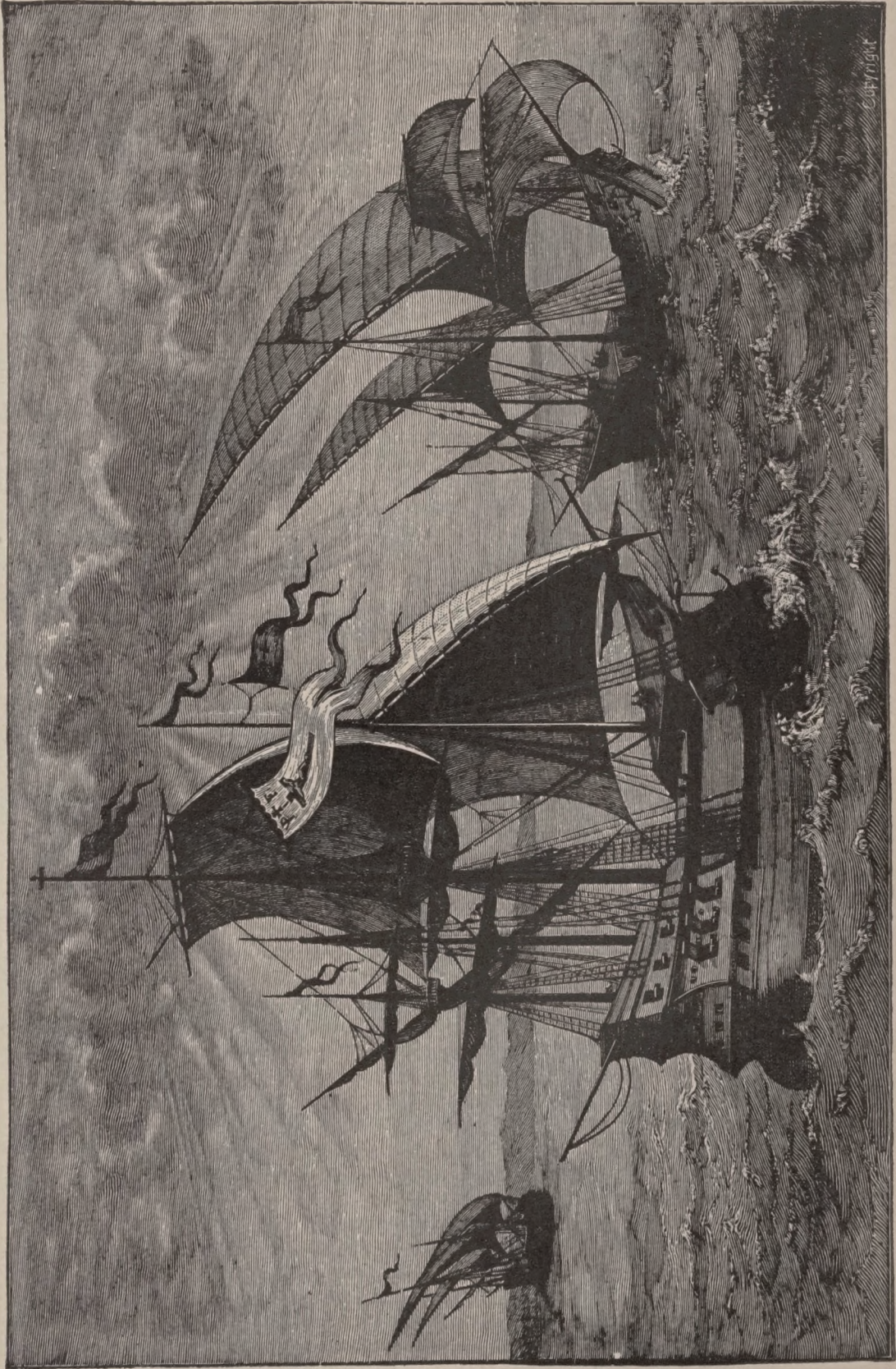
of the many people assembled outside the monastery, who had come to say farewell to dear relatives and friends whom they never expected to welcome back from the voyage into the mysterious unknown.

CHAPTER VI

ALL ABOARD FOR AMERICA.

IN the gray dawn of the third of August, 1492, the vessels of Columbus drew out of the little harbor in which they had been moored and sought the waters of the open sea. One hundred and twenty persons were aboard of them, including ninety mariners or common sailors, the pilots, royal officials sent by the court, the officers of the fleet and several private adventurers.

The shouts of the sailors as they hove up the anchors and warped the vessels out into the stream, were answered by sorrowful voices on land, from the people assembled on the hill-slope of the monastery, which was black with them. Below them, on the shore, stood faithful Prior Marchena, holding aloft a large banner emblazoned with the Cross, and murmuring prayers for the voyagers' safe return. The "Santa Maria" was the first to loosen out her sails and glide into salt water, followed by the "Pinta" and the "Niña" in the order named. The



The Caravels,—The Santa Maria, Nina and Pinta. The vessels that comprised Columbus' fleet in the discovery of America.—Page 56.
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flagship was well out from the land and her two little sisters following closely after, when a great commotion was observed ashore, the multitude on the hillside parting right and left to allow the passage through their ranks of a single horseman, who rode furiously to the shore and halted at the water's edge, holding aloft what appeared to be a roll of papers. By his impatient manner and imperious gestures the mariners implied that he had a message of importance to communicate; but it was against the Admiral's orders for any boat to turn back, and as he was well ahead in the flag-ship, the captains of the lesser craft did not dare wait or send a boat ashore. Seeing that the fleet would not wait for him, the messenger on horseback rode up and down the beach shouting wildly and gesticulating frantically, and if the truth be told, invoking maledictions in the King's name upon the vessels and their crews. At last he found a single sailor who had been left behind in the embarkation, a poor fisherman, just coming in from toiling all night at his nets, and he impressed him by a large offer of gold, to row him out to the "Niña," which was not yet far from shore.

Recognizing his importunity the captain of the "Niña" threw his sails aback and held the vessel

in the wind awhile the row-boat approached. As it drew alongside the King's procurator from Moguer—for such he was—threw aboard the roll of manuscripts he held and told the captain to give them to the Admiral. “He will see what they charge him with,” shouted the procurator, “and as he touches at Gomera in the Canary Isles, he will be able to send the youth ashore who has surreptitiously gained a passage with him. I have done my duty, now let Admiral Don Columbus do his, or suffer the consequences of the King's wrath when he returns! *A tierra!* (to the shore!)” he commanded his boatman, and turning about, the twain made for the beach where the procurator mounted his horse and rode furiously up the hill, while the vessels still remained in sight.

There was much speculation aboard the vessels as to what the roll contained, and the sailors were prone to view this overhauling of the fleet in the King's name as a sinister circumstance. Then again, the setting sail on a Friday,—for the third of August, 1492, fell upon that day of unlucky omen—made all the superstitious sailors exceedingly uneasy, so that there were grumbings and repinings loud and deep, ere they crossed the bar of Saltes. The passage through the narrow channel between

the foaming breakers of the bar absorbed all the captains' attention, and it was not until the vessels were well out in the open sea and sailing swiftly with a fresh breeze after them, that the commander of the "Niña" signaled the flagship that he had a message for the Admiral. The "Santa Maria" slowed up until the "Niña" drew near and sent a boat out with two sailors in it, one of whom passed the King's message up to the officer of the deck, who sent it by the hands of a page to the Admiral. Then the little boat returned to the "Niña" and the voyage was resumed.

Meanwhile, the Admiral took the parchment from the hands of the page—who happened, by the way, to be Adolfo himself—and retired to the privacy of his cabin, where he broke open the seals and read the message. Soon after he emerged, and calling Adolfo to him said in severe tones: "*Señorito*, (Master), how is this? I have a message from Court commanding me to send you back to shore. It tells me that you have obtained access to official secrets that should never be divulged; that you are in effect an enemy to the Crown; but also that your position, by birth and royal connections, precludes your punishment. It is now impossible for me to put back to shore, because if I did so half my sailors

would desert me; but it is my intention to touch in at Gomera of the Canary Isles, and there you must be ready to land and take the first passage back to Spain; or perhaps you would prefer to go direct to Lisbon in Portugal?"

"Your Excellency," answered Adolfo, unabashed by the implied accusation in the King's message, "I have committed no crime."

"No, I trow not," rejoined Columbus, scanning the papers he held in his hands. "I see no actual accusation; only I infer that it were for the betterment of state policy that you should return."

"That may be, your Excellency; of that you are the best, perhaps the only judge. I say nothing which will commit me to your Excellency, as to my birth or connections; but rest assured that while they are high enough to protect me from insult, they are also such as to make it desirable for you to retain me in your service."

"Aha!" muttered the Admiral, stroking his beard. "You think I might desire to have a way left open by which I might retreat to Portugal, peradventure King Ferdinand play me false? Is that it?"

"As your Excellency chooses," replied Adolfo demurely. "It is always well to have at least two

strings to one's bow, you know; and I may add that should you need influence at the court of Portugal, I may be in a position to give it to you, youth though I be."

"A prince is always full-grown when born," said Columbus respectfully, making a gesture of homage, then looking about stealthily to see if it were observed. "But you must see that you place me in an embarrassing position, Infante,*—a position in which I must either treat you rudely or divest myself of you altogether. Truth to tell, I would that we both were sailing in the service of your king and royal sire; but circumstances have so ordered it that Spain hath the outfitting of this expedition and will probably reap all the glory."

"Yes, Admiral, it was my father's mistake (since you have penetrated my disguise and recognize me as what I am) and I must own to being the son of Portugal's king. It was my royal sire's mistake that he dismissed you from his court with scant ceremony and allowed you to go to Spain with your great message. But, believe me, he regretted it soon after and would have recalled you, when too late."

* Infante a title applied to the princes in Spain and Portugal, but not to the heir-apparent.

“And so, now that he has discovered that mistake, he sends his son with me to ascertain how the King of Spain will profit by it? Is that the act of an august sovereign, think you, Infante?”

“Not that, exactly,” answered Adolfo. “I came here of my own accord from a desire to become a sailor under the eye of your Excellency. My father had nothing to do with this adventure—believe me—and he thinks I am now on a tour of the courts of Europe. Since this be so, cannot you keep my secret and also keep me, at the same time?”

Columbus eyed the youth earnestly for a full minute, then answered: “I take great risk in allowing a prince of Portugal to accompany me on this first voyage across the ocean sea. You know how King Ferdinand, not to say his august mate, Queen Isabella, will view this circumstance. They will not hold me guiltless in the matter. The only way it can be done is for me to treat you like one of the commonalty; and it irks me, Infante, to do that.”

“Have no fears on that score, Excellency. So long as I may go with you, treat me as you will. Only let me go. And, your Excellency, another favor: I would like to have with me the boy,

Pablo, who is now in the "Pinta," in order that I may protect him from any possible harm. For he has befriended me in a way that a great service only can requite. Allow us to go with you, and to be together, and you may treat me well or ill. But go I must, and go I will, your Excellency."

"Ah well," said Columbus with a sigh, yet with a smile at the youth's audacity playing around his bearded lips, "I suppose you must go. But, let me warn you now, when we touch in at Gomera you are not to be in sight, remember. I must search for you, to put you off, and make great ado about your returning to Spain; but so it is understood that if you would proceed with us you must lie *perdu* when we are at Gomera. As for the boy: when next the Pinta approaches near enough for us to communicate, you shall have him aboard the 'Santa Maria.' "

"Thanks, your Excellency. Keep my secret, and keep faith with me, thus we shall understand each other full well and the end will be prosperous, I trow. On the return voyage, peradventure we have one and it be possible for you to do so, I trust you may find it advisable to touch in at Lisbon, or some other port of Portugal, at least long enough for me to get ashore; for it would well accord with

the plans of your king to have me as a hostage, especially with the knowledge that I shall possess after the voyage is over.”

“That it would,” rejoined Columbus, with a knowing smile. “And, my Prince, it would not be for my own interests to embroil two neighboring kingdoms in war on such a pretext, when it might be well avoided. I make no promises; but if it be possible, I will do as thou desirest. But, I make no promises, remember.”

“Nay, I understand. Promises to princes and diplomats are made only to be broken. I desire none; but at the same time shall look forward to a leap ashore at some port in my native land, your Excellency. Meanwhile, I waive all my rights while aboard your flag-ship, and if you retain me as your page will work well and faithfully serve you.”

“Yes, you shall be nominally my page, and that will afford me a pretext for retaining you near my person and giving you quarters in the castle, where you will be more comfortable than with the common men. Also, the boy, Pablo, shall share them with you, if you so desire.” Adolfo bowed and withdrew, leaving the Admiral to his observations.

For a while Columbus stood on the castle top

gazing out at sea and sweeping the horizon with anxious ken. He was disturbed by the knowledge that he had aboard his vessel, and subject to his orders, a scion of the house of Portugal, Spain's great rival in the race for exploration and the acquisition of new lands. The complications that might arise were likely to defeat his own schemes of conquest, unless the subject were handled carefully. He could not see his way either to dismiss the youth from the fleet or carry him along to share the knowledge that might be obtained of his discoveries. He was loyal to the sovereigns who had sent him forth with this equipment, even though they had ventured but a paltry portion of their vast treasure in its outfitting, the entire cost of which, including the entire armament, was less than thirty thousand dollars. They had kept him waiting for years without reward, to be sure, and at the last had only yielded through fear that some other rulers might profit from the Admiral's knowledge. But here was Columbus, now, with a Prince of Portugal on board his very flag-ship, a son of Ferdinand and Isabella's hated rival in the race for honors to be obtained by his discoveries. Problems enough, in sooth, had Columbus to solve, without another intruding; and he knew not how he should extri-

cate himself from the meshes of the net that seemed to involve him.

That Columbus was honestly loyal to his sovereigns may be learned from the journal he began on the voyage, in which he states his intentions of making great discoveries and converting all the heathen of those countries to the holy faith believed in by their majesties. He makes no mention in this journal of the young prince he then had with him on his ship; but that was not to be expected. His presence there was ascertained from another diary of events than that kept by Admiral Columbus.

Meanwhile, at last afloat, on the great salt sea, the vessels sailed serenely along without mishap, until the third day, when the master of the "Pinta," Captain Martin Alonzo Pinzon, signaled the flagship that her rudder was unhung and that he must repair it before he could continue the voyage. It was more than suspected that the owners of the "Pinta" had caused this mishap by damaging the rudder before departure from port, in order that the vessel might be returned and condemned, as they did not want her to go on the voyage. But Captain Pinzon thwarted their plans by securing the rudder with ropes and in a manner steering until the fleet arrived off Gomera in the Canaries. Co-

lumbus made that port for repairs, and in the end had to stay there nearly three weeks, the "Pinta" being greatly damaged and leaky, while the lateen sails of the "Niña" had to be changed for square ones, and other things done to the caravels which caused the long detention.

After arriving at Gomera, Columbus made a great hue and cry about young Adolfo, for whom he pretended to search all the vessels, in order that he might be sent back to Spain, as the King had ordered; but needless to say, he was not found until after the port had been left astern and the final voyage begun that ended only in America. The Spanish scouts reported three Portuguese caravels hovering off Gomera, at one time, probably sent by the King of Portugal for the purpose of capturing Columbus or intercepting his fleet, but which had departed without doing either, probably deterred by the strength of his armament. When the Admiral heard of their presence off the coast he was sorely tempted to send out and have young Adolfo placed aboard one of those caravels, and thus get rid of him, once and for all; but he could not do so without exposing himself to danger of capture, and so decided to let him go along.

What with the extensive repairs that had to be

made to the different vessels, and the delay caused by the information that the Portuguese vessels were prowling about the coast, it was the sixth of September, or five weeks after leaving Spain, before Columbus finally set out on the actual voyage into unploughed waters. Though he left Gomera on the sixth of September, however, it was on the following Sunday, the ninth, that his vessels first lost sight of land. A calm delayed the vessels three days in sight of land, as though reluctant to let these mariners aboard of them go off into the unknown region of mysteries; and to make it worse, it was near the island of Ferro they were detained, where the Portuguese caravels had been seen by the scouts. On Sunday, however, a brisk breeze sprang up, which soon carried the fleet away into the ocean, and by sunset, when the last heights of Ferro disappeared, the westward voyage to America had begun in earnest.

Coincidentally with the disappearance of land, the presence of Adolfo was made manifest in the cabin of the castle, accompanied by his chosen companion, the ever-smiling Pablo. Whether these two had remained hidden aboard the "Santa Maria," secluded in the lockers of the cabin, or had been ashore during the greater part of the stay at Gomera, never was fully explained to the Admiral. In point

of fact, he did not seem over anxious to know just where they had been, and no allusion was made to the circumstance afterward. It was a long-standing regret, with him, however, that he had not been able to dispose of Adolfo by sending him aboard the Portuguese caravels, when they so opportunely hovered around the horizon of the voyage while he was detained at Gomera.

CHAPTER VII.

ADRIFT UPON THE UNKNOWN SEA.

WHILE the vessels lay becalmed within sight of the Canaries, Columbus held frequent consultations with his captains, and he particularly impressed upon them the fact that in case of separation each one was to steer directly westward, sailing night and day till seven hundred leagues should have been covered, when they were to lie-to and look for land. The correctness of the Admiral's guess as to the existence of land at that distance from the Canaries was shown by the discovery of land-tokens, such as a branch with berries on it, a piece of carved wood, and birds flying over the sea. But, in point of fact, the Spaniards had to sail much more than seven hundred leagues before land was actually discovered. When that number had been sailed, indeed, Columbus, who was the only scientific navigator aboard the fleet, deceived his men by making the distance out only five hundred and eighty leagues. His only nautical instruments were a compass, a primitive affair called the astrolabe, by which he determined

his latitude, and an hour-glass; but the captains of the other two vessels had not even these rude affairs, and so the whole fleet depended upon Columbus for their observations. It is no wonder, then, that after days and nights had passed without any land appearing, and the fleet had continued sailing westward, ever westward, without the wind shifting at all and with no prospect of a termination to the voyage, the sailors began to murmur loudly and were in a state of unrest.

Perhaps there were not half a dozen persons in that fleet who had unbounded faith in Columbus. Nay, if it comes to that, there were not more than two, and these two the boys who shared his cabin and watched him day by day. The Pinzons, being navigators of repute and accustomed to long coasting voyages, yet had rarely if ever been out of sight of land for more than a few hours at a time; and even their faith in the Admiral began to waver after the first week on the broad bosom of the ocean. Experienced as they were, they knew pretty well, as the days went by, that their vessels had made a greater distance than that given them from time to time by the Admiral, and when about a third of the voyage had been accomplished and they were more than two hundred leagues

from Ferro, they found a cause for fear that threw them all into trepidation. It was the variation of the compass needle, which instead of pointing steadily at the north star, as it had done hitherto every night, departed from that point until at last even the pilots noticed it and communicated their alarm to the sailors.

The boys had noticed the increasing anxiety in the Admiral's countenance, as he scanned the compass frequently, then looked intently at the starry heavens for hours, turning from one to the other without seeming to find a solution of the vexing problem which for the first time in the history of navigation was now presented. But when the pilots of the "Pinta" and the "Niña" came aboard to demand a reason for this apparent variation of the compass, Columbus was ready with a most plausible explanation. He told them that it was only an apparent variation and not a real one, since the needle probably pointed to a fixed and invisible point, instead (as they thought) to the north star itself; and though he had reasoned out this theory himself and it was little more than a guess, it for a time allayed the sailors' fears and the voyage went serenely on.

A more propitious season for that voyage could

not have been selected, for the weather throughout was simply perfect. If a storm had come up there is no doubt that Columbus would have had a mutiny on his hands at once; but as the seas were for the most part smooth and the air soft and warm, with only occasional showers for a change, nothing more delightful in this respect could have been desired. But the crews got tired of this monotonous sailing on and on, through the bright days and starlit nights, and the very fact that they had almost nothing at all to do, not being obliged even to shift the sails for days at a time, became very irksome to them all. Although they knew well enough that weeks must elapse before any signs of land should be seen, yet from the first they were constantly on the lookout for some indication of the promised country to which they had set sail. Within a week after leaving Gomera, two land birds, a heron and a wagtail, came aboard one of the vessels, and the sailors felt sure they were already approaching the shores of that new continent Columbus had told them of. But long days and even weeks were destined to elapse before they should look upon the land itself, and their hopes would rise and sink a hundred times before their expectations would be gratified.

One day, after about half the entire distance had been sailed, as Adolfo was leaning over the side of the ship, he saw a mass of seaweed drifting by with a live crab on it, and calling the Admiral's attention to this fact the latter was inclined to argue from it the vicinity of land. "And yet," he said, "we have come only three hundred leagues, so it cannot be, according to my reckoning. Still, as it may please the sailors to believe the fiction, I must allow them this measure of relief."

"But look," said Pablo, who stood near, "there is a great white bird, of the kind that I have seen flying near our shores at home, and which always comes to land at night to rest, as it never sleeps on the sea."

"True," said Columbus, "it will serve as a land bird for our purpose, anyway; tell the sailors, call their attention to it." At this moment there came a shout from the "Niña," sailing astern not far away, and looking in her direction the people on the "Santa Maria" saw one of her sailors holding up a tunny fish which he had caught. At sight of a fish which was supposed to live always near the coasts and on receiving the information of the bird and the crab, the crews were put in high spirits, expecting to make land right away.

“What is the reward for first sight of land?” shouted Captain Pinzon from the poop of the *Pinta*.

“Ten thousand maravedis are offered by the sovereigns,” called back Columbus, so that all the crews of the vessels could hear him; “and I will add another thousand on my own account.”

“Good!” rejoined Captain Alonzo, “and I will be the one to win it.” But he added under his breath: “I wonder where that adventurer will find the ten thousand maravedis that he promises so blithely? Not in his own money chest, I warrant!”

The crews took up the shout of “Good!”—“*Bueno*,”—and the captains ordered all canvas spread, each one striving to outsail his neighbor, in order to be the first to view the land that the morrow ought to bring in sight. It was on the twentieth of September that these portents cheered the crews, and, as the world now knows, fully three weeks were to pass before they should actually behold the land. The spirits of the men sank correspondingly, for being of the Latin race they were impetuous and of ardent temperament, easily cheered and as easily discouraged.

Seeing the boys one day with their heads together, sitting as they usually sat, under the lee rail of the castle deck, Columbus suddenly turned to

them and asked: "Well, *señoritos*, what do the men talk about to-day, or of late? Have they discovered some new grievance? Is there something new in the air?"

It was not often that the great Admiral addressed his pages, despite the awe he really felt for Prince Adolfo, for he was by nature reserved, even taciturn and gloomy, never companionable. He was kind to them, saw to it that they lacked nothing for their comfort; but other than this left them to their own devices. In answer to his question Adolfo said: "Well, your Excellency, the men say, and there seems some reason in their saying, too, that it is very queer the wind should always blow from the east and northeast, never varying even a point from week's end to week's end. They are becoming alarmed, lest this wind should always blow from this direction, for inasmuch as it is now favorable for our voyage from Spain, by the same sign it will be contrary to us going back, if so be we ever shall return. And again, they say that if your theory be true, that the world be round and like a globe, then surely we are now sailing down the watery hill, and how in the name of all the saints are we ever to sail up again? And sooth, there seems reason in their complaints."

“My faith, so there doth seem reason in their wonderings,” assented the Admiral, stroking his beard and gazing at the horizon with a thoughtful air. “I confess I myself cannot explain the continued prevalence of this fair wind from the east, and which increaseth as we go the further south, except it be that it belongeth to these tropical parts and is caused by the heat arising from the sea which causeth an indraught of air swirled from east to west by the rotation of the earth. But as for sailing back again, be it up the watery hill or down it, we can easily prove it feasible by turning about and trying the experiment. I thank thee, Infante, for so frankly informing me of the men’s complaints, and if, without betraying anything of consequence, you can tell me more, at times, you will be doing thy servant a favor. Not that I wish to learn of aught that doth not concern me; but I would like to anticipate the complaints of the men in order to allay their fears in advance. For I perceive signs of exceeding great unrest among them, and as it will be absolutely inconceivable for me to give over this plan of finding the new country we are in search of, some excuse must be made to divert the minds of the men and keep them in subjection.”

“Yes, your Excellency, I understand,” an-

swered Adolfo. "It shall be my study how to divert them as much as possible, and to this end I would call attention to those great birds approaching the ship. They resemble the birds my people call boobies, and if so they are of a surety not inhabitants of the vasty deep." The birds alluded to made directly for the "Santa Maria" and alighted on one of the spars, where they remained until two of the sailors caught them, so tame were they, and unaccustomed to the sight of man. These stupid fowl were followed by flights of song-birds, which came to the vessels singing in the morning and after remaining till evening flew away again, still with music in their throats. These signs greatly cheered the sailors especially the advent of the song-birds, but the very next day they were depressed by finding the vessels almost at a standstill in the midst of a vast sea of weeds. As far as the eye could see, the surface of the water was covered with seaweeds, which impeded the progress of the vessels so, the wind having died away to a calm, that the crews were terror-stricken at the idea of being fixed immovably in this weedy sea and finally perishing of starvation.

To us of the present day this idea seems absurd, knowing as we do that Columbus had merely sailed

into that vast stretch of ocean on the verge of the tropics known as the Sargasso Sea, where, owing to the eddies of the ocean currents, not only thousands of acres of seaweeds, but drifts of all sorts are accumulated. Still, the fear was real to the crews, and as days passed without their being able to extricate themselves, they were at last on the verge of despair when, most fortunately, a breeze sprang up that finally carried them clear of the Sargasso and into a comparatively open sea again.

This episode had such an effect upon the minds of the men that many were ready to cast themselves into the sea, in sheer despair, and were only restrained by their captains, who argued and entreated, and finally ordered some of them to be put in irons. It was from this state of mind that the suggestion sprang which was fraught with evil consequences to Columbus, when one of the most villainous of this cut-throat crew muttered to some boon companions that instead of throwing themselves into the sea they should cast overboard the author of all their woes. This suggestion met with almost universal favor; for it must be remembered that the crews were composed of the rakings and leavings of the port in which they were gathered, and that there were many desperate characters among them. The

word was passed from one to another, until it reached aft on the "Santa Maria" and came to Pablo's ears.

Being one of the Palos people himself, Pablo had continued friendly with the crews of all the vessels, while Adolfo, regarded as a foreigner, was avoided by all, in common with Columbus. Pablo, then, came aft one day late in the afternoon and communicated to Adolfo the evil news he had gathered. Getting his friend in the cabin, where they would be secure from observation, he whispered fearsomely: "Adolfo, the men are planning to throw the Admiral overboard, this very night. Yes, *es verdad*,—it is true. I not only overheard them planning, but one of my neighbors, that Sanchez with the evil eye, himself told me, not thinking, perhaps, that I might tell thee and the Admiral. Now, Adolfo, what shall we do?"

Adolfo thought a moment, then replied: "There is but one thing to do, friend Pablo, and that is to prevent the deed, at all hazards. Prevent it, either by telling the Admiral, or heading off the men when they approach to throw him overboard and turning the tables on them."

CHAPTER VIII.

ALMOST A MUTINY.

THE mutinous disposition of the crews first manifested itself about the last week in September, but it did not find open expression until the night of the tenth of October. On the night of September twenty-fifth, after having sailed in company all the day, the sea being so smooth that the captains and men conversed together, and Columbus and Martin Alonzo even exchanged charts and observations across the space that separated their vessels, something occurred that wrought every one on board the fleet to the highest tension. Shortly after sunset, as Columbus was studying the chart that Captain Pinzon had tossed him from the Pinta, he heard a shout from the latter, who, standing upon the castle top of his vessel, was pointing into the southwest. "Land, land, Señor!" exclaimed Pinzon, excitedly. "Land to the southwest. I claim the reward offered by their majesties." Looking in the direction

indicated, Columbus also thought he saw land, and this opinion being confirmed by that of all the men, he went down upon his knees and offered thanks to God, while Pinzon and his crew chanted the "*Gloria in excelsis Deo.*"

The sailors swarmed into the rigging and up the masts, all fancying that they saw land, low-lying on the horizon, many miles away. Few of the men slept that night, but when morning dawned the fancied land had disappeared, having been only a cloud of mist or a mirage.

Columbus had ordered the course changed from due west to southwest, upon the supposed appearance of land in that direction, but when finally convinced that it was an error resumed the westerly course again, keeping on it till ten days later, when he returned to the southwest, diverted by the flights of land birds and yielding to the advice of the pilots. Had he kept on the westerly course to the end, the fleet would have brought up on the coast of Florida, somewhere to the south of the present city of Saint Augustine, instead of about midway the Bahamas chain of islands.

After the first of October, the Admiral was more open to the advice of his captains and pilots than formerly, because, by his secret calculations, they

had made the seven hundred leagues which he had stipulated as the probable length of the voyage. The distance he gave out was only five hundred and eighty-four, but himself knowing the deception and fearing that such able navigators as Captain Alonzo and two or three of the pilots would suspect him, he was more and more uneasy as the days passed on. But though he listened with an air of attention to the suggestions of his officers, that they should either change the course to the southwest or give up the voyage altogether, nothing was farther from his thoughts than doing either. He had reasoned out a scheme of discovery to be consummated by sailing due west from the Canaries across the Atlantic; and though the distance he computed had now been exceeded he still held to his idea. The captains now murmured openly, as well as the men, and nearly all were of the opinion that they had more than fulfilled their obligations to their sovereigns and their country by sailing so far into the open ocean, and that to turn back would be no disgrace, for already they had sailed farther than ever crews had voyaged before without sight of land. It may be that the captains heard of the threats muttered by the men, who were working themselves up to the final act in the drama when they should demand of the

Admiral that he return to Spain at once or take the consequences, the consequences being that they would turn about and sail back without him. If the officers were cognizant of this plan, however, they did not openly encourage it, neither did they discourage it; so the leaven of discontent worked in the minds of the sailors until they were ready to commit the desperate deed. If it had not been that the signs of land became more frequent every day or two, exciting hopes which alternated with their fears, there would have been no hesitation among the more desperate of the sailors in carrying out their plan the first week in October; and the boys, Pablo and Adolfo, noting the increasing turmoil in the forecastle of the "Santa Maria" kept close watch upon the Admiral, by night as well as by day.

At last they could endure the strain no longer, and on the evening of the sixth of October, after Columbus had refused a persistent entreaty of Captain Pinzon to stand more to the southward, his refusal being met with scowls of hate by the men, they resolved to broach to the Admiral his perilous position. It may seem strange that he had been all this time unaware of the intention of the men, or had not thought enough of the matter to set on foot an investigation;

but, as Pablo shrewdly put it, he was so wrapped up in his one great scheme as to take no notice of ordinary things.

“He lives up in Heaven—*en cielo*,”—said Pablo to his friend, when they were consulting as to the best manner of approaching him in the affair, “and if we should tell him that these men had evil thoughts about him, he would not believe us.”

“That is true,” answered Adolfo, “his head is always in the clouds. That is what you mean, I suppose, by his being up in Heaven. He is a man with one great and grand idea, and he has thought upon that idea so long that it has absorbed his whole being, as it were, and it guides him, directs him, without his being aware of what he does, I believe. He has no sentiment of fear, either, and we cannot arouse him by appealing to that. The only thing he fears is the prevention of his one great desire from being accomplished, and if we could arouse him by exciting some apprehension as to that, we might get him to protect himself. But he is so convinced that his mission is heaven-sent and that he is the one man in the world who can carry it out, that I doubt even if he could be approached on that side, either. But we will try it,” Adolfo added with a sigh, “for he is too great and too good to be sacri-

ficed by those cowards, whose only aims are low and groveling.”

“Yes,” assented Pablo, “he is truly *un hombre grande*,—a great man,—Adolfo. Do you know, I have watched him hour after hour, as we have lain here under the lee rail, while he stood like a statue of Saint George,—no, like the great giant Saint Christopher, outlined against the sky. He is not much above the height of the common man, Adolfo, but yet he hath the appearance of one more than six feet tall. And his eyes: You might call them blue; but when I have looked into them as he was cast in thought, they have seemed to me black as night. He is what our people call *rubio*, is he not?—that is, a fair complexioned man, more like what I have heard the Germans are who live to the north of Spain.”

“Yes, yes,” answered Adolfo rather impatiently, “he is something like a German or a Saxon in appearance, and his white beard and hair make him look like what I have fancied the Druids were, of whom I once read in a book written by a learned traveler. But what do we here, Pablo, discussing the Admiral’s appearance, while his safety, mayhap, depends upon our action?”

“True,” assented Pablo humbly, “we waste

time here; but what shall we do, and how shall we break the subject to him?"

"There is but one way, and that is to go boldly to him and tell him what we have heard and what we fear. My heart misgives me, but I shall not hesitate longer, for the night is approaching."

"God help us, Adolfo, and convince the Admiral that we speak the truth," whispered Pablo, as hand in hand the two boys sought Columbus. The Admiral was standing at his usual post on the castle top, with an astrolabe in his hand by which he was taking occasional observations of the stars. So wrapt in thought was he that the boys had to touch his sleeve, and even to pull it strongly, before he gave them his attention. Then he turned a look upon them that made them tremble as intruders upon his privacy; yet he was courteous, withal, and while evidently employing his mind in some abstruse calculation, greeted them kindly, though briefly.

He knew instinctively that the boys would not intrude without some good reason, so he patiently awaited their motions, looking down upon them benignly, as from some great height among the stars.

"Your Excellency," began Adolfo, "we have come to warn you, to entreat you, and pray that

you give heed to our words. There is a plot, which may mature this very night, to throw you into the sea and then turn about the ships and seek the homeward voyage.”

“Oho, so this is what my little friends have come to tell? Well, Infante—I mean Don Adolfo,—it may be as thou hast said; but if so what of it? We are in God’s care, friends. I am His chosen instrument for a great achievement. Think you I stand in fear of mere man?”

“No, no, your Excellency; not that. But while we know you have no fear, still, should you jeopardize your plans by inattention to your personal security? Remember, even the great Samson was overthrown by the meanest of creatures and his fall accomplished.”

“Yes, yes; but his work was done; mine is but just begun.”

“So be it, Excellency; yet it may be sufficiently furthered so that some one else might carry it out. you have shown the way so plainly, now, that others may follow, and—and may reap the reward.”

“There speaks the suspicious Portuguese in thee, Infante,—I mean Adolfo.—Pardon me my frequent lapses, which may betray thee to my countrymen. But, as thou sayest, the work is already well unto

its accomplishment, for this very night, or at the furthest to-morrow, land may heave in sight and then the veriest landlubber aboard may know which way to travel. All my great schemes be brought to naught, so far as I am concerned, and others reap the victory.”

Magnanimous as was the nature of Columbus, it had its one weakness, suspicion, and Adolfo's remarks had evidently awakened it.

“ Well, little friends, and how do you propose to avert this dire happening, provided it come to a crisis ? ”

“ Oh, your Excellency,” answered Adolfo, quickly, “ take some precautions, such as hitherto you have ignored. Gird on a sword, to-night, when you mount to this post of observation, and as an excuse if need be for this unwonted weapon at your side you might give out that you would be prepared to go ashore, were the land to heave in sight. Lay out, also, some arquebuses in the great cabin, where they can be snatched at a moment's warning; for I opine that the shooting of one or two of the mutineers would be sufficient, and the rest would retire to the fore-castle, as they are men of mean spirit, and cowardly, in fact.”

“ Not like the Portuguese, eh, friend Adolfo ? ”

But no matter, do not mind my raillery. Who, then, will fire these arquebuses, provided I lay them out? For in sooth I know not whom to trust, on this occasion, the defection is so wide-spread and may have tainted all my men."

"Pablo and I will serve you in this emergency," said Adolfo stoutly, drawing himself up and clapping his boy friend on the shoulder. "We both can fire arquebuses, having, as you may have observed already, practised with them at the dolphins and the tropic birds when the vessels were becalmed."

"So? Thank God that I have at least two true friends aboard! I think I have more, in fact; but dare not venture to rely upon them in this emergency. Still, it shall be as you say. Get out the arquebuses, then, and have them charged; but carefully, friend Adolfo, carefully, without exciting the suspicions of my captain and the pilot, who may at any moment go into the cabin, you know. Needless to say, my heart thanks you, both, dear friends, for your intention; but God grant it may not have to be put to the test."

The Admiral grasped each boy by the hand, showing the first real emotion they had ever observed in this self-contained man whose cabin they had shared for weeks, without sharing his confidence or even

his sympathy. They crept away to the cabin, where they prepared the arms, as planned, charging the arquebuses and placing them where they could be grasped quickly in an emergency, and then covering them over with a blanket. They took turns watching at the castle stairs, that night; but nothing occurred to verify their suspicions, and the next morning, at sunrise, a gun fired on board the "Niña" gave the signal that her captain thought he had discovered land.

This was a false alarm, as was soon verified; but it served to divert the attention of the men that day and keep them on the *qui vive* for two days following, when they reverted to the discussion of their dastardly plans for ridding the fleet of the Admiral's obnoxious presence.

CHAPTER IX.

AT LAST, THE LAND IN SIGHT.

NOTWITHSTANDING the apparent pacification of the crew, the boys were not to be deceived, for they knew the treacherous, ignoble character of the men and felt certain that they would break out again when opportunity presented. They were all confirmed in the belief that in any event they would not share the honors that this "base-born foreigner," as they called Columbus, would win, and as they had done their full duty by the authorities they were more than ready to return. The discovering of new continents was not a matter that appealed to them at all, since it is only the high-minded that can perceive the glories to be gained by such adventures. The Pinzons, sharing as they did to some extent the sentiments of the Admiral, exerted themselves to quell the discontent and proceed on the voyage to the bitter end; but few others shared their noble feelings and finally Co-

lumbus stood almost alone as against the murmuring, complaining crews.

The ringleaders of the mutinous bands sought to have Columbus promise that if the predicted land did not appear within three days from the afternoon of the tenth of October, he would 'bout ship and sail back to Spain; but though sorely tempted, feeling almost certain, from the increasing number of portents, that land was surely nigh, he would not yield to their importunities. "No," he thundered, from his vantage on the castle, "I will not yield to such as you. Almost, we have the reward of our persistence within our grasp; and shall I fail through a little longer holding to my faith? Never! never! I will die first. Go! And, moreover, do not broach the subject again, either to me or among yourselves. You shipped for the voyage, be it long or short, and for the voyage, as determined by me, and me alone, you shall stay. I did not come out here to take a *pasear*,—a little promenade,—but to discover the land where dwells the great Khan, by a newer and shorter route than by sailing around the world, and that I shall do, or shall perish in the attempt."

The men had gathered in a body at the waist of the ship, where they huddled together like sheep

without a leader; but though they had no chosen spokesman there were several more forward than the rest who did not hesitate to raise their voices above the others and denounce the Admiral to his face. Columbus might have ordered them placed in irons, as an example; but he forebore, merely shrugging his shoulders, with an air that plainly showed they wearied him, and turned again to his occupation of searching the sky and sea.

The men dispersed, openly shouting their complaints and rending the air with their threats; but the Admiral paid no more attention to them than if they had been logs of wood, and this incensed them more than if he had condescended to reason with them. Pablo and Adolfo knew that the crisis would come, if at all, that very night, and, so far as they were able, prepared for it as before, hoping, almost against hope, that there would be no concerted attack by the whole body of sailors, but rather a stealthy assault by a single man or small detachment. In whatever shape the assault came, they knew the odds would be against them, and consulted together as to the advisability of taking some others into their confidence. They could not go beyond the little group that shared the great cabin, consisting of the master of the ship, the

pilot, the inspector-general and the chief alguazil, besides Columbus himself, who did not have faith enough in their suspicions to aid them in any manner directly. He conceded something to their fears by girding on his sword, that evening, as he went forth after dinner to take his stand on the castle deck; but more than that he would not do, and apparently dismissed the subject from his thoughts the moment he was once in open air.

“The pilot is a trusty fellow, I’m sure,” whispered Pablo, “and I think we can count upon Señor Sanchez, the inspector-general; but as to the alguazil I have doubts.”

“And so have I,” answered Adolfo. “But I have concluded not to call upon any of them in advance, lest there might be a leak somewhere and the men be warned. If so be we get into close quarters we will call upon them for assistance, which they cannot well refuse; but not otherwise. I know those common curs out there in the fore-castle. They will send a single man, or at most two men, to creep upon the Admiral in the dark, and themselves remain *perdu*. If he falls a victim they will stand ready to raise a great clamor and demand a return at once to Spain; but if the attack is frustrated they will sneak back to their

bunks and pretend to know nothing at all about it. They have no arquebuses, only their knives, for as they say, the knife tastes blood without making any sound.”

As darkness fell about the fleet the boys took their positions, one on each side the castle, each with an arquebuse lying near, a keen-bladed knife in one hand and a bludgeon in the other. Belonging to the Latin race, they were more inclined to use the knife than the bludgeon or the arquebuse; but they were not desirous of shedding their brothers' blood, nor did they wish to make a disturbance, so they agreed to use the bludgeon if opportunity offered, rather than either of the other weapons. The night wore on until near nine o'clock without any sign of the enemy; but still the two kept watch, feeling that the safety of the Admiral and the success of the voyage were at stake and depended upon their vigilance. The night was very pleasant, with soft sweet airs and a starlit sky. The sweetness of the breezes wafted to the fleet should have convinced the crews that they were near some coast, for they were laden with land odors and the fragrance of forests. Columbus noted this, and spoke of it to those near him; but the crews, being wrapped up in their plans for ven-

geance, did not give it heed. From their posts of observation the boys could see the Admiral pacing up and down his weary watch, now pausing to peer through the astrolabe he carried, now halting to observe the trim of a sail or listen to the slightest noise upon the sea. He was a conspicuous figure, outlined against the sails or the sky, and a shining mark for an assassin. To reach him, however, one must first climb up the gangway to the castle deck, and it was at the foot of this steep-set ladder, one at each corner, that the boys were crouched, seeing all that took place, but well out of sight themselves.

About half-past nine, as Pablo lay there watching with eyes so wide open that they hardly winked, a slight noise reached his ear above the rustling of the ropes and the sougning of the wind, which now was blowing fresh. He strained himself around the coil of rope behind which he was hidden and saw a dark form approaching along the narrow passageway between the cabin and the rail. It stealthily crawled along, crouching in the shadows and avoiding the faint gleam of the lantern in the rigging, and Pablo noted that in one hand the approaching individual carried a long-bladed knife. His heart beat fast and furious, and he wanted to cry out; but that, he knew, might frustrate their plans. He clutched the

bludgeon firmly in one hand and drew back for a spring as the man should get opposite, intending to deal him a sudden blow on the back of the head. It would have been murder, provided the blow were fatal; but though this fact was flashed upon him and almost seared into his soul, he was still determined to act, just the same, believing that he had good cause in defense of the Admiral.

But the boy was saved from committing the deed, almost by a miracle. Suddenly, just as the dark figure got almost opposite him, Pablo heard Columbus call out excitedly: "A light! A light! Come hither and confirm my view." The would-be murderer heard the voice, also, and after hesitating a second, turned and glided swiftly back whence he had come.

It may be well believed that poor Pablo drew a long breath of relief at this, and quickly crossing himself he breathed a prayer of thanks to the Almighty for saving him that dread experience. He sprang up the ladder, then, closely followed by one Pedro Gutierrez, a gentleman of the King's court, who happened to be in the cabin when the summons came.

"Come hither, Don Pedro," exclaimed Columbus hurriedly, "and you, too, Pablo. Tell me, is

not that a light, faintly glimmering at a distance? There, just beneath the sail. Look! look! Ah, here comes Don Rodrigo (as Señor Sanchez thrust his head above the ladder). What think you, Señor, is not that a light?"

"Of a truth," murmured Don Pedro, "it surely is a light," and Pablo, though unheard, also added his testimony. But Don Rodrigo was too late to observe the gleam at a distance, though a little later it appeared again, wavering in a fitful fashion, as though it were some torch or lantern in a fisherman's boat rising and falling on the waves. While the night lasted all must be speculation as to the import of the transient gleam, but it was certain proof that ahead of the fleet, shrouded in the darkness, was the land of promise that Columbus had so long and hitherto vainly sought. Not an eye was closed that night aboard the "Santa Maria," and the crews gathered at the rails chattering like parrots over what the morning was to reveal. Among the men so gathered there was at least one, Pablo and Adolfo knew, who quite recently had murder in his heart, and who, but for the interposition of some unseen power, might have frustrated the schemes Columbus had so long carried in his mind. The darkness was such that Pablo could not identify the

man who had come so near being an assassin; but there were certain peculiarities in his general appearance, he told Adolfo, when later he narrated his exciting experience, by which he thought he could detect him in the daytime.

How slowly the hours wore away, as, all hands on deck, a watch was kept till daylight came. About two o'clock in the morning of that ever-memorable Friday, the twelfth of October, 1492, a gun on the "Pinta," which was ahead, boomed out the joyful tidings. Land was first actually seen by a common sailor, one Rodrigo de Triana, who was on watch at the mast-head, and (to go ahead of our story a little) when he saw it he cried out: "There is the land! The reward is mine." The reward offered by King Ferdinand, of thirty thousand maravedis to him who should first descry the land, most certainly should have gone to this poor sailor, who was overjoyed at his good fortune—as he viewed it—and acted like a madman. But, sad to relate, when the fleet had returned to Spain, the reward was adjudged to Columbus for first having seen the light; and to his everlasting shame, be it said, he not only accepted but retained it, refusing even to share with poor Rodrigo, who was so overcome by this act of injustice that he left Spain and

went to Africa, where he turned Mohammedan and passed his days cursing the ingrates of his native land.

The "Pinta" lay-to and awaited the other vessels, according to the instructions of Columbus, and when daylight broke, there before the collective crews lay the land they had sought so many weeks. The chronicles of the time do not state whether or not they were disappointed or delighted at the prospect outspread before them; but in the first flush of their enthusiasm and their joy at reaching the object of their labors, they overlooked the fact that the scene was, after all, not altogether an inspiring one. Beyond a line of foaming coral reefs lay the real shore of what seemed to be an island, covered with a scant vegetation and with far-extending beaches, ending north and south in rocky promontories. There was no sign, however, of the advanced civilization which Columbus had expected to discover here, no indication of populous cities or even towns, no fine architecture, no temples or palaces. So far as the Spaniards could discover, there were no houses at all in sight; though later, after they had landed, they found the humble huts thatched with palm leaves in which the people lived.

Even in his hour of triumph, Columbus maintained

his serene composure, and when the men crawled on their knees before him, begging his pardon for their mutinous behavior, he freely forgave them all, reminding them only of the goodness of God in having given them such a favorable voyage and in vouchsafing to them, above all other people in the world, the blessed privilege of being first to gaze upon the newly-discovered country.

“ Would he be so magnanimous if he knew all ? ” whispered Pablo to Adolfo, as they hung over the rail, straining their eyes for a clear view of the shore, now unfolding before them in the morning mists.

“ I think so, ” answered his companion. “ The Admiral can be great and lofty of mind when occasion demands. He is now filled with thankfulness that his long-cherished scheme has come to pass, and would probably forgive the would-be assassin if he had taken him by the throat. But see, the boats are being lowered. We must secure permission from the Admiral to go ashore with the first party that lands. ”

CHAPTER X.

THE FIRST EUROPEANS IN THE NEW WORLD.

“YES, my sons, surely you shall go with me,” answered Columbus, when appealed to by Pablo and Adolfo for permission to accompany him ashore in the long boat. “And moreover, you two shall be the first, after me, to press the sands of yonder mysterious shore. For,” he added, noting their looks of astonishment and joy, “you have stood by me like gallant defenders, as you are, when nearly all the others had deserted me. Yea, I have seen more than you perchance may think. Absorbed as I have been in my vigils, I could not have but noticed your unremitting care, even to the last, and your willingness to sacrifice your lives, if need be, in my defense.”

The Admiral was in the great cabin, donning his rich doublet of scarlet cloth, and tightening the belt of his sword ; but he paused in this occupation long enough to place a hand on the head of

either boy, as though in benediction, as he said: "Moreover, I am aware of the extremity to which you, friend Pablo, went, in my behalf, last night. All unseen by you, I peered over the castle rail and looked down upon you when you were ready to spring out upon that foul assassin. My sword was poised, even, for a swift descent, though thou knewest it not, my son. Just at that moment, glancing up, I saw the gleam of light ashore, and called out as I did, in order to divert the fiend from his intention. It was the goodness of God, my sons, that caused that light to appear when it did,—yea, even to appear at all, and a miracle."

"And did you see all that? Did you see the man?" asked Pablo falteringly, blushing to the roots of his hair at the praise of the great Admiral.

"Yea, did I. And moreover, I think I know him, too, so the future shall have something in store for at least one man aboard, from which at present he may think himself immune. But come, the boat is ready. Follow me closely, and take a seat at my side, one on either hand. I would have the men see that I, this morn, honor you two above all the others. It is a small matter, mayhap, but it is my wish."

The boats from the "Pinta" and "Niña" were

awaiting the leadership of the Admiral, in the one Captain Martin Alonzo Pinzon and in the other his brother, Vicente Yanez, commanders, respectively, of the vessel and the caravel. As Columbus seated himself, with one of the youths on either side, the men at the oars gave way and the boats shot forward, like arrows from bent bows. In one hand the Admiral grasped a drawn sword, in the other a banner-staff supporting the royal standard, while the two Pinzons, each in his own boat, held aloft the banners of the Greek Cross, which had at either arm the initial letters of the Spanish sovereigns, "F" and "Y," Ferdinand and Isabella, the whole surmounted by crowns embroidered in gold. Seeking an inlet through the foam-capped reefs, the Admiral's boat soon reached smooth water and neared the shore.

"Look, oh, look!" exclaimed Adolfo, as they gained the beach. "Behold those naked people, swarming from the woods. They are not white, neither are they black, but red in color, more like the Moors of Barbary. Great sir, are they not savages?"

"Mayhap," responded Columbus absently, "but if so they are peaceful ones, for they carry no arms save bows and arrows, and these they seem not dis-

posed to use against us. Verily it is a strange sight, and one for which I am altogether unprepared. I had expected to see the people described by the traveler, Marco Polo, and to land on the coast of the great Khan's dominions; but surely there is nothing here to indicate that we have done so. These people may be the fierce Tartars run to savagery; but they show no sign of that, save for their being naked. Ah, but how sweet the air is, like that of Andalusia in May, and how pleasant those green groves that line the beach! Father Almighty, we thank thee for this sight before us, for this prosperous ending to our voyage!"

Columbus bared his head and looked up at the heavens, his companions doing the same, while he murmured a prayer of thanksgiving.

The boat's keel grated on the sands and was run up from the water, the rowers dropping their oars and leaping overboard to hold the craft steady while Columbus landed, first to press dry soil in the New World. The King's officials were about to press forward after him, but he held them back by a wave of his hand, saying, "No, gentlemen, these two youths first of all, after me to be the next."

The dignitaries looked astonished, then scowled at the boys as they leaped forward and stood by the



Columbus, elevating the royal banner, waved his sword above his head and took possession of the country in the name of Ferdinand and Isabella, sovereigns of Spain.—Page 107. *A Voyage with Columbus.*

Admiral on the sands; but they obeyed the command, though with murmurings at the audacity of "these upstart foreigners." After all were landed, Columbus gathered his retinue around him and elevating the royal banner waved his sword above his head and took possession of the country in the name of Ferdinand and Isabella, sovereigns of Spain. The royal notary was commanded to note this act of his, and to observe that he called this new land, whether island or continent, San Salvador. The native name of the island (for it has since been ascertained to be one of the thousand isles that compose the Bahamas chain in the West Indies), was Guanahani, and many years later, when the English came here, it received the name of Watlings. It lies about midway that vast archipelago; but owing to the fact that Columbus made no accurate chart of his first voyage (or if he made one did not leave it for posterity), there was for many years great doubt as to the actual location of San Salvador.

Such high authority as Washington Irving concluded it must have been Cat Island in the Bahamas, but that theory has long since been abandoned, and the majority of investigators have decided upon the island now called Watlings; though there is some doubt as to the fact.

The writer of these adventures has followed closely the voyages of Columbus, having investigated almost every place he touched at during his career, and has specially examined the Bahama islands with a view to exactly locating the first spot at which Columbus landed. It is his belief that it was on the eastern shore of the present Watlings island, for this answers to the descriptions left by Columbus in almost every particular. There is the barrier reef of coral lying just off the shore, beyond which the vessels "lay-to" during the night, and the island itself, as Columbus says of it, is very level, without any high hills or mountains, and with a large lake or lagoon in the center. The exuberant vegetation observed by Columbus, however, has long since disappeared, only a few palms remaining to remind us of what formerly covered the bare coral rock with a leafy canopy.

The people, also, those red aborigines who flocked to the shore at the approach of the boats, and then fled in terror to their huts in the forests, were exterminated centuries ago. Columbus never revisited the scene of his first landfall and landing in the New World, but he always remembered the first people he had found there, and who, after having overcome their affright at the approach of the

great-winged ships and the landing of the boats filled with men clad in bright-colored garments and steel armor, collected about him, impelled by simple curiosity.

Columbus called that first island he landed on San Salvador, and the country to which it pertained he named the West Indies, because he really thought, as all the world now knows, that he had found another route to the Indies and the country of the Great Khan.

“I have no doubt,” he said to the officials gathered about him as he took possession of the country in the name of his king and queen, “that we have discovered the Eastern coast of the great East Indies, and hence these people now approaching us shall be called Indians.” And Indians they have ever since been called, being the first red men and women of their kind ever looked upon by Europeans.

Naked, yet unashamed, never having worn any clothing in their lives, the frightened Indians finally gathered about the wondering groups of Spaniards and timidly examined these strange beings who, as they thought, had come down from Heaven by way of the sea. They had never seen ships or boats managed by sails before, and took them for great

birds; for though they had a kind of boat called *canoa*,—and seen by the Spaniards for the first time that twelfth day of October, 1492, they were unacquainted with ships with sails.

If the Spaniards were surprised to see these people going about stark naked, the Indians also were astonished to see the new arrivals clothed in garments. After they had prostrated themselves before Columbus and his men in token of adoration and submission, some of the boldest of them ventured to touch the clothing worn by the Europeans, and, finding it was not part and parcel of their skins, they were more surprised than ever. One of the Indians, a shapely boy of twelve or thirteen years of age, laid a hand softly on Pablo's shoulder and stroked his arm, then pinched it gently as if to see if it hurt him. Pablo, in turn, felt the Indian's rounded arm and found it smooth as velvet.

“Why,” he exclaimed, “his skin is soft as silk, yet firm as leather.”

“That comes from his having a thicker tegument than we have,” answered Adolfo, “and also from his being out in the air all the time without any clothes on. I have read that the Ethiopians, who, you know, are black people living in the interior of Africa, have skins of the same texture, though black

as coals." He beckoned to the Indian, and when he timidly approached handed him his rapier, which, never having seen a weapon or utensil of iron of any kind before, the innocent boy took by the blade and cut himself slightly, much to the distress of the boys, but to the amusement of some of the men, who laughed boisterously at the aborigine's surprise.

It is a pity that the boys had not kept some sort of journal, or account of their adventures, for it would be interesting reading at this day; but so far as we are aware they did nothing of the kind. It is doubtful if Pablo could either read or write, and Adolfo's accomplishments in that line were not great. He could fence with the best of them, could ride a horse like a Centaur, swim, dance, sing, and play instruments of music like the guitar and violin, and speak two languages, Portuguese and Spanish; but in other ways his education had been neglected. However, the journal which Columbus began on the voyage was discovered a few years ago, and throws some light upon the incidents of this first landing in America. This journal he had inscribed to Ferdinand and Isabella, and, alluding to the red people he found at San Salvador, he wrote: "I swear to your Majesties there are no better people on earth, for they are gentle, and know not

what evil is, neither killing nor stealing. I presented some of them with red caps, strings of beads and other trifles, by which we got a wonderful hold on their affections. They afterwards came to the boats of the vessels, swimming, and bringing us parrots, cotton thread in balls, and such, which they bartered for glass beads and little bells. All of them go naked as they came into the world; their forms are graceful, their features good, their hair as coarse as that of a horse's tail. They are dark of complexion, like the Canary islanders, and paint themselves in various colors. They have no iron, their spears consisting of staffs tipped with fishes' teeth, and they have no boats larger than their little skiffs, which they call *canoas*, but which are wonderfully built, some large enough to contain forty men, and they paddle them about with great dexterity, making great speed; and if a *canoa* capsizes they all swim about it and bail it out with dishes made from calabashes or small gourds."

After the visitors and the Indians had become well acquainted, Columbus gave his men permission to scatter over the sands and stretch their legs, and then ensued a period of such relaxation as only those who have taken a voyage like theirs', lasting longer than a month, can appreciate. Wandering along

the beach and penetrating the forest in search of adventure, the two boys walked arm in arm, visiting many an Indian hut of palm, and gazing in wonder at the strange inhabitants, who welcomed them warmly, setting out native or cassava bread and bananas for them to eat. They found these red people to be as nearly destitute as it was possible for them to be and live; but they all seemed happy, always wearing smiles on their faces and taking no thought for the future, either near or remote. Being so poor and ignorant, they were a great disappointment to Columbus, whose hopes of finding a great and highly civilized nation were dashed by the discovery of these savages at the outset.

CHAPTER XI.

NEW SCENES AND AN ADVENTURE ASHORE.

“ DID you find any of the red people having ornaments of gold, my sons?” asked Columbus, as the boys made their way back to the boats and met him coming up the beach.

“ No, Señor,” answered Pablo. “ I think they must be the poorest people in the world, even poorer than the meanest man in Palos, for they live in wretched huts made of leaves, and sleep on the ground, or in cotton nets which they swing between two posts.”

“ But their household vessels, are they not of some kind of metal, or gold, perchance ?” urged Columbus, a shade of disappointment coming over his face. “ Methinks I saw some small golden ornaments in the noses of a few of the men who came to the boats.”

“ Yes, now I think of it,” answered Adolfo, “ in one of the huts was a very fierce-looking man

who had great pieces of something bright and shining hanging from his nose and ears. But he seemed to be a prisoner, being tied to stakes driven into the ground, and when we came near he growled like a bear or a wolf and we were afraid and ran away.”

“Aha, that was gold those nose and ear ornaments were made of, and it is gold I am seeking, my sons, as well as a nearer way to the country of Cipango, which the famous Marco Polo says lies somewhere hereabouts, unless I much mistake his meaning. Lead me to him at once, for I would see this man with gold in nose and ears.”

Following the boys up the beach and into the forest, Columbus accompanied them to one of the huts, a little larger than the rest, and set somewhat apart. Like them, it was circular in shape and made of poles set into the ground and tied together at the top by means of withes, and covered over with palm leaves. The only aperture, which served as a doorway, was in one side and the gloom within was deep. As they approached the hut Adolfo drew his rapier and advanced boldly, closely followed by Pablo and the Admiral; but they quickly halted when greeted by a low, rumbling roar, like the howl of some wild beast in a rage, or the dis-

tant mutterings of thunder. Right before them, in a corner of the hut, they saw the outlines of a human form, crouched as if for a spring, and fell back a little until their eyesight became accustomed to the gloom. The creature continued to roar menacingly and strain upon his fastenings until it seemed as if they must break; but feeling confident that with three against one they could hold their own, at least, the invaders stood their ground.

“What a savage-looking thing,” said Columbus. “I never looked upon his like before. He is different from these people we have seen outside, and perchance may have been captured in some island to the south. But truly, he hath golden ornaments, as you have said, and I must ascertain if they be true metal or base. Oh that we could speak the language of these red men and find out from them what all this means! Ah, here comes one of the natives of the land, perhaps he can enlighten us.”

A young Indian peered timorously into the hut, and seeing the strangers there made signs for them to come out, expressing by his countenance the greatest fear imaginable. Taking him by the shoulder, the Admiral pointed to his own ears and nose, indicating as well as possible that he wished to know the meaning of the ornaments, so called,

pendant from the captive's ears and nose. It was a long time before the astonished Indian could understand him, and the two had to go into the hut and close up to the prisoner before he made out the Admiral's meaning. It was with great fear, and trembling in every limb, that the young man approached the captive, and when he did so seemed ready to fly at his slightest movement.

Finally, his dull comprehension seemed to grasp the meaning of the Admiral's questioning, and he pointed to the south, at the same time talking volubly in his native language. To make sure, Columbus approached a little nearer to the prisoner, in order to place his hand upon the coveted ornaments, and seeing this the young man ran out of the hut with a cry of terror, looking back to see if the captive had broken loose. All this time the thing on the ground continued its growlings and mutterings, digging into the soil with long, claw-like fingers and stretching out its hands as if desirous of getting a grip on the Admiral's throat. But the thongs held securely, though every moment they seemed on the point of bursting; and finding that he was not pursued the young Indian came back. He took Columbus by the arm and tried to lead him from the hut, and finding it was no use to reason with him further

while he was in such terror, they all retreated outside and sat down beneath a palm tree growing near the doorway. Then the trembling Indian with expressive gestures informed the strangers that the creature inside was a prisoner of war, who had come from a place far distant for the purpose of murdering the natives of San Salvador. From what they could gather of his meaning, they learned that the prisoner was a man-eater, for the Indian took hold of the Admiral's arm and pretended to bite a piece out of it, and also went through the same performance with one of his legs. At the same time he uttered the word, "Caraib, Caraib," and shuddered, rolling his eyes and making it very plain that the Caraib, whatever it was, must be a very bad specimen indeed.

But where did he come from? That was what concerned Columbus more than the prisoner's character, and where did he get the gold? The Indian was slow at understanding the meaning of this inquiry, but at last a light dawned in his face, and he made a gesture for his new friends to remain where they were and ran swiftly to another hut, probably his own, entering which he remained a moment, then came out with something bright and shining in his hand. He held it aloft, as if to ask if that

was what Columbus wanted, and the Admiral nodded his head with satisfaction, as, taking the thing in his hand he found it was really gold, yellow, glistening gold. Spreading out his hands, Columbus asked in the sign language, "Here?" meaning was it found in that country, and the Indian answered quickly "No," by shaking his head, and, pointing to the south, described seven half circles with his arms, beginning at the east and dropping toward the west. That meant, as was soon proved by having him repeat the performance, that the gold was found in a country seven days' journey to the south. The Indian was now quick to apprehend the meaning of the stranger's questions, and signalling for the three to follow him he ran to the shore where a canoe was moored, got into it and, taking up the paddle, described the same half circles again, from east to west, indicating very plainly that he meant by each of those semicircles a journey in his canoe from the rising to the setting of the sun. That was quite satisfactory, and paved the way for getting together a vocabulary of the Indian language, for, pointing to the canoe, Columbus made the young native understand that he desired to know what it was called. "*Canoa*," answered the Indian with a smile, and pointing to

his hut he said: "*Bohio*;" and thus the beginning was made for an aboriginal vocabulary. The third word was that which signified gold, and this was "*turey*," which Columbus repeated over and over again, rolling the word like a sweet morsel under his tongue.

"I am too old to begin the acquisition of another language, my sons," he said to the boys, "so I shall depend upon you to do it for me. If we can keep this young Indian with us, and keep at him persistently, I am sure we shall gather words enough to serve us. So what do you say, my children, to setting yourselves to the work? I have authority to pay out certain sums of money for interpreters, and if you will serve in that capacity you shall receive the royal stipend. What say you?"

"I would gladly learn the Indian language for the mere pleasure of it," quickly answered Adolfo, "and to receive compensation is to be doubly paid, not to speak of the delight of serving you and our royal masters." But Pablo shook his head doubtfully. "I am afraid I cannot learn much, anyway, for I never could," he replied sadly, "master my own language, never having been much at school."

"Well, no matter," answered Columbus kindly.

“The more one learns the more easily the rest is acquired. I know that Don Adolfo cannot get along without you, so you shall be his assistant.”

Pablo flushed with pleasure and drew himself up with a new dignity born of the confidence the Admiral had placed in him, while Adolfo said that he was sure his friend would be of great assistance and it was true; as Columbus had said, he could not do without him.

It was more difficult to secure the assistance of the third party to this contract for the acquisition of a new language,—that is, of the young Indian,—because as yet they had so few words in common. But by dint of great persistence Adolfo made him understand what was wanted, and he fairly leaped for joy when it finally dawned upon him that he was needed for the voyage. He made known to his friends that he had no ties from which he could not quickly separate himself, and later, when the trio got to understand each other better, he told them that his father, mother and nearly all his relatives had been carried off by a pestilence. But a shade of sadness came over his face when he became convinced that he would have to leave the island and sail off in the great “*canoa* with wings,” for he seemed to recollect that there was at least one tie

he had overlooked. Dropping his arms at his side with a gesture of despair, he looked earnestly at his new friends a moment, then, signing them to await his return, ran swiftly to a little hut that stood near the beach within a thicket of palmettos. A few minutes later he came walking down the strand leading by the hand a little girl of perhaps six or seven years, a graceful brown-skinned creature with long black hair and big black eyes. She was greatly afraid of the strangers and hung behind her brother—for so it seemed he was;—but uttered no cry, though quite evidently terror-stricken. Pointing to the little maiden, then at the hut and the vessels, at the same time shaking his head, the Indian boy made it very evident that he could not go away and leave this pretty creature behind. She was all he had in the world, he explained in his sign language, and was wholly dependent upon him, so he could not leave her alone. Columbus hesitated a little, then ordered Pablo to go to the boat and fetch some glass beads and hawksbells (*cascabelas*) which he would find there. Pablo did as requested and when the Admiral held up these bright and glistening baubles the little maiden's curiosity quite overcame her terror and she held out her hands. Giving the string of beads to Pablo, Columbus commanded him

to place them about her neck, at which the girl was almost stupefied with happiness. Never before had she owned an ornament of any sort, nor even an article of dress, save a simple girdle of woven leaves, worn about her slender waist; nor were her larger sisters more favored than she.

The wondering Indians gathered around and were about beginning to barter what they owned for the Spanish baubles, when there was a sudden outcry in the direction of the huts that caused most of them to disperse and go in search of the noise. They had not long to wait, however, for soon there appeared a grim apparition in the person of the Caraib hitherto held prisoner in the hut, who had finally burst his bonds and was now at large. When the natives of the island saw this they uttered loud cries of fear and fled in every direction, for they were peace-loving and timid people who never went to war unless forced to do so and rarely lifted their hands against any others of their race.

The raging beast of a Caraib dashed into the midst of the throng on the beach, biting and snarling, and grasping viciously at every man, woman and child he came near, throwing some to the ground and making as though he would tear them limb from limb. He seemed not to see the white people

gathered nearest to the water, but made his way thither as though desirous of securing one of the canoes and in it make his escape from the island. But he soon had some braver people than the mild Indians of Guanahani to withstand, for as he hewed his way through the throng he finally came to the group of Spaniards, standing there, amazed, with Columbus in their midst. The Europeans had no thought of running away, and if they had they lacked the time to do so, for the Caraib lost no time in making for the water's edge, except as he stopped to bite and rend his captives, now and then. He appeared like a great gorilla; though of course the gorilla was at that time unknown to white men; and his strength was prodigious. Marching on toward the water, he carried along with him a girl and a boy, one in either hand, probably for the purpose of feasting on their flesh after he had embarked in the canoe; and his attention was so taken with his captives that he did not see the Europeans until close upon them. Then he found his way barred by Adolfo, who with his sword, standing there before the Caraib giant, might have reminded one of the Biblical story of young David and Goliath. And he was no more afraid than was David when he stood before the Philistine with his sling charged

with its smooth round stone; though in truth he had little time to consider whether to be afraid or not. The Caraib howled with rage when he saw his path thus crossed, and dropping his captives he darted upon Adolfo without delay. The latter made a thrust at the Indian, but this time his skill was parried by brute force and the blade was turned downward by the onset of the Caraib, who seemed to care no more for sword-thrusts than for pin pricks. It might have gone hard with Adolfo if some of the Spaniards had not rushed to his rescue, for the Caraib not only bore down his sword, but fell full upon him, carrying him to the sands. As quick as this was done, however, the Spaniards were as nimble as the Indian, and throwing themselves upon him, pinned him down, while some of the sailors brought ropes and tied his hands and feet.

Adolfo extricated himself from beneath his burly adversary and was standing by, coolly bending his sword to try its temper, when Columbus came up and commended him for his bravery.

“Sooth, it was nothing,” said Adolfo. “Indeed, I am ashamed that I missed the brute when he made for me. It is the first time, I believe, that my good blade ever played me false.”

“Well,” rejoined the Admiral, “I am glad the

poor fellow was not wounded, for it would have been an inauspicious omen for the future voyage. But what shall we do with him, now? Faith, I am perplexed. I think, however, that the best thing is to leave him here where we found him, but bound with iron chains instead of the slender withes the Indians used.”

So the Caraib was taken back to the hut from which he escaped, howling and yelling like mad, and after strong stakes were driven into the soil, he was chained to them in such a manner that he could not by any means get loose.

The natives of the island viewed this affair with great alarm, and seemed rather inclined to beg Columbus to take the Caraib away with him than to have him again in their midst. But when they saw the iron-linked chains around his wrists and ankles, they were reassured, and recovering their equanimity they resumed their bartering for trinkets. They all hastened to their huts, soon reappearing with great balls of cotton thread, tame parrots and cakes of cassava bread, which they held up to view, chattering excitedly amongst themselves; and to humor them Columbus gave each one a few beads and hawksbells, giving double portions to such as were willing to part with their nose ornaments of gold.

CHAPTER XII.

SAILING IN SEARCH OF CIPANGO.

SUNDAY, October 14, 1492, Columbus wrote in his Journal :

“ At dawn I ordered the boats of the ship and of the caravels to be got ready, and went along the island ; for I was afraid of a reef of rocks that surrounds it, although within it there is depth and ample harbor for all the vessels of Christendom ; but the entrance is very narrow. . . . After observing that harbor, I afterwards returned to the ship and set sail, and saw so many islands that I could not decide which one to visit first.”

There were islands enough, but all very much of the same character, low-lying and almost barren, inhabited by the same kind of people Columbus had found at San Salvador. The Admiral believed these islands to constitute a fringe along the coast of the continent, merely, and that beyond them lay the wonderful Cipango, described by Marco Polo the

Venetian traveler as being situated in the China Sea opposite Cathay. He still believed he had reached the eastern coast of Asia, or was drawing near it, so it was with high hopes that he set sail from San Salvador in search of Cipango. All the natives had told him, as well as they were able, that the country of gold lay to the south; so southward he sailed, calling at various islands in the Bahamas on the way, but not tarrying long, as he was impatient to discover Cipango the golden.

Barren as they were of vegetation and opulent cities, the islands were extremely inviting, and in his Journal Columbus writes of one at which he anchored on the second night out from San Salvador: "I tarried here because I saw this cape so green and beautiful, as are all the things and lands of these islands, so that I do not know which to visit first, nor do my eyes grow tired of looking at such beautiful verdure, so different from our own. Here are some large lagoons, and around them are trees so large that it is a marvel, while the grass is as green as in Andalusia in April. And the songs of the little birds are such that it seems as if a man could never leave here, while the odors came so good and sweet from flowers and trees that it was the sweetest thing in the world."

This island he called Isabella, and going ashore in the morning to fill their water casks at a spring which gushed out from the roots of a gigantic banyan tree, the sailors saw a strange animal like a young alligator, nestling in the branches of a mangrove near the beach. They recoiled in alarm, but the young Indian, who, with Pablo and Adolfo, had accompanied them, signaled for silence and, armed only with his rude bow and arrows, advanced upon the creature boldly. It was an iguana, an animal entirely harmless unless attacked; but the Spaniards had never seen one before and were afraid of it. The Indian youth advanced cautiously, holding his bow ready bent and an arrow at the string, and when he got within a few rods of the iguana he began to whistle softly. The iguana, which at first had raised its crested head menacingly, stretched itself out along the branch, like a cat before a fire, and seemingly went to sleep. Then the Indian, having soothed it by sweet sounds, crept up silently and seized it by the throat. Quick as a flash the iguana recovered its senses and lashed out fiercely with its long, whip-like tail; but it was unable to make its captor loose his grasp, and soon quieted down. Taking it to the group of wondering sailors at the spring, the boy asked one of them for a

knife, with which, when it was handed him, he cut the creature's throat. It looked so much like a serpent, as it lay writhing on the ground, that even then the sailors could hardly be prevailed upon to touch it; but the boy assured them by signs that it was very good to eat, and when its struggles had ceased he quickly skinned it, preserving the tail, which was about three feet long, to present to the Admiral as a dainty tidbit for his dinner. Having filled their water casks, the sailors returned aboard the vessels, and at midnight, says Columbus in his diary, "I weighed anchor from this island of Isabella, in order to go to 'Cuba' which these people tell me is very large, with much trade, and yielding gold and spices. By their signs I understand it to be the island of Cipango, of which marvelous things are related, and which, on the globes and maps I have seen, is in this region. And they tell me I should sail, to reach it, west-southwest, as I now am sailing."

So the days passed by, the fleet sailing from one island to another, until, the last week of October, the coast of Cuba appeared in sight, a little more than two weeks after the first discovery of land in the Bahamas. During this portion of the voyage Pablo, Adolfo and the young Indians, were nearly

always together, and by the time Cuba was sighted they had acquired a great deal of each other's language; so that they could converse quite freely. The child especially had been quick to learn, being at the age when words are most readily acquired, and could lisp in Spanish prettily. She and her brother had been furnished with clothing by the Admiral's commands, and though at first they were plainly uncomfortable in their unwonted costumes, they bore it all with patience for the sake of pleasing their new friends. They were cleanly in their habits, bathing frequently, or whenever opportunity offered, and soon learned the habits of civilized people, at least so far as practised by the Spanish sailors. Having overcome their shyness, both boy and girl were great favorites on board the "Santa Maria," where they were assigned quarters in a corner of the castle cabin. The child was particularly devoted to Pablo, whom she followed like a dog, hardly allowing him out of her sight while daylight lasted. Her affection was reciprocated, so far as bashful Pablo dared show preference; while her brother, who was nearer Adolfo's age, chose the latter for his companion. So they got on very well together, and a friendly rivalry existing as to which one should acquire the most new words in a

given time, it was not long before they were depended upon almost solely by the Admiral as interpreters.

Being of an acquisitive disposition, Pablo and Adolfo enjoyed keenly the opportunity the voyage afforded for making acquaintance with so many things hitherto unknown to white men. They may not have appreciated the opportunity to the full, but within their awakening intelligences they felt the supreme privilege that was theirs to be something beyond price. For example, they were the first boys in the world to take the great voyage across the Atlantic; they were with Columbus when he first noted the variation of the compass; were among the first to view the wonderful Sargasso Sea; first after the Admiral to land on the newly discovered shore, and the first, also, to get acquainted with the Indians. They now promised to be the first who should acquire the aboriginal language, and went to work at it with a determination that was in itself a presage of success. Among the new things they had observed, aside from the land and the Indians, were the wild parrots, which flew overhead in great flocks, from island to island; the huts of the natives, so primitive in construction, as well as their domestic uten-

sils made of shells and calabashes, the rude weapons of wood tipped with bones and fishes' teeth, the spear and arrow heads of flint and stone. They wondered at the canoes and hammocks (called *hamacas*) used by the natives, and after they found how comfortable the latter were to sleep in they got the Indian boy to make them duplicates of his own hammock, woven out of cotton twine. The most wonderful thing that came under their notice, however, was seen one day when they were crossing the broad channel between Isabella island and Cuba. In mid-channel a small canoe hove in sight, containing a single Indian, an old man, who seemed to be afire, as his head was surrounded by a wreath of smoke.

“Oh, look ! look !” exclaimed Pablo, who was gazing in his direction. “See the smoke coming out of that Indian's mouth. He is on fire ! Hasten and let us throw some water over him !”

His exclamations caught the attention of his young Indian friend, who was standing near, and seeing what it was that had excited Pablo he looked anxiously at the man in the canoe and then burst into a laugh. “No, no,” he said. “No *fuego* (fire); *tabaco* !” He then reached into a little wallet of iguana skin which he wore around his neck

and drew forth some dried leaves which he deftly made into a roll, and striking a flame from two dried sticks which he rubbed rapidly together, he lighted this primitive cigar, and for the first time in their lives the Spaniards saw the operation of smoking illustrated by an object lesson. The youth puffed his roll with seeming satisfaction for a moment or so, then handed it to Adolfo and Pablo for trial; but both refused it, recoiling from it with some alarm. The little girl was next offered the cigar, of which she took a few whiffs, as a matter of course, greatly to the delight of Columbus and the officers of the "Santa Maria," now gathered around to observe the strange proceeding. The Spaniards may have had bad habits enough already; but from that day dates one pernicious habit which has continued to the present, for, attracted by the novelty of the thing and the seeming enjoyment the Indians took in smoking tobacco, they were not long in adopting it as their own. It is a fact that the island near, and on which the Indians were first seen smoking tobacco, is still the most famous producer of the "weed," for Cuba has furnished it to the world almost ever since it was discovered.

CHAPTER XIII.

CUBA AND THE GRAND KHAN OF CATHAY.

ON the third day after leaving Isabella the outlines of a large and mountainous island rose upon the horizon, reminding Columbus in its general appearance of Sicily in the Mediterranean, which he had visited. Such a long stretch of coast was developed as the fleet approached it, on the morning of the twenty-eighth of October, and such were the vast contours of the inland mountains, that the Admiral mistook it for a continent; and that belief, in fact, he held till his death, never having circumnavigated Cuba.

The mouth of a beautiful river appearing beyond an inlet in one of the coral reefs, the "Santa Maria" was headed into it, followed by the caravels, and an anchorage made in water of crystal clearness beneath the shade of enormous trees. The air was pure and soft, the sun shone brilliantly and all nature was dressed in green, so that the feelings of the

sailors were wrought to a pitch of gladness. In common with the rest of the company, the three boys were on the *qui vive* for new things to be observed, and engaged in friendly rivalry as to who should find the first and strangest sight. Adolfo cried out, suddenly, as they came to anchor in the stream: "Oh, your excellency (addressing Columbus, who stood near) there are battalions of soldiers dressed in scarlet uniform. See, inland on the edge of that great savanna. They are standing still, not one of them has moved since I observed them. I wonder if they are watching us and if they will attack the boats?"

The Admiral looked in the direction indicated and then said: "It is just as I thought. This is the country of the Grand Khan, and those must be his soldiers, drawn up in dress parade. God be thanked for bringing us, at last, to a land of civilization and culture, where we shall find a refined people, and perhaps gold in great abundance."

But his enthusiasm was short-lived, for when the young Indian's attention had been drawn to the supposed soldiers he made it quite clear to his disappointed friends that they were nothing of the sort. Placing his hands on his breast, and then on the shoulders of each one of the company about him in

succession, he shook his head negatively, as if to say: "No people, no." Then he asked the Admiral to allow one of the sailors to fire off an arquebuse,—or he indicated as much by signs, and to please him Columbus did so. At the report of the arquebuse, which reverberated through the surrounding forest with a thunderous sound, the "soldiers" sprang into the air, at least a hundred strong, and flew heavily away, toward the reef-lined shore south of the river. The things in "scarlet uniform" were, in fact, nothing but flamingoes, great birds which still have their haunts along the coast of Cuba and breed in the Bahamas. The face of the Admiral, as the brilliant host sped athwart the horizon, making a gorgeous streak across the sky, was a study, for it expressed both astonishment and disappointment mingled, but with the latter predominating. For another of his theories had been shown, temporarily at least, to be a fallacy. There were no more signs of civilization here, in fact, than in the islands he had so recently left behind.

But at the report of the arquebuse several canoes darted out from the umbrageous border of the stream above the fleet, filled with Indians who had evidently been watching the strangers from their re-

treat. One of the small boats was already afloat, and sending it after the fleeing canoes one of them was overhauled and towed back to the "Santa Maria," where its occupants were quickly taken aboard the vessel, half dead with affright.

"Get our friend, the young Indian, to ask them where lives the Grand Khan," said Columbus to Adolfo, "and also learn, if possible, in which direction lies Cipango, land of gold and precious spices." The Cubans were plied with questions, both by the Indian from San Salvador and Adolfo, assisted by Pablo, and the gist of their replies was that the Grand Khan lived to the south, pointing ashore and toward the mountains, where also was a land abounding in gold. Having ascertained what he wanted to learn, Columbus ordered the Indians dismissed with presents, retaining one of them to act as guide to the dominions of the Grand Khan, which he understood to be quite near and easily reached by an inland expedition. No time was lost in equipping this expedition, and the boys desiring to accompany it, Columbus allowed them all to go, not only on account of their desire, but because they were more proficient in the Indian language than any others aboard the fleet.

When it was explained to the captured Indian

that he would be required to lead the party to the country or capital of the Grand Khan, he shook his head dubiously, but when “*turey*” was mentioned—that being the native name for gold,—he brightened up and looked more hopeful. His fear of the strangers was allayed by conversation with the Bahama Indian, who told him of the kindness and pacific purposes of the Admiral, and also of the great power of the fleet, with its boats with wings that could go anywhere upon the water, and the guns that sent out messages of death with voices of thunder. The Cuban looked his admiration and respect, and approaching Columbus knelt at his feet, kissing the hem of his cloak, then taking one of his feet in his hands placed it on his head, in token of submission.

The exploring party, the first that ever penetrated the forests of the New World, was ready to start that afternoon, but as the captive Cuban made it appear that the best point of departure would be from a river farther down the coast, the departure was delayed until that river should be reached. Sailing out of the first harbor they had made on the north coast of Cuba, the Spaniards coasted the shore until a deep and magnificent bay was reached, large enough to float a modern navy and bordered

with beautiful palms. Into the center of this bay flowed a large river, from the mouth of which the expedition set out, after being rowed up stream as far as the small boats could proceed. While the party was absent, Columbus had the vessels careened on the beach so that their sides and bottoms could be scraped and such repairs made as they needed.

The little party consisted of the three boys, the native of Cuba who had been retained for the purpose, and two Spaniards, one of whom was a converted Jew who could speak Hebrew, Chaldaic and Arabic, one of which languages the Grand Khan would surely understand.

This place of departure of the first expedition in America was the beautiful bay of Nipe, which may be found on any map of Cuba and which yet exists almost in the primeval state as discovered by Columbus, in 1492. The party set out on the morning of the first day of November, and all its members were in a state of joyful expectation. Besides provisions for several days, they carried rich presents and a letter from the sovereigns of Spain, which were to pave the way for a treaty of commerce and amity between them and the Oriental monarch they expected to discover in the interior of Cuba. Before leaving, Columbus had taken Adolfo

aside and explained to him the object and great importance of the mission, and added that he made him commander of the expedition as a mark of his confidence and an assurance of esteem in which he held his father, the king of Portugal. All this was said aside, for fear that some one of the company might overhear it, as no one aboard except the Admiral, and possibly Pablo, knew of Adolfo's identity as a prince of the royal family of Portugal. Pablo had only surmised it, but as his friend had always discouraged any approach to the subject, when he had tried to allay his curiosity, he was by no means certain. The two were friends, and the best of friends, Adolfo would say on such occasions, but he would prefer that the question of his rank and birth should for the present remain a mystery. Pablo had always assented to this, of course, but he had determined that if the opportunity ever offered, he would solve the mystery, if only for his own satisfaction.

Clad in his crimson doublet, a hat with a plume on his head, and his rapier at his side, Adolfo made a gallant-looking leader of the little party that left the boat, that morning of the first of November, 1492, and entered the great and mysterious forest on the river bank. A certain sadness tinged the

feelings of all when it came to say farewell, and it was in silence and under a cloud of oppression, contrasting with their feelings, as they had left the fleet. This, however, soon wore off as the beauties of the great forest opened to their senses, and before noon arrived they had recovered their spirits. Immense trees rose above them, tangled vines and lianas stretched across their path, while overhead sang many birds new to the Europeans and clad in brilliant plumage. Odors of strange plants filled the air, the heat was tempered by the deep shade, and, while the trail was merely a narrow trace through the forest, it was passable and plain.

They camped, that night, in the forest, by the side of a small stream, and their Cuban guide, assisted by the Bahama Indian, made a little hut of palm leaves which they called an *ajoupa*, this being the Caraib word for such a kind of shelter. As they were all very tired, Adolfo and his friends sought the hammocks the Indians had stretched between two trees and stakes, almost as soon as they had eaten their supper. The night was cool and the darkness relieved only by the brilliant light of the *cucuyos*, or fire-beetles, which gave out gleams of phosphorescent fire. Having caught a glimpse of the fire-beetles, Pablo's curiosity was

excited so that he could not sleep, and after all the others were deep in slumber he left his hammock and went outside the hut to catch some of the gleaming insect-lamps. In order not to make a noise he crept carefully to the glen beneath a great tree on the bank of a stream, where he had noticed numbers of the *cucuyos* playing, and soon was busy making captures.

He had no thought of danger, for the Indians had told him, as well as they were able, that the forest contained no creatures harmful to man. But they had forgotten to mention one of the greatest dangers to travelers in the forest, because, probably, they had no idea that it would be encountered. As Pablo was absorbed in his pastime, chasing the fire-beetles through the ferns and grasses, unmindful of the darkness, or the tangled vegetation that every now and then tripped him up, he suddenly encountered the one thing that he should have been warned against. He was darting through a thicket near the trunk of a great, liana-hung tree, when he felt something catch across his throat. It was cold and slimy, and caused a singularly creeping feeling in the parts with which it came in contact. But Pablo, all unconscious of the forest terror, and thinking the thing was merely a liana, or long bush-

rope, that had become entangled in his path, put up his hand to draw it to one side. Then he suddenly became aware that the thing was living, for the coil about his throat quickly contracted until he was nearly choked. He had just time and strength enough to cry out in terror as loud as his voice could carry, when the cold, creeping coil constricted his throat so forcibly that he could hardly draw his breath. Then he felt other coils about his body, his legs and arms, and knew that he had fallen into the grasp of some forest monster of which he had never heard. In the darkness, illumined as it was only by the fitful gleams of the fire-beetles, poor Pablo was completely at the mercy of this monster, for his strength was failing, his breath coming and going in gasps, his whole frame felt benumbed, and he knew his end was near. And all this time, as the cruel coils slowly but surely tightened about the hapless boy, no sound was uttered by the monster that was exerting this force to strangle out the life of its helpless victim. Pablo felt that his time had come, and breathing a prayer to his Maker he sank into insensibility.

The cry uttered by the boy had reached the hut, outside which lay the Indians who were sleeping with the proverbial alertness of their race. The

Indian boy from the Bahamas, was on his feet as soon as he heard the cry, and listening intently for its repetition. Hearing no other noise, he caught a few *cucuyos* and threw them into the hut, where they gave out light enough for him to see that one of the boys was absent. Catching a few more of the fire-beetles, he used them as torches to illumine the ground and thus was able to scan the trail taken by Pablo in his wanderings. He followed this trail through the thickets until he came to the glen where Pablo had caught his first *cucuyos*, and then traced him further by the trail of crushed twigs and ferns he had left behind. Suddenly he caught sight of the boy, suspended from a branch of a big tree by what appeared to be a liana loop more than three inches in thickness. But the Indian knew at sight that was no liana-loop, but the body of a gigantic *boa constrictor*, and at once darted back to the hut for help. Arrived there, he awoke Adolfo, who seized his sword and followed the Indian boy without a word, when he learned that Pablo was absent and in danger.

The Bahama boy led the way and they soon came to the spot where hung poor Pablo, motionless and apparently lifeless, in the dreadful loop of the *boa constrictor*. The Indian had found and taken a cut-

lass belonging to one of the party, and motioning Adolfo to watch for the great boa's head and if possible sever it by a cut across the neck, he himself crept up cautiously and feeling for the loop in the darkness, sank the cutlass-blade deep in the quivering flesh of the serpent. This of course caused it to relax its hold on Pablo, who after being involved in the serpent's terrible writhings, slipped from its grasp and fell to the ground. As he did so the boa darted out its head and fixing its sparkling eyes upon Adolfo made a thrust at him with mouth wide open and white fangs gleaming. It was a conspicuous mark in the darkness, with the diamond-glittering eyes and ivory-white fangs, so Adolfo cut across the neck with his sword and severed it completely. That finished his snakeship, so Adolfo thought, and he then turned his attention to Pablo, who lay where he fell, and from whom the breath of life seemed to have fled entirely.

Aided by the Indian, Adolfo lifted his friend, and together they carried him to the hut, where water was dashed into his face and his arms moved up and down to induce breathing, if possible. It was a long time, Adolfo thought in his anxiety, before Pablo finally drew a fluttering breath, then followed

it by another stronger; but at last he seemed altogether recovered, and though faint and bruised found himself little the worse for his encounter, except for the horror of it. The two boys embraced each other without a word, and though they said nothing, in their hearts they were thankful that the misadventure had had no worse ending. Both the Indians signified by signs that Pablo had experienced something from which few people ever escaped, for the great boa constrictor of the Cuban forests was the one thing they feared above all others.

In the morning, early, after sitting up the remainder of the night, unable to sleep as they were from the excitement, the boys went out to view the serpent that had caused so much trouble, and found the monster still with life in its body, though unable to move. It was soon despatched for good, and found to measure fourteen feet in length. The Indians skinned it for Pablo, who desired to preserve some memento of his wonderful escape, and this trophy was taken back to the vessels on the homeward journey.

On the second day the party marched from morning until the sun had passed the meridian, all the way through the dense forest, and an hour or so

after noon reached the borders of a clearing in which stood about a hundred huts of the kind seen by the Spaniards in the Bahamas. At sight of them the Cuban Indian leaped into the air and said; “*Cacique, cacique,*”—which the Bahaman interpreted as meaning “chief” or king, and told the boys that was the settlement they were seeking. They must have looked extremely disappointed, for he added there was no larger village in the land, as this cacique was the most powerful monarch ever known. But the “great cacique” was naked, like all the rest of the Indians encountered, and his “palace” was merely a hut a little larger than the others; though the chief was very courtly and ceremonious, giving his guests stools to sit on, while he and his men squatted around upon their haunches on the ground. The linguist of the party tried him in four languages, Spanish, Hebrew, Chaldaic, and Arabic, but not one of them did the cacique understand, so they had to fall back upon the young Lucayan from the Bahamas, who expatiated in flowery speech upon the great fleet awaiting them at the coast and the importance of the embassy sent over to America by the sovereigns of a far country. At least, that is what it is thought he said; but the truth will probably never be known, for the only

people who understood the Lucayan were the Cuban Indians. They were greatly impressed, however, with the speech, and promised to pay tribute to the distant king if there was anything there that he desired; but sad to relate, the resources of the country were very limited, consisting of a few vegetables, among which was the potato, then seen by Europeans for the first time, and the fruits of the tropics. These fruits the chief set out before his guests, giving them also delicious water to drink from the cocoanut, and then sent for dried leaves of the tobacco, which his servants rolled into cigarettes enclosed in corn husks and passed around, accompanied by firebrands to light them with.

Noting that the natives seemed to derive great comfort from inhaling the smoke of the *tabaco*, Adolfo thought he too would try a whiff of the "weed" and signed for an attendant to bring him one of the little rolls, which he lighted and smoked up to the end, Pablo looking on, meanwhile, with admiration in his eyes, but not daring to venture the experiment. Suddenly, Adolfo turned very pale and looked distressed, much to Pablo's concern, who thought he might have been poisoned. And when his friend darted out of the hut he followed closely after him, finding him in great agony and

unable for a while to reply to his questions as to his sudden indisposition. The Lucayan assured him that the distress would soon be over and was not lasting; and sure enough, in a short while Adolfo recovered sufficiently to confirm this statement; but he could not be induced to take another whiff of tobacco on that trip.

To be brief, the things discovered on that expedition were not of great importance, for the strangest articles seen were some queer stools made of wood in the shape of an iguana or alligator, with tails turned up and eyes of gold. The precious metal was not found in any quantity, but the natives told them it was abundant in *Bohio*, a country four days' journey to the south, and with this information the travelers returned to the coast and to the fleet.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE DISCOVERY OF HAITI, OR HISPANIOLA.

THE Indian cacique and his people had great fields of maize or Indian corn, peppers, yucca and tobacco; but of gold and precious spices the travelers found few traces in Cuba. There is gold in the island, and since it was settled, some twenty years after its discovery, Cuba has also been successfully mined for copper and magnetic iron ore. But it was gold that Columbus desired, gold in large quantities, for the impression the sight of it would make upon his sovereigns and its effect on his own fortunes. Gold was the watchword, the key-note, of this first voyage to the New World, and also of all subsequent expeditions fitted out by the Spaniards. In pursuit of it the cruel Spaniards murdered thousands, some historians say millions, of innocent aborigines, and committed barbarities that made their name a byword for cruelty through succeeding centuries. Though Columbus never returned to the

scene of his first exploits in the Bahamas, many *conquistadores*, or conquerors, followed in his wake, and in a comparatively short time the islands were depopulated, owing to the fact that the Lucayans were kidnapped and taken to Haiti to wear their lives out in the mines.

A story is told of a shrewd old cacique in Cuba who, some twenty years after Columbus was there, was hounded by the Spaniards for the gold that was supposed to be in his country. He had learned from the Indians of Haiti, or Hispaniola, of the cruelties committed by the foreigners in their search for gold, and so he called his people together and harangued them on the necessity for concealing every evidence of the precious metal in their section. "The Spaniards," he told them, "do all their fiendish deeds for the sake of a great lord whom they serve, and whom I will show you. And this is that lord," he exclaimed, holding up a handful of gold. "Our scouts tell me they are now coming here to seek him, therefore let us dance before him and make sacrifice, in order that he may be propitiated; then cast him from you, and by no means have a grain of this gold in your possession, for even if it were inside you, the men of blood would find it out and cut you open for the sake of it."

The cacique prophesied truly, for it was not long before he and his people were massacred, for the sake of the gold they were supposed to conceal, and the chieftain himself was burned at the stake. Columbus may not have committed such atrocities as those who came after him; but he "set the pace" for the cruel adventurers to follow, and soon they had all but exterminated the natives of every island in the West Indies.

There are no Indians of pure blood in Cuba now, for they were killed out many, many years ago, by means of atrocities as great as those perpetrated by the Spaniards in modern times, during the war of independence waged by Cubans, and which was only brought to an end by the intervention of the United States, in 1898. During four hundred years the Spaniards held possession of this island discovered by Columbus in 1492, but they exterminated the million or more of natives who once owned it, in the first fifty years of their rule.

If you should visit the port of Baracoa to-day you would find it at the foot of a most beautiful mountain called by the Indians *Yunque*, or the Anvil, from its curious shape. This mountain seemed so attractive that Adolfo and Pablo begged for permission to explore it, or rather the forests

around its sides, which he reluctantly accorded, with many a caution not to get into trouble. So they set forth, performing the first part of the journey in a canoe up a lovely stream o'erhung with tropical trees and vines spangled with brilliant flowers. Parrots chattered in the tree-tops and alligators sunned themselves on the banks; but the boys stopped for none of these things, being intent upon visiting the anvil-shaped mountain. But their intention was never carried out, for soon after landing they encountered a herd of those small but pugnacious animals called peccaries, which as you know are a sort of wild hog peculiar to the tropical forests of South America and the West Indies. They might have avoided them, as the peccaries were peacefully feeding beneath some great oak trees with wide-spreading branches; but Adolfo, who carried an arquebuse, thought it would be a good thing to get some wild pork as a change of diet aboard ship, and so singling out the leader of the herd, a big "tusker" of vicious aspect, he fired. The old peccary promptly fell over on the ground to all appearances lifeless, but the remainder of the herd, instead of turning tail and running away, as the boys fully expected they would do, after a moment's hesitation, in which they seemed more

surprised than afraid, all charged in the direction of the young huntsmen.

Fortunately for them, Juan the Lucayan, or Bahaman, was with them, and he shouted out "Climb a tree ! climb a tree !" setting them the example by leaping into the branches of the nearest oak and swinging himself well above the ground. The boys did not quite understand Juan's language, but they did his motions, and made all haste to follow after his example. They grasped the limbs of a low-spreading oak tree and swung themselves up into it as promptly as they could; but not before the new leader of the herd had reached the spot and with his tusks ripped up the sole of Adolfo's right boot. It was a narrow escape; but after they were securely perched in the tree out of reach of the pigs, they knew not what to do, as Juan the Lucayan told them the peccaries would keep watch there until driven away by hunger, perhaps for several days. So long as his ammunition lasted, Adolfo loaded and fired off the arquebuse, until the ground was strewn with the slain peccaries; but this seemed to have no effect upon the survivors, who were apparently all the more determined to stay there until their enemies were compelled to descend. It was well for the boys that the noise

of the shooting reached the vessels and aroused the suspicions of the Admiral, who promptly sent out half a dozen arquebusiers to the rescue. Approaching cautiously, the veterans put the herd to flight, after a general discharge of their firearms, and released the boys. They were laughed at by the Admiral for their adventure; but on the whole did not regret it, as for several days after they and all the rest of the fleet's company enjoyed the unwonted luxury of sweet and toothsome meat at their meals, afforded by the pigs they and the arquebusiers had shot.

Although again disappointed in his search for some signs of a civilized empire, Columbus did not give it up for many years, making in all four voyages to America for the purpose. When, therefore, his envoys brought back to the fleet their reports of a land of gold to the southward, vouched for by the cacique and confirmed by other Indians, he set sail in that direction. First, though, he had to sail along the north coast of Cuba, in order to get around it, and on the way he discovered more magnificent harbors, like that of Baracoa, for instance, of which he was so enamored that he could not write enough in its praise. He makes particular mention of a great, table-topped mountain at this

port, which is a noted landmark for sailors on the north coast of Cuba, and is still known by its native name of Yunque.

Up to the time of leaving the bay of Baracoa, which is near the east end of Cuba, the vessels of the fleet had held together; but after rounding Cape Maysi, its extreme eastern end, the "Pinta," commanded by Martin Alonzo Pinzon, sailed off on its own account. As she was about to disappear in the distance Columbus set the signal for return; but as the vessel was the best sailer in the fleet, and as her commander seemed to desire a free hand at exploring all by himself, she was soon lost to sight. This defection left Columbus with only the "Santa Maria" and the little caravel the "Niña," with which to continue the search for Bohio, land of gold.

The departure of Captain Pinzon was a disagreeable surprise to Columbus, though the former's intention was not unknown to Adolfo, to whom Martin Alonzo had confided it the day before. "Here am I," he had complained to Adolfo, when the two were ashore together at Baracoa, "here am I, a veteran voyager of experience, holding the highest rank in the merchant maritime of my country, compelled to obey the command and follow the whims

of a foreign adventurer who merely got the favor of our sovereigns by chance. He has been now for more than five weeks searching for gold and spices, when he should have made all sail for the southern countries. I for one am not going to stand it longer, and you may tell him so if you like.”

Adolfo tried to soothe the wounded vanity of the veteran sea-dog, but being himself aware of the high services he had already rendered in fitting out the expedition and in navigating the ocean, as well as the inferior talents of the Admiral in this direction, he could say but little. He did urge the disgruntled Captain to stand by the fleet, holding up to him the danger he would run of incurring the King's displeasure and its effect upon his fortunes on their return to Spain. And in fact, it turned out as Adolfo had predicted, for, though Captain Martin Alonzo's services had been more important to the success of the voyage than those of any other, on the return to Palos he was not only ignored, but openly slighted by Columbus and the King; soon after, it is said, dying of a broken heart. Adolfo did not consider it his duty to inform Columbus of the proposed departure of Captain Pinzon, reasoning that he might thereby incur the ill-will of the sailors, without rendering any adequate service to the Admiral. So

he merely confided his secret to Pablo, who agreed with him that no good would come of making it known to others.

It was with great trepidation that the crews of the two small vessels took departure from Cape Maysi and steered boldly out into the channel which separates Cuba and the island of Haiti. They did not know then, what was later revealed, that this stretch of open water was a channel, but feared it might be part of the open ocean. But they had not sailed many hours before the dim outlines of another mountainous land were traced on the horizon, rising higher and higher, and developing a grandeur not yet seen in the islands already visited. As the blue clouds resolved themselves into lofty mountains, their slopes clothed in vivid green, and near approach showed golden-sanded bays between high headlands and with palm trees fringing the shores, the natives of Cuba, who had been brought along by Columbus, leaped up and down, shouting "*Bohio*," and "*Babeque*," these being the names by which they knew the island. The Indians later found living there called it *Ha-i-ti*, or the lofty country, from the many mountains it contained, and Columbus named it Hispaniola.

After taking refuge from a storm under the lee of an island which Columbus called Tortuga, from its shape, resembling as he fancied a great sea turtle, and which was later a rendezvous for the famed buccaneers, the "Santa Maria" and "Niña" stood across the narrow channel for the greater island. They first entered a fine, natural harbor, completely land-locked, named by the Admiral San Nicolas, and by which name it is still known. Then sailing along the coast they came to a harbor so beautiful that Columbus bestowed upon it, or rather upon the valley running down to it, the appellation of *Val de Paraiso*, or Vale of Paradise. It was on the sixth of December that the land of Babeque was sighted, but nearly a week passed before the Spaniards discovered any inhabitants, as they had probably fled to the mountains on the arrival of the vessels off their shores. Signal smokes by day and fires by night, proclaimed their presence in the mountains, and Columbus sent in a party from Val de Paraiso (which is supposed to have been the valley at the mouth of which the present city of Port de Paix is situated), and by this means some natives were captured. Owing to the fact that the three boys were now fairly proficient in the Indian language, they were sent on this short

expedition, as they were also in Cuba, for the same reason. Along with them went little Julia, as the Indian child was called who was taken at San Salvador, and she was instrumental in putting them in communication with the natives. She was now clad in a bright-colored dress, which though scanty was sufficient to cover her nakedness, and had around her neck a large string of glass beads, of which she was very proud indeed. Marching along in advance of the men and boys who composed the little party, she was observed by an Indian woman concealed in the woods, and who was attracted by her gaudy garments and bright ornaments. The woman's vanity was the means of causing her capture, for coming out from her place of concealment to observe the strange things worn by the little maiden, she was staring at them as if transfixed when the others of the party came up and surrounded her. At first she was terrified beyond measure and resisted strongly. As she was quite naked and as slippery as an eel, it was a difficult matter for her captors to hold her and she might have escaped but for the child, who, in response to a suggestion from her brother, held out a string of beads. These caught the young woman's eye at once and she eagerly accepted them as a peace offer-

ing, at the same time asking where they came from and if she would receive some like them if she went with the strangers. The child replied that they were given her by a great man who had arrived in a big *canoa* from Heaven and that he had a ship-load of just such beautiful presents for those who were kind to him and his companions. Then the Indian woman went along very willingly with her new friends, and when she reached the ship, Columbus, delighted to find a native of the island at last, loaded her with beads and finery, in exchange for which she gave him a great nugget of gold that hung from one of her ears.

She was a very pretty young woman, and though she had never in her life before worn any clothes except a girdle of grass around her waist, she was modest and well behaved. Taking a great fancy to little Julia, she told her that she lived with her husband in a big town far inland, and that if she might be permitted to go there she would bring back with her a multitude of her friends and neighbors to trade with the fleet. In response to the Admiral's questions, which were translated to her by the child, she said that while there was very little gold in her part of the island, only three days' sail to the westward there lived a powerful cacique

who had great stores of it, and as he was a rich and generous chieftain she knew he would gladly give the Spaniards all they wanted. Then she went away in search of her people, and true to her promise returned two days later with a great number of Indians, estimated at above two thousand, who advanced singing and dancing, and who took turns in carrying the woman on their shoulders, as if she were a queen. She was, in truth, the first of her people to be clad in a gown and to wear strings of beads around her neck, so she was looked up to by all the rest; though, such was the perfect disposition of these charming natives, they did not regard her with envy, but manifested every token of pleasure at her good fortune. They brought all the gold they could find, and such as had no gold brought tame parrots, cassava bread, dried fish, edible roots, and tropical fruits like the banana and pine-apple.

The place had been well named by Columbus the Vale of Paradise, for its inhabitants lived in the state of our first parents before they were driven out of Eden, perfectly happy, contented, at peace with all mankind, and like them needed neither clothing nor deception to cover themselves or cloak their actions, which were open and innocent, wholly with-

out guile. With the coming of the Spaniards, only, was the Vale of Paradise invaded by the demons of evil, and its inhabitants made to feel the penalties of sin.

CHAPTER XV.

HOW THE FLAG-SHIP WAS WRECKED.

BEAUTIFUL as was the Vale of Paradise, Columbus could not stay there longer than a day and a night, for a message reached him here that the great cacique, Guacanagari, who lived farther along the coast, and who ruled the region of gold, was awaiting his coming. So he set sail, and next day entered a bay that is now known as Acul, where the prospect was as lovely as in the other place, and of which he wrote in his first letter to Spain, "I have now been at sea twenty-three years, and have seen the East and the West; but in all these parts I have never witnessed so much of perfection as in this."

He did not stop to explore the country, for as the boats landed on the beach and the Admiral stepped ashore he found a native chief with a magnificent retinue already there. "It is the little king," said the Indian woman captured the day before, "and

he comes to bring gold to the strangers.” The “little king” reclined in a litter borne on the shoulders of his subjects, two hundred of whom were with him, and each one had a bit of gold to exchange for the wonderful objects the Spaniards had brought. They eagerly gave away nuggets of shining gold for small strings of glass beads and cascabels which had cost Columbus next to nothing, so that he was glad to remain in this harbor several days engaged in such lucrative trade. Contrary winds also detained the fleet, and it was not until the morning of the twenty-fourth of December that the vessels got away.

A messenger had arrived from the cacique, Guacanagari, the evening before, who sent a present to Columbus, consisting of a golden mask, as grotesque as it was valuable, showing that the Indians had spoken truly when they said the rich mines were in this native king's dominions. But the winds were light and baffling, and night fell before the king's capital was sighted. Christmas Eve of 1492 found the “Santa Maria” and the “Niña” struggling with a light but adverse wind and a contrary current; though this latter was not suspected until it was too late to save the flag-ship, which was carried against a hidden reef.

As the night was calm and the weather pleasant, Columbus had yielded to fatigue and had gone below to sleep. He recommended the boys to follow his example, but they chose to stay on deck awhile to enjoy the beauty of the night, to watch the dusky mountains gliding slowly by and inhale the fragrance of the breezes from off shore. It had been well for at least one of the boys if they had followed the Admiral's advice, as the sequel soon will show. While Juan the Lucayan and his sister curled up beneath the rail and went to sleep, Pablo and Adolfo sat on the castle deck and conversed about the strange sights they had witnessed. Then the conversation drifted to other things and at last turned upon the Admiral.

“I like him more and more,” said Pablo; “but do you know, though he is very kind to me now, at first he seemed to dislike me much. The first week we were at sea he hardly spoke to me without showing his displeasure.”

“Yes, I remember,” said Adolfo with a light laugh; “but if he disliked you, he appeared to have a stronger feeling against me. In fact, though he calls me “son” and treats me with great respect, he distrusts me yet, I am sure. It is because he thinks I am here to spy upon his movements,

I suppose, and who can blame him for feeling distrustful? But since the night when we stood watch and ward on deck,—that night he was in danger, you remember,—he has softened towards us and I really think he regards us as about the only friends he has in the fleet.”

“So it seems to me,” answered Pablo simply; “and I hope the time will come when we may prove it, even with our lives. I would lay my life down at once if thereby he could be benefited. But what can I do, only a cabin boy, to serve the interests of the Admiral and my king and queen?”

“You can do much, you have already proved that,” answered Adolfo putting an arm around Pablo’s shoulders and drawing him nearer. But hist, here comes the helmsman, seemingly to speak with one of us.”

“Your pardon, masters,” said the sailor referred to, approaching with his lumbering gait. “But now that the Admiral has gone below and all the crew are asleep, it struck me, as you both seem so wakeful, that you might be willing to do a fellow a good turn and take the helm, while I, too, get a little rest. Faith, masters, I haven’t had a respite from work for more than a week, and my eyes are heavy with sleep. You can steer, my

boy” said the sailor addressing Pablo directly, “for I have seen you do it well.”

“Yes, I can steer, and would be glad to help you out,” answered Pablo, hesitatingly. “But I remember the Admiral especially forbade any but the pilots to handle the helm.”

“Oh, that was while we were at sea, no land in sight and the winds and waves were boisterous. Now things are different, little man, for the night is clear as a bell, there is little wind, and all you have to do is to keep her on a course even with the shore, which you can plainly see abeam.”

“Well, I will try, Antonio. Of course I can steer; but I recall what the Admiral said, and if he knew that all the others were asleep and I only at the helm, he might be angry. Still, as a neighbor of mine, I would like to help thee, Antonio. You will not sleep long, will you, neighbor?”

“Only a wink, just a sweet little cat-nap, to get the sticks out of my eyes. There you are, God bless you, Pablo. Keep her sails from shivering, that’s all you can do with this faint breeze. But if a wind springs up kick me at once, for I will turn in right here on the deck. You, Señor,” —addressing Adolfo—“will help the boy keep watch, will you not?”

“ Yes, of course, my man; but let me tell you, I think this is highly irregular. Only, we know you sailors have been kept awake for weeks, and you as a seaman say there is positively no danger ? ”

“ Not a bit. Heaven save us, master, do you think I would risk the flag-ship, here in this wild waste of waters, far from home, and I, too, a man with a family, a wife and children waiting my return at Palos ? No, the saints forbid. The sea is still as a pond, and the sky without a cloud. God rest you, gentlemen. I’m dead for want of sleep.”

So saying, the steersman curled up on deck at their feet and was asleep almost as soon as the words were out of his mouth. Pablo took the helm, doubtfully; not because he had any mistrust of his abilities as a seaman, for he “knew all the ropes” and was perfectly at home on shipboard; but on account of the act being directly contrary to the Admiral’s orders. Still, his heart was soft, and if an hour at the helm would relieve his neighbor he was ready to give it and take the consequences.

Ah, those consequences! They changed the course of Pablo’s life, they changed the plans Columbus had conceived, and they brought disaster to the entire company in the little fleet! But Pablo

was innocent, and must be held blameless for what happened, acting as he did from the best of motives. It was a pretty sight: this man in miniature clinging to the tiller, casting an eye aloft now and then like an old sailor, his chubby cheeks red with suppressed excitement. He enjoyed the sensation of being the only one in charge of the flag-ship, and his heart swelled with happiness, perhaps with importance, at the thought of being able to render a service to the steersman and the Admiral. When he reached home again he could tell his boy friends of the Christmas Eve, on the coast of the strange country, when he alone of all the crew was intrusted with the great responsibility of guiding the "Santa Maria."

"Dear old 'Santa Maria,'" he whispered to Adolfo. "She has carried us well, hasn't she? She hasn't opened a seam or broken a rope in all the voyage. I love her, I love her, as the only home I have had since my dear mother died. But, Adolfo, do you not think this luck of ours has been too good to last? This calm sea is the kind, the old sailors say, in which the monsters of the deep and the mermaids appear. Look over the rail, Adolfo, and tell me if anything strange is in sight. I feel all shaky and queer, Adolfo."

“ It is the importance of your trust, dear Pablo,” answered Adolfo with a nervous laugh. “ But truth to tell, I feel that way myself. Still, what can happen to us on the eve of *Noche Buena*, when the Christ Child first appeared on earth ? Think how we would be celebrating this night at home, dear Pablo ; and here we are, sailing through summer seas, in a part of the world our countrymen never saw or heard of before. Yes, I will look over the rail ; but there is nothing in sight, only the smooth surface of the water, and the shining wake left by the keel. The water is a-gleam as if filled with fire, Pablo, and I see fishes down beneath the surface, darting about like blue and silver flames.”

“ But do you see no mermaids or mermen, Adolfo ? This is the place we ought to see them, the Admiral said, not long ago. And hark, what is that noise ? It sounds like the roaring of a lion, or some great monster, Adolfo.”

“ I do hear the roaring, Pablo ; but perhaps it is the surf beating on the shore. Still, had we not better wake Antonio ? I fear me, Pablo ; not for the monsters of the deep, but that something dire might happen to us for disobeying the orders of the Admiral.”

“I almost think we had better wake him, Adolfo; but the poor man is, as he says, dead from want of sleep. Ah, how my heart beats! I never felt this way before. Is it fear, thinkest thou, Adolfo?”

“No, no, I do not think thee capable of fear, dear Pablo; but it is the weight of the trust imposed upon thee, and perhaps it may be doubt as to what the Admiral might think of what we are doing. But, really, Pablo, the noise gets louder and nearer. I will run to the forepeak and take a look ahead. Perchance the watchman, too, has fallen asleep, and who knows what may be ahead of us?”

Meanwhile, the roaring had increased, and it was no longer directly ahead of the vessel, but seemingly on both sides. The water, too, was white with foam, as though torn by sudden gusts of wind. Adolfo came running back shouting, “Breakers! Pablo, breakers ahead! Wake Antonio. Call the Admiral. The waves are raging like wild wolves, right ahead of the ship!”

A deeper voice now broke in with: “What is this? My helmsman asleep and a boy at the helm? Get up, dog,” exclaimed the Admiral, who had heard the tumult and hastily darted on deck, to find his flag-ship unmanageable, right in the midst of

reefs on either side. "Get up, you cur!" he shouted angrily to the helmsman, planting a kick at the same time that sent the poor man sprawling. "This is how you obey orders, is it? Where's the captain, the crew? What, all asleep, and only two boys on deck? Saints preserve us, the ship is lost! All hands on deck, the ship is sinking!"

The recreant captain came hurrying up, rubbing his eyes, followed by the crew, all apparently half asleep and began fumbling with the ropes, their first thought being of launching a boat in which to escape.

By this time the vessel was well up on the reef, and poor Pablo clinging with all his strength to the helm, was dashed this way and that, as the rudder repeatedly struck upon the rocks. The Santa Maria had been carried by the swift and treacherous currents that run along the coast, right into a depression of a reef and was forced firmly against the sharp-pointed coral prongs. Columbus came to Pablo's assistance, but finding the rudder was no longer of use, there being no steering way, he dropped the helm and shouted, as he darted amongst the sleepy crew: "Get out a boat and carry an anchor astern! Lively, now, our only hope is to ward her off the reef!"

The captain and a body of the crew jumped into the long-boat, as if to comply with the Admiral's orders; but instead of taking out the anchor, they immediately rowed off in the direction of the "Niña," which was farther inshore, and left the rest of the ship's company to their fate.

"Miserable whelps!" ejaculated Columbus, as he saw how they had deserted them; "they shall suffer for this later. There is now no escape, for the current has set the ship broadside to the reef and the water is pouring through her seams! Here, men; those of you that are left! Cut away the mainmast! Get the axes out, and be quick about it! Ah, *Dios!* There she goes careening, broadside to the breakers. We are lost! lost! and all for the lack of a man to command that craven crew!"

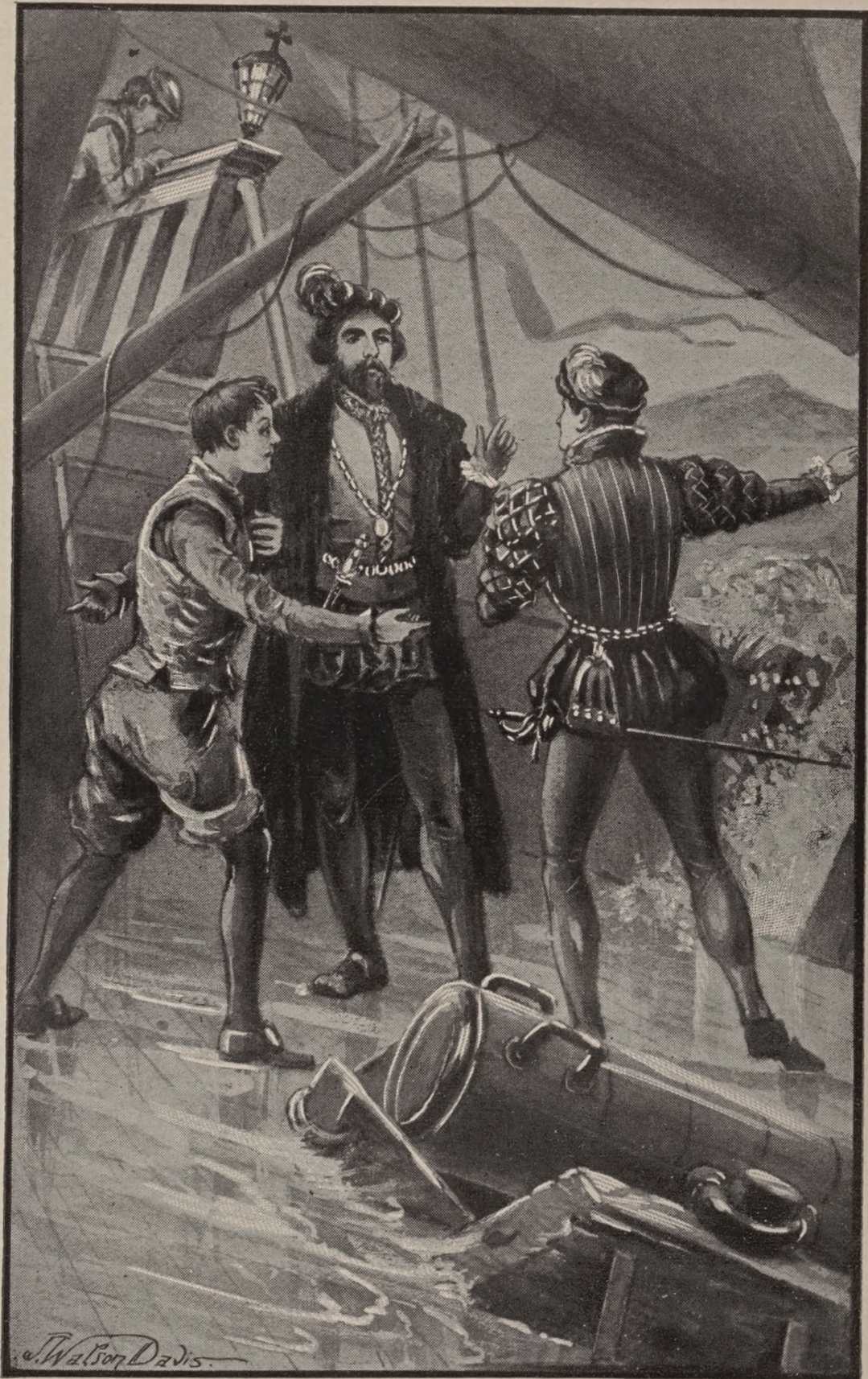
CHAPTER XVI.

AN INDIAN KING TO THE RESCUE.

THE breakers were banging against the vessel's sides, opening the seams and splintering the bulwark. When the mainmast went overboard, the "Santa Maria" righted a little, but still was heeled over to a dangerous extent, and the Admiral was yet fearful for the lives of those aboard of her. In the misty light that hung over the sea he saw a great prong of coral jutting from a ledge astern, and after viewing it critically said, as if to himself, "Me-thinks if we could get a rope to that rock in the sea we might right her up a little. But there is no boat, those recreants having deserted me."

Pablo and Adolfo were standing near and overheard him, and the latter said: "Your Excellency, there is no boat aboard, but still a rope can be carried thither, so it seems to me."

"How, lad?" asked Columbus quickly.



“But I can swim, too, your Excellency!” exclaimed Pablo, eagerly.
“Oh, Señor, allow me to make the attempt. I can swim like a fish.”—
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“Well, your Excellency, I can swim, and I will gladly carry it.”

“No, no,” replied the Admiral. “It would not do. Your life is too precious to me, son. I am involved in difficulties enough already, without being asked, when I return—if ever I do—what I have done with an Infante of Portugal. No, no, it cannot be.”

“But I can swim, too, your Excellency,” exclaimed Pablo, eagerly. “Oh, Señor, allow me to make the attempt. I can swim like a fish.”

Columbus glanced at the boy with interest, pity and doubt mingled in his looks. He saw that Pablo was anxious to atone in part for the misfortune he had inadvertently caused, and so he said: “Thinkest thou so, son Pablo? My sooth, I’ve a mind to let thee try it. Yet thy life is as valuable to me as my own, my boy.”

“It is only a boy’s life,” answered Pablo, “and at this time you cannot spare a man from the crew. Give me a rope, and I will try.”

“No, Señor, let me go,” interposed Adolfo. “I am older and stronger than Pablo, and I was the one who suggested it, too, your Excellency.”

“Pablo will go,” said Columbus decidedly. “It is only a short stretch of smooth water, and per-

chance there be no dangers intervening. But fasten this line to thy waist, son, and if anything happen we will haul thee in again."

Pablo was already stripped for the swim, and as soon as he had fastened the line about his waist he sprang to the rail and dropped into the sea. He swam with strong, vigorous stroke, and Columbus was relieved when he noted how at home he was in the water. "God grant he may return safely to the ship," he murmured. "Of a truth, it was not his fault my gallant 'Santa Maria' was lost. It was the fault of the captain and the helmsman, and they shall suffer for it!"

It took but a few minutes for the boy to gain the ledge where the rock protruded well above the water, and though the sharp coral gashed his hands and feet severely, he balanced himself upon it while he drew in the line, then the rope which was fastened to it, and made the latter secure. He then cast himself into the water and began his swim back to the ship. But what was that dark object cleaving the water just behind the boy,—a triangular fin, which the watchers aboard the vessel had not noted previously? "It is a shark!" shouted Columbus, "haste thee, Pablo, haste! Oh for a boat,

an arquebuse,—something to arrest the progress of that sea monster! ”

Adolfo also had seen the object pursuing the boy, but he uttered no sound as he divested himself of his clothing, seized his rapier, balanced himself on the rail, then plunged into the sea. He was a more vigorous swimmer than his friend, and a few moments only elapsed before they met in mid-channel. But in that interval the shark had caught up with the boy and was about turning on his side, with mouth agape, to seize him by the leg. Pablo said not a word, but glancing over his shoulder he saw the monster at his side and quickly dove beneath the surface of the water. The shark was for the instant baffled, as it snapped viciously at the empty air, and before it could again catch up with its prey Adolfo was taking a hand in the fight. Keeping his head well above the water, he took in the scene in one swift glance, then diving suddenly he came up beneath the shark and drove his blade into its body. He tried to wrench the rapier away, in order to give another blow, but in its struggles the shark tore it from his hand and he was left defenseless. Half strangled from the sea water, Adolfo regained the surface and struck out for the ship, following close after Pablo, and keeping be-

tween him and the wounded shark. He apprehended no further attack from the wounded fish, but he knew that the blood that tinged the water would attract others of its kind, and that there was no time to be lost.

The rail of the "Santa Maria" was lined with men, several of whom cast nooses down to the swimmers as they reached the vessel, and they were quickly withdrawn from the water. But not before a fresh arrival on the scene, a shark even larger than the first, had swam swiftly and close up to them, and as they were suspended in mid-air made a leap that only barely missed them both.

After being pulled over the rail and laid out on the deck, the boys soon recovered from their adventure and were able to sit up and look around. Scant time was there for congratulations, as the crew tightened up the rope to right the vessel; but Columbus paused long enough to draw them within his arms in a hearty embrace, all wet and dripping as they were, and to express his admiration of their prowess.

"You are heroes, both," he said with fervor, "and you shall be brought before the King and Queen, when we return, and receive the honors due you for this action. As for thee, son Pablo, words

of mine cannot express my admiration. Thou wert in no fault by taking the helm on request, nor for stranding my flag-ship; and if thou wert, thou hast amply atoned for all. I now absolve thee in advance, dear boy, and lay not up in thy heart any feeling that thou hast been remiss."

Pablo beamed with pleasure, and indeed a load was lifted from his heart, as he said: "Your Excellency is kind and just. I knew you would not blame me. But your thanks are due Adolfo, who risked his life to rescue me, Señor. But for him I might not have reached the ship."

"And sooth, thou wouldst not," exclaimed Columbus. "But Adolfo has his reward, I am sure, in having saved thy life."

"That I have," said the young Prince quickly. "And, your Excellency, in so doing I was only repaying a debt of the kind, for at the beginning of our acquaintance Pablo saved my life; so we are quite even."

"Ha, is that so? Thou must tell me about it, later. Meanwhile, the ship is leaking like a sieve, and we must haste to get away, if so be that is possible. Hist, I hear the sound of oars! A boat is approaching. Yes, it is from the 'Niña,' and behind it come the base ingrates who deserted in my

long-boat. What excuse will they have, what can they say? Verily, nothing in extenuation of such conduct. But this is no time for accusations. I must bide my day, which will surely come after we have made the home voyage to Spain. Meanwhile, I must temporize with the scoundrels, for surely they are all against me and troubles are thick upon me now.”

It was about midnight when the “Santa Maria” was forced upon the reef by the swift sea-currents, and soon after dawn she was lying a deserted hulk, stripped of all her rigging, anchors,—in fact, of everything portable, and with all her crew ashore. This had been accomplished so expeditiously by the assistance of the Indian cacique of whom Columbus was in search when the accident occurred, and who, when notified of the wreck, sent out his men to render all the aid that lay in their power. In the first boat that came to his rescue from the caravel, Columbus sent ashore two high dignitaries of the King’s household, who were along in official capacity, one Diego de Arana the chief judge of the armament, and Pedro Gutierrez, the King’s butler, to notify the cacique of his distress and implore his aid. By the Admiral’s calculations, they were not far from Guarico, the cacique’s capital, and so it proved,

for the emissaries quickly found the king, who swiftly summoned his men, and soon after dawn the wreckage of the "Santa Maria" had been accomplished.

Spurning the offers of the repentant captain who had so basely fled with his men, Columbus had ordered him ashore, himself standing by the ship and being the last to leave. Fortunately for him and his crew, the sea was smooth, except where the current broke its force upon the reefs, and no wind was stirring before the morning breeze came off from shore. Had it been otherwise, Columbus might have lost his life and the lives of his crew, as well as his ship. But the good "Santa Maria" the largest vessel of the little fleet, and also the staunchest, was a total wreck. The Admiral finally left her where she stranded, and with a sad heart sought the shore, as the morning sun sent its first rays over the mountain peaks of the beautiful island.

In the light of that Christmas morning of 1492, might have been seen the doleful spectacle of the once proud vessel, "Santa Maria," flag-ship of the fleet, and a short time before the temporary home of three-score sailors, lying broadside upon the coral reef, with the breakers pounding her to pieces, while the placid bay inside the reefs was alive with smaller

craft safely making their way to shore. There were the two boats of the flag-ship and the caravel, the "Niña," and besides them at least a hundred canoes manned by Indians and laden with wreckage of every description.

It might have been thought that these wild Indians, who had never before looked upon a white man, and in whose eyes the trinkets of trade brought by Columbus were so precious, would have availed themselves of the rare opportunity for plundering the vessel, or at all events of carrying off some of the valuable wreckage. But they were even more honest and dependable than the white people themselves, for instead of stealing any of the articles they carried ashore, they on the contrary saved every object for the owners, and when Columbus set foot on the strand at Guarico he found all his possessions either piled up in heaps awaiting him, or coming in the canoes. Not an article of any kind was lost, save only the vessel itself, and even the heavy guns and anchors were taken from the wreck and carried ashore.

And then the reception given the shipwrecked mariners by King Guacanagari, who with tears in his eyes welcomed the Admiral to his capital, was truly regal and hospitable. He sent into the island

for everything in the way of eatables with which his limited cuisine was acquainted, and set his cooks at work to prepare a feast such as no white men had ever eaten in America before. Perhaps the readers of this story of adventures in connection with the first voyage would like to know just what the Indian king served up for the Spaniards at their first Christmas dinner in America, and the following is the menu, as nearly as it can be gleaned from the journal written at the time: In the first place, there was a hearty welcome, without which no feast is complete; for Guacanagari spared no pains to make his guests "at home."

The repast was spread on the ground, to be sure, for the Indians were unacquainted with the use of tables, and for plates they used great leaves from the palm and other tropical trees. After his guests were all squatted around on the ground, Guacanagari clapped his hands and a host of comely Indian girls appeared, each carrying a different sort of dish. One girl carried a dish of Indian corn, which Columbus had seen in Cuba, but had probably not tasted previously; another brought some manioc, boiled and roasted, while still another set down before the Admiral a dish called "cassareep" made from the manioc, and which the Spaniards called

olla podrida, or all-sorts, because it contained many kinds of meat preserved by the juice of the manioc. Various kinds of meats also were served, such as the "utia" or native hare, the "dumb dog," so called because it had never barked when alive. With their arrows the Indians had shot wild pigeons and doves, parrots and iguanas, which were stewed in an earthen pot, the flesh of the iguana being considered particularly fine. For drink they had the fermented juice of the wild palm, as well as water; and when the repast was over the Indian maidens brought the Spaniards water with which to wash their hands, and fragrant grass to dry them on. Then they rolled up innumerable cylinders of the herb they called *tabaco*, which the Indians smoked in a peculiar pipe with two stems which they inserted in their nostrils, inhaling the smoke with evident gusto; but the Spaniards refused to experiment with it, having in mind Adolfo's sad experience with tobacco when in Cuba.

It was truly a great feast, and Columbus wrote of it in his journal that it was the most varied and protracted he ever enjoyed.

CHAPTER XVII.

HOW COLUMBUS ASTONISHED THE NATIVES.

THE stranding of the flag-ship took place just ten weeks after land was first sighted at San Salvador, on the night before Christmas. The Spaniards were landed at Guarico, Guacanagari's capital, early on Christmas morning, and remained there until the fourth day of January, 1493, so that the day of the Nativity, as well as New Year's, was celebrated ashore in the strange country. Neither event had ever been commemorated in such fashion before, and the adventurers were carried away by the sentiment of the thing, and for a time almost forgot the hardships they had endured in admiring the many strange things they saw. The weather had been superb, all the while they were on the coasts of Cuba and Haiti, the country revealed to view as they coasted its shores the most beautiful they had ever beheld, and the people residing here, who came swimming out to the vessel, or paddling in their canoes, hollowed from logs of trees, the most

gracious and hospitable that ever welcomed sea-tossed mariners to the delights of a sun-kissed and fruitful land.

So they had sailed carelessly along, wafted by favoring breezes and caressed by gentle zephyrs, amid such glorious scenes and with such evidences of bounteous nature all about them that Columbus himself wrote to his sovereigns that it seemed indeed as if they had penetrated to the very heart of the terrestrial paradise. Wherever they went, along the coast of Haiti, unclothed but courteous natives entreated them to stay and share with them the delights of their country, offering them all they possessed if they would only tarry. But ahead of them was the conjectural land of gold, where, according to the savages, all the streams ran over golden sands; and this auriferous lure had led them on to destruction. But the hospitality of the natives was not changed by the disaster; on the contrary, it was increased, if that were possible. The king of the country, generous Guacanagari, seeing that there would not be room in the one remaining caravel for all the sailors to return to their native land, offered to provide homes for such as wished to remain behind, even if all should decide to do so. He at once gave orders for his men to build huts

enough to house them all, and so expeditiously was this work carried on that they were provided with shelter within twenty-four hours after they had reached the shore.

Taking with him the three boys, Adolfo, Pablo, and Juan, the Lucayan from the Bahamas (who was always accompanied by his sister), Columbus made the rounds in a tour of inspection. It had so fallen out by now that these four were about the only friends the Admiral had in the whole company, and in them alone he reposed the most implicit confidence. The King's officials grouped by themselves, the captains of the caravels held apart, sulking and gloomy, while the common sailors, now that shipwreck made their return seem more remote than ever, viewed the Admiral with a distrust bordering upon open mutiny.

“Friend Adolfo,” said Columbus, as they walked together beneath the golden fronds of the palms on shore, “this Indian king is the most hospitable man I ever encountered. He has not only offered me, as you know (being my interpreter), a residence in his country, with all the gold and precious stones it contains, but has promised to help me build a fort, within which to house such of our men as cannot return with us to Spain. It will be

impossible for us to carry all the crews in this one small caravel, and as the 'Pinta' has gone no one knows whither, we must probably leave at least half our number behind. Now, before we commence upon the fort which I shall build, I am going to give the king a feast aboard the 'Niña,' in return for his hospitalities of yesterday. I wish also to impress him with the strength of our resources, even though we are wrecked and seemingly helpless, and so shall order the captain to fire off the lombards and arquebuses, in the midst of the feast, in order to ascertain what effect it will have upon the Indians."

True to his word, when they had returned to the shore, Columbus ordered the captain of the caravel to prepare a repast for his guests, but meanwhile Guacanagari had another surprise in store for the Spaniards. He invited Columbus to a beautiful grove, where the ground was spread with delicious fruits, such as the pineapple, mammey, custard-apple, guava, avocado pear and sour-sop—all natives of this favored island—and after all had partaken of them, the king sounded a signal by blowing a shrill whistle, and there suddenly appeared, as if they had sprung out of the earth, more than a thousand Indians, who surrounded the Spaniards

and began a sham battle with their spears, war-clubs, bows and arrows. It was a very entertaining fight they "put up" for their guests, and the Spaniards were immensely diverted, especially by an encounter between two of the warriors, armed with spears tipped with flint. These two fought so fiercely that both were severely wounded, and the blood streamed from gashes in their arms and legs.

"That is a very pretty fight," remarked Columbus to one of his captains; "but we have many men with us, think you not, who could vanquish any two of these Indians in single combat?"

"I misdoubt me, your Excellency," replied the captain, "for they fight fiercely and with a great deal of skill."

"Pooh, pooh, Captain, it is not so! Why, our young friend here, Don Adolfo, is a better swordsman, boy though he be, than any Indian here."

"Mayhap," answered the captain cautiously. "I have heard how he vanquished Captain Martin Alonzo at small swords, before we started out, when in the convent of La Rabida; but methinks these savages are of different metal. They think nothing of wounds that would kill one of our men, and they fight like tigers when their blood is up."

Adolfo had overheard part of this conversation,

and at once divining what was in the Admiral's mind, exclaimed: "Your Excellency, I would like to measure weapons with one of those warriors, peradventure none other of our company cares to do so. May I have your permission?"

"Ask the king what he thinks," answered Columbus. "Ask him if he has a man amongst his warriors who dares meet a boy at a trial of skill." When the question was asked Guacanagari his face beamed with satisfaction, and he answered: "Truly, scores of men; but I warn you that the sight of blood incites them to a fury I cannot restrain. Still, if the youth wishes to try his skill, I will call out the best and most renowned amongst my warriors to oppose him." This was the gist of his answer, as interpreted by the boys, and after Columbus had inquired anxiously if Adolfo was willing to engage with the savage on such conditions, and received an affirmative reply, he nodded for the battle to begin.

The fight that ensued was one well worthy a Roman arena, and in some particulars it resembled the combats that once took place in the Eternal City, for it was one between a Christian and a savage, the latter naked, big and burly; the former slight of build and armed only with a sword.

“Have a care, Infante,” whispered Columbus, “for thy life is most precious to me, understand.”

“Fear not,” answered Adolfo, “I have held a sword ever since I could bear its weight. Let me select a big one with keen blade, and I will soon compel that savage to beg for quarter.” With that, he marched forth to meet the Indian, who was armed with a ponderous spear, and who laughed loudly at the approach of the slender youth. He made a thrust at Adolfo, as if to put him out of the fight at one fell blow; but the boy parried it, and bringing up his blade with a swift stroke, cut the spear staff in two, leaving only a short portion in the Indian’s hand. The latter gazed at his mutilated weapon in amazement, then darted at the boy with the ragged staff, as if to bear him down by the force of his onset. But Adolfo met him with a swift upper cut that set the staff spinning into the trees, and then lowered the point so quickly that it penetrated the savage’s bare and brawny breast. Seeing his opponent badly wounded, with the crimson blood spouting forth, Adolfo would have withdrawn the blade; but the savage pressed forward with demoniac fury, striving to get at him, driving the sword yet deeper into the muscles of his breast.

At word from the king, several Indians darted forward and seizing the infuriated barbarian from behind, threw him to the ground, where he lay panting, and Adolfo then withdrew the sword. Even then the savage tried to get on his feet and seize the youth, such was his rage at being beaten; but both Columbus and the king forbade the contest to continue, having had enough. In truth, Adolfo did not desire to fight any further, having done more than he intended in drawing blood so copiously, through the Indian's eagerness; but merely stood on the defensive until the savage was overpowered, when he lowered his weapon and returned to his place by the Admiral's side.

“Thou hast done well, Infante; but I am as sorry as thou art that the savage hurt himself so sorely.”

“I did not intend it, your Excellency; but, as you saw, he would persist in the attack when I had him practically weaponless. I trust it is not a mortal wound, for he is a brave man and worthy a better fate.” He was interrupted by Guacanagari, who came and patted him on the shoulder, at the same time gingerly feeling the blade, all stained with blood, that had done the business for his best warrior. He expressed great admiration for Adolfo's

skill, telling him as best he could that he had vanquished his most doughty fighter and that if he would accept the command of his army the position was his for the asking. In answer to Adolfo's anxious questioning, he said that the man would soon get well of his wound, and that when his fury had cooled he would be the best friend he had, as he had met his match for the first time in his life as a warrior.

“Now we will give them another exhibition,” said Columbus, and sending for an old Spaniard who had fought in the wars with the Moors, he told him to fill his quiver with arrows and prepare for a trial of skill with the native bowmen. The old man was a veteran crossbowman and hailed this occasion for exhibiting his proficiency with his favorite weapon with delight. A dozen Indians came forward with their primitive bows and arrows, and each one made most wonderful shots at the mark set up for them, striking close to the “bull's-eye” every time. Then the old Spaniard let fly and shot right into the center, and while the murmur of applause was going around he sent another arrow from his bow-gun right into the nock of the first, splitting it in twain. Proficient as they were, none of the Indians could surpass this feat, neither could

they shoot so far or so strongly as the veteran; so a second time the Spaniards were victorious.

“ We have beaten them at their own weapons, in a sense,” said Columbus; “ now let us introduce something they have never seen or heard of before. Ho there, send me three arquebusiers, and let them shoot at those great birds (pelicans) floating at a distance on the water.” The arquebusiers came as ordered and having prepared their pieces set them off, one after the other, amid a spouting of flame and smoke, to the great terror of the natives, many of whom fell to the ground in abject terror, at the noise, the smoke and the flame. And when some of the Indians in their canoes went out and got the pelicans, dead and dabbled with blood, and which were shot without any missile being visible to them, there was no end to their amazement and awe. They all examined the great birds, putting their fingers into the wounds, and then drew apart, whispering amongst themselves and casting glances of wonder at the Spaniards.

“ I thought that would amaze them,” said Columbus gleefully; “ but we have still one more wonder in store for them, which I shall reserve until the king has dined on board the ‘Niña,’ which I am going to invite him to do now.” The captain of

the 'Niña' signaled that he was ready to receive his distinguished guests, and so Columbus led the way to the boats, the king following in a maze of wonderment, taking with him several of his sub-chiefs or little caciques.

On board the caravel Guacanagari was served with the best the larder could afford; not only with choice food, but Spanish wines, which he tasted daintily, and behaved with such decorum that his host was delighted. After the banquet was over Columbus ordered the ship's cannon, the lombards, to be loaded, and asking the king to keep his eye fixed on a certain great tree ashore, had the gunners concentrate their fire upon it, with the effect that it was shivered to fragments and fell with a crash. The roar of the great guns and the crash of the falling tree had such an effect upon the Indians that several of them jumped overboard and swam ashore, being frightened almost out of their wits; but the king, though stupefied with fright, was too dignified to show it, and reproved his companions for their fears.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE TREASURE BROUGHT BY THE INDIANS.

WHEN the Indian king went aboard the caravel to dine with the Admiral, he wore a golden crown, and each one of his caciques or sub-chiefs wore another, though smaller than Guacanagari's. When the Indians left the caravel neither of them wore his golden crown, but in the place of it a velvet cap, bestowed by Columbus in exchange, and in addition the king wore a cotton shirt and a pair of gloves, of which he was prouder than of his coronet. In his ignorance, seeing that Columbus and his men greatly desired all the gold they could get and set a great value on it, and having an abundance of the precious metal in his country, the king gladly exchanged gold for gewgaws such as glass beads, hawk-bells, bits of iron and tin, and even rusty nails. For these things he and his Indians had never seen before, hence they attached a value to them beyond that which they placed on the gold.

Being convinced that he had at last arrived at the country of gold, Cipango, mentioned by the learned Marco Polo in his book of travels, Columbus determined to build a fort—as already mentioned—and leave here such of the men as he could not carry in the caravel. It happened that the name of the region from which the gold was obtained was called “Cibao,” and it so nearly resembled “Cipango” that Columbus was easily deceived into believing he had found the veritable country so famed in history. It bears the same name, Cibao, to-day, and lies back of the river Yaqui in the island of Hispaniola. And, the writer may mention in passing, that he himself has found gold in the Cibao region, and has seen precious nuggets weighing an ounce apiece. The gold is there to-day, in the sands of the Yaqui and other rivers of Santo Domingo, but cannot be found now in sufficient quantities for profitable mining. However, when Columbus arrived off the north coast of Haiti and Santo Domingo—the island collectively known to Columbus as Hispaniola—the precious metal was exceedingly abundant, having been washed out of the “placers” for ages into the streams, whence the Indians took it in great quantities. Being the first one to arrive in the land of gold who knew its real value, Columbus was the

recipient of all the Indians had collected for generations, and he did not believe himself using extravagant language when he said to Adolfo, in a burst of confidence: “ *Infante mio* (my dear Prince), if the men we shall leave here are industrious, I am sure I shall find at least a *ton of gold* accumulated when I return, as I shall next year, to make a settlement on this coast.”

To which Adolfo replied, “Your Excellency, that will be glorious. And will you not allow me to remain here with the men and direct their operations? I will surely attend to your interests, Señor, and faithfully serve his majesty, the King.”

“I do not doubt it, Infante, for I am now convinced of your integrity; but no, it would not do to leave behind in this wilderness one so nearly related to my sovereign’s royal rival. Even though you came without my knowledge and consent, complications might arise that would embroil our respective nations in war. No, no, no! While I respect thy intentions, this thing cannot be.”

Adolfo was disappointed, for he had set his heart upon remaining with the men who were to be left behind as a garrison for the fort they were to build; but he concealed his feelings as best he could and said no more to Columbus on the sub-

ject. While this conversation was going on, the Indian king was preparing to go ashore, and taking a formal leave of the Admiral he and his caciques entered their canoes and were paddled to the beach. Meanwhile, there continued to arrive innumerable canoes, coming apparently from all parts of the coast, each canoe containing eager and excited Indians, who were anxious to barter what gold they had for the trifles the Spaniards were willing to give them. They paddled and swam around the caravel, holding up their treasures and crying out "Chug, chug," by which they meant that they wanted some of those tinkling hawk-bells in exchange; and after they had departed there was a pile of nuggets and gold-dust so large that Columbus thought it possible he might obtain the ton of gold before he left for Spain, and delight his sovereigns with the sight of the country's vast riches when he met them again at court.

"You would like a souvenir of the country, Infante, would you not?" asked Columbus of Adolfo. "Well, then, the next Indian who comes here bartering shall be yours to trade with; and by the same token, the next shall belong to Pablo. Here comes one now, standing up in the prow of his canoe, and he holds up his hand, which seems full of some-

thing, probably of gold-dust. Get out your hawk-bells and trade with him; but, son, do not give him too much for his gold, lest you should spoil our market.”

Pablo and Adolfo thanked the Admiral for his graciousness and went in search of the trinkets which they had provided against just such an occasion as this before they sailed from Palos. As they came again on deck there were two canoes on the port side of the caravel, in the foremost one the Indian pointed out by Columbus, who at sight of the hawk-bell held up by Adolfo, leaped to the bulwark rail and thrusting into his hand all that his fist contained hastily seized the trinket and sprang overboard, swimming to the shore, with many a backward glance over his shoulder, as if fearful the boy would pursue him and take his bell away.

“ Well, well,” laughed Columbus, “ there is one fool in the world I had not known, it seemeth. Look at that Indian, having bartered his fistful of gold for a trinket worth a few *centavos* only, fearsome lest you shall take it away from him. Verily, we have arrived at the trader’s paradise, as well as at the paradise of fools. Now it is thy turn, Pablo *mio*; and I trust thou wilt do as well as Adolfo.”

“I could not do better,” answered Pablo, “nor do I think it would be right to do so; though I am glad Adolfo made such a good bargain.”

“I did not make it, in sooth,” said Adolfo with a happy laugh. “The Indian cheated himself, and as he has departed for the forest there is no redress. I only hope he will not find out his mistake and return for the change, for of a truth every one of these glistening grains is worth a hundred cascabels. What will my father say, when he looks upon this evidence of wealth in the country you have brought to light, your Excellency?”

“Of a truth, what will he not say?” answered Columbus, with a frown on his brow and a gleam of triumph in his eyes. “Thou knowest, Infante, that he had the opportunity for outfitting my expedition in search of the New World even before the sovereigns of Spain; and thou also knowest that he refused my offer, dost thou not?”

“Yes, your Excellency. But lay it not up against him, for he was indeed sore tempted, but at the time thought he could not spare the funds. Would to heaven he had accepted your terms, for to him, now, would belong the glory that is shared with you by the sovereigns of Spain.” And Adolfo sighed, while Pablo, to whom this conversa-

tion was somewhat unintelligible, looked on in wonder.

“Well, Pablo, there is thy Indian,” suggested Columbus, as the second canoe came to the side with its clamorous traders. “His fist is not quite so well stored with gold as that of the first, but doubtless there is enough to repay thee for thy investment. Surely, you boys were forehanded, in thus providing yourselves with trinkets for barter in advance. Who told you we should meet here people who would desire to exchange gold for trifles, youngsters?”

“Nobody,” replied Adolfo, as Pablo was now engaged in bartering his bell for the Indian’s treasure. “Nobody; but I knew there might be an opportunity, provided we should find a country with inhabitants, and so I furnished the money while Pablo searched out the trinkets. It was while we were at La Rabida, you know, and time hung heavy on our hands.”

“Ah, yes, I remember your advent at the monastery. But I came near refusing you passage with me, after all, and if I had, your investment would have been fruitless, my son, would it not?”

“Oh, perhaps; but in that case I should have

given the things to some one of the sailors, so they would not have been wasted.”

“ Answered like a most generous prince,” rejoined Columbus; “ and I doubt not you would have done so, my son. But, now to make a confession—I am most heartily rejoiced that I let thee and young Pablo come with me, for you both have served me better than any man aboard my vessels. Now, as a small token of my regard, I shall allow you both to barter to the extent of your possessions, and if so be thou gettest so much as might gladden the eyes of thy royal sire, do thou present them to him with the compliments of one who would have served him, had not Fortune ordered otherwise.”

“ Thanks, your Excellency. And I trust Fortune may be kinder to you in the future than it has been in the past, and that you may not again go begging from court to court, with a world to offer for royalty to spurn. When I am king,—if ever that eventually come to pass,—I shall remember the lesson of your life and I trust be a better king than otherwise I might have been.”

“ Would it had been my fortune to find one like thee upon the throne,” rejoined Columbus with a sigh. “ But I was in God’s hands; He hath done with me what was best in His eyes. What I have done

was fore-ordered from the beginning of the world. It sufficeth me that I have done my best, always, having in view only what God would have me do. We mortals are but emanations of the Spirit; human pride and earthly vanity,—what are they? Verily, naught in the sight of Him who hath sent me on this voyage and made me the instrument of His will. I have but one purpose in gaining such wealth as may accrue from this voyage, and mayhap from other voyages to the New World, and that is to accumulate enough to equip an army for the deliverance of the Holy Sepulcher of Christ, which is in Jerusalem, from the hands of the infidel Mohammedan. That fortune once acquired, and that purpose accomplished, it will appear to me that my work was well and truly done; not before.”

“Perchance,” suggested Adolfo timidly, “there may be a work of the kind to do here, for verily these people are pagans and have never yet heard the name of God or of the Son. They live in sin, as we regard their lives, and what could be better than their conversion to the true and only Faith?”

“True, thou sayest well,” answered the Admiral. “And I have thought upon this, believe me. But as thou can see, my men are unruly and almost all

licentious, evil-minded, looking only to the gratification of their lusts. And again, there is no holy man, no religious teacher amongst us, who can turn these people aright. On my next voyage, I shall insist upon a religious teacher accompanying me, that the Indians may be converted and their souls saved from perdition.”

There is little doubt of the integrity of the Admiral's intentions; but History has shown that, if he later held to them, they were grossly perverted; for within a few years after this first visit to Hispaniola, nearly all the innocent Indians had been murdered, by Spaniards under the command of Columbus himself and those who followed in his track. Barbarities unspeakable were committed; this same generous king, Guacanagari, who had received the Spaniards with such hospitality, was slain, his village destroyed and his people massacred; and all for the love of, and in pursuit of, gold, the first grains of which he gave the Spaniards.

But let us not anticipate events. Turn, rather, to the little group on the deck of the caravel, and witness the joy of Pablo, as, having bartered his hawk-bell for a handful of gold-dust, he found himself richer than ever he had thought to be in his life.

“Why, your Excellency,” he joyfully exclaimed, holding out his treasure for inspection, “I could live a year on just what that poor savage has given me in exchange for my cascabel.”

“God willing,” said Columbus, “thou shalt gain enough to keep thee in comfort all thy life. So husband thy resources, for thou hast my permission to traffic to their full extent. And that is more than I shall allow the rest to do; though as to that matter, they are almost beyond my control at present. But we shall see, we shall see, when the sovereigns are informed of what has transpired hitherto.”

This conversation took place on the “Niña,” from which nearly all the crew had departed, in order to join the Indians in their festivities on shore. They could be seen scattered about on the beach and in the forest, dancing with the Indian maidens and drinking deeply with the men. At sight of them thus engaged, Columbus shook his head sorrowfully and bit his lips, for he well knew they were getting beyond his control.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE BOYS HELP BUILD A FORT.

NOTWITHSTANDING the kindness of the Indian king and his efforts in the direction of making Columbus forget his troubles, the desperate situation in which the Spaniards found themselves could not be ignored. There they were, nearly three thousand miles from home, the chief vessel of their fleet a wreck, and only one small caravel in which to escape from this wild country. The little "Niña" had her full complement of crew before the wreck occurred, so it would be impossible to take many more aboard, even for a voyage of short duration; but for the homeward voyage across the great ocean, there was no room for more. Fortunately for Columbus, most of the men chose to stay behind, rather than return to Spain, moved to this decision by the delights of the climate, the abundance of tropical fruits, and the prospect of living amongst a people so kind and free from care as

were these Indians of Hispaniola. Taking them for celestial visitors, the Spaniards gave the Indians freely all they possessed, deeming themselves highly honored by the attentions of the latter. If they had but known, that the most of these strangers were men of mean birth and inclinations, that they were the very off-scourings of their country and far removed from beings whose attributes the poor aborigines attributed to them, there would have been a prompt revulsion of feeling; but for the present the white men and the Indians fraternized and got along very well together. Every hut was open to the strangers, every attention showered upon them; so when Columbus asked for volunteers to garrison the fort he intended to build, there were more men offered than he could accept. He chose forty of the most turbulent, deeming himself fortunate in getting rid of them, and then proceeded to the construction of the fort.

“Son Adolfo,” he said to the Prince, one morning, “there are so many advantages here that, after all, the disaster was perhaps a most fortunate one; for it is certain that had not the ship been lost, I should never have come here, since the place is a large bay and so beset with reefs of rocks. Now, if I had wished to leave the men in these parts, I

should never have been able to find a place so desirable for them; nor could I have left them so well supplied with ammunition or provisions, or the means for their protection. Many of the crew have been entreating me to leave them here, and I have therefore determined that a strong fort shall be constructed for their protection.

“What sayest thou, Infante? Thou wouldst like also to remain? Nay, nay, my son; thou knowest not what thou sayest. Although thou art a passenger with me without my voluntary consent, yet I am, as I have already said, responsible to thy sire for thy safety. Nay, neither shalt thou nor the boy Pablo remain, for this is no place for innocent youth. Seest thou not what excesses the men have engaged in already? There will be fights and bickerings, perchance orgies and drunkenness. Though I shall leave in command one whom I have reason to believe I can trust, yet I dare not believe but that he will have trouble in controlling these men, whose passions are so easily excited and whose tendency to evil is strong.

“I do not think a fort is absolutely necessary to protect the men from these people of the Indian king, but he has told me that his territory is subject to incursions from a terrible chieftain who lives in

the mountains, one Caonabo, a Caraib, or cannibal, an eater of human flesh, who suddenly descends upon these unprotected people and captures many, some of whom he devours, and the others takes with him to his stronghold to a fate worse than death.

So it is right that a fort should be constructed for their defense against the man-eaters, and I shall store it with provisions and wines for above a year, and with seeds also, so that they may plant. And the boat of the ship shall be left with them, with a calker, a carpenter, a gunner, a cooper, and trained bowmen and arquebusiers as many as desire to stay, peradventure there be not above forty all told, as that will leave us just enough to fill the "Niña" to overflowing. This is reckoning upon our not finding the "Pinta," which should be awaiting us somewhere further along the coast.

At thought of the "Pinta" and her recreant captain, Columbus frowned and sighed deeply; but said nothing to indicate what he had in his mind. Only it must be remembered, when it shall be seen later on that he did not commend the Pinzons to the favor of King Ferdinand, that he had great provocation to denounce them, for not standing by him through all his troubles in America.

The ten days that remained before Columbus took

his departure from Guarico were busy ones indeed. Every person of his command was actively at work at the construction of the fort, the site for which was a small hill that overlooked the harbor. Upon the summit of this hill a circular castle or martello tower was erected, made from the wreckage of the "Santa Maria," every plank and nail from which had been preserved and brought ashore. Upon the platform within the crenelated battlements the big lombards were mounted, pointing not only seaward but landward, and there was a magazine in the lower part well stored with powder. A deep moat was dug around the fort, which was filled with water from the sea and crossed by a drawbridge wholly controlled from within the structure, so that no hostile Indians could get in if the garrison were alert and watchful. As provisions were provided for a year—at the end of which Columbus fully expected to return—there was no concern on that score; and besides, the friendly Indians would probably provide food enough to last, so long as the Spaniards treated them well. The sequel showed that the Spaniards were soon at odds with the natives, owing to their overbearing manners, their drunkenness and lusts, and that the provisions were wasted in a few weeks or months; but that was not the

fault of the Admiral, who provided for every contingency except the very one that happened—the dissoluteness and the cruelty of the garrison. An experienced commander was furnished in the person of Don Diego de Arana, with Pedro Gutierrez second in command and Rodrigo de Escobedo third. They were cautioned to keep their men well under control, not to offend the natives in any particular, and above all to always maintain an attitude of defense. Columbus well knew what the tendency would be, in that land of loose living and sensual pleasures, amid a people who were always kind and ever thoughtless of the morrow, and his heart misgave him at the thought of what might happen were the garrison to become derelict in its duty to himself and their sovereigns.

While the fort was being constructed the boys worked cheerily with the rest, helping to carry the material from the beach to the hill, driving nails and even digging in the ditch or moat. They viewed its completion with intense satisfaction, and their only regret was that they could not remain to share in its defense. But the Admiral's word with them was law, even if it was not with most of the others, so they reluctantly returned to the shore and the caravel every night, not daring

to trust themselves with the men who were to compose the garrison, for fear they might be over-persuaded and desert their kind commander. When the tower was finished it was a sight worth looking at, of a truth, as Columbus told the boys, and he and they were proud of this first fort ever erected in the New World for the defense of white men against the aborigines. It was about thirty feet high, and with the cannon peeping from its ramparts made a very gallant show, exciting the admiration of the Spaniards as well as the awe and respect of the natives. Having worked upon it for nine days with the best of its builders, the two boys were especially proud of the fortress-tower, as the first structure of the kind they had ever engaged in erecting, and they suggested to Columbus that it should have a name bestowed upon it worthy of the fort and the event that had called it into being.

“In sooth, my young friends,” responded the Admiral when this subject was broached, “I have already decided upon a name that is most fitting, and that is *La Navidad* (The Nativity), because, as you know, our coming ashore at this place, after the loss of our gallant ship, was on the morn of the day in which the blessed Christ was born. It may

seem ill to consort with the memories of that glorious day in which our Saviour first appeared on earth, to name after it a fort for defense; but I trust this fort may prove a refuge for our people and but the beginning of a settlement in which the teachings of Christ shall be taught the heathen."

"Yes, that is good," said Adolfo and Pablo in a breath, and reverently uncovering themselves. "It is Christmas Fort, indeed," added Adolfo, "and also it might be called New Year's Fort, as well, since we have been engaged, this first week of the new year, 1493, in erecting this tower of refuge in this barbarian country."

"That is true," mused Columbus "very true, indeed. The advent of the new year has found us well engaged; and perhaps this work of our hands may prove a portent of coming good fortune, and be the end of our disasters. At least, we will hope so, and to the end that our home voyage shall be prosperous let us pray also that our return hither shall be swift and propitious.

"Now for another day of trading with the natives. Gather ye all the gold ye can, for this will be the last opportunity. King Guacanagari hath promised me a feast for the morrow, and hath summoned hither all his caciques from the interior, with in-

structions for them to bring with them what gold they have on hand.”

The feast prepared by the king on the succeeding day was even more bountiful than that with which he had greeted them on Christmas, but of the same character so far as its fruits and viands went. The king himself could hardly contain himself for grief over their departure, and the tears frequently started from his eyes as he alluded to that event. The Admiral was likewise affected, and when Guacanagari took his new coronet of gold from his head and placed it upon that of his chief guest, they both were overcome and fell upon each other's shoulders, weeping copiously. Each of the caciques assembled followed the example set them by their royal master, and when the feast was over there were at least a dozen golden coronets on the ground for Columbus to take with him aboard the caravel. Then the common people had brought all they could find of golden grains, dust and nuggets, so that the aspect of the place was that of a great fair or market, in which there was an exchange of presents instead of barter. Even in the extremity of his emotions, however, Columbus was careful not to bestow too many of his baubles upon the confiding natives, and thus was able to leave a large quantity of beads

and bells for the garrison to use, since they were expected to discover and work the mines while he was away. For he had ever in mind that "ton of gold" he had in imagination promised his sovereigns, and that thought was always uppermost.

At last came the time of departure. The "Niña" lay off shore with sails bent and anchor apeak, awaiting only the signal. The last boat was on the strand, near it the Admiral, the boys and a few officials, with the crew that was to comprise the garrison crowding around them. Those who were to depart were more affected than those who were to remain, for the latter were carried away and buoyed up by the prospect of unlimited leisure in this land of delights, of explorations and golden discoveries in the mountains. Well for them, perhaps, that they could not forecast the events of the next few months; for, anticipating the return of Columbus, we shall see that not one of this devoted garrison survived to welcome him when, in less than a year, he again anchored in this bay of Guarico. He then returned with a great fleet, filled with soldiers, provisions and munitions of war, with all the material for the founding of a settlement here. But instead of finding his garrison to welcome him, he saw only the smoking ruins of

the fort, found only one soldier, and that a dead one,—merely a bloated corpse floating at the river mouth.

But at the time he left, on the fourth of January, 1493, there was no hint of this coming disaster, when the cannibal chief of the mountains descended like a thunderbolt upon the little fort and, finding its garrison dispersed about the settlement, wreaked his wrath upon the Spaniards without their being able to withstand him.

CHAPTER XX.

ON THE RIVER OF GOLDEN SANDS.

THERE was one among the Spanish garrison left behind in the fort whom the boys were by no means sorry to part from, and that one was the common sailor who had fought with Adolfo at Palos. He had shipped on board the caravel, the "Niña," so was not brought much in contact with the boys on the voyage, though once in a while he showed his hatred of them by unmistakable signs. He tried to get at them on the first landing at Guanahani, and again in Cuba begged his captain to allow him to accompany the expedition into the island which was commanded by Adolfo. But on both occasions he was thwarted by Columbus, who had gained an inkling of the situation and stood between him and his young friends.

Fate had strangely separated the boys from their enemy, when, for the third time, an opportunity for coming together might have been afforded at

the time of the wreck, for the man was detained on board the caravel when the boat was sent to the rescue, and not allowed to land until after the whole party had arrived. His being one of those told off to compose the garrison was another reason why Columbus would not allow either of the boys to belong to this little party left alone in the wilderness; and to his credit be it recorded, he stood manfully by them all through this critical period. But at last, just as the boats were about to push off for the "Niña," after the farewells had been said and the shore party had fallen back, the sailor burst through all restraint, and unable to command himself any longer, pounced upon Adolfo, with a snarl of rage. He seized him by the throat, by the force of his onset carrying him to the ground, and the lad, taken unawares as he was, might have suffered severely, or have lost his life, had not succor been at hand. Pablo was standing near him, as he rarely left Adolfo's side; but what was his strength as against that of the burly ruffian who had borne his friend to the ground? Fortunately, two or three Indians were also near, and at the orders of the Admiral, shouted from the boat a little way from shore, they threw themselves upon the sailor and tore him away. Adolfo rose somewhat bewildered,

white with rage and shaking in every limb from the sudden shock, but he would have cast himself upon the sailor had not the Admiral restrained him by a stern command.

“No, no, Infante,” he shouted; “do not engage with that ruffian now; it is beneath thee, son. Get into the boat by thy side and haste to the caravel, for the wind is rising and we must be off. I will settle with the man when I return, so leave it to me.”

Much against his will, Adolfo followed his commander's advice, and in silence stepped aboard the remaining boat which was awaiting the remnants of the party. The others followed, and the craft was pushed off for the caravel. Then the Indians released the man, who, at first speechless from rage, shouted after the departing boat, “Go, go, ye cowards; but remember I have comrades here, and if yon craven foreigner who has brought us to this state of misery ever does return, he will not find many friends awaiting him. Oh, yes, we will collect the ton of gold for our masters, but they shall never see it, mark my words, dog of a foreigner.”

“Hush, miscreant,” said Captain Diego de Arana, running up and striking him across the mouth. “You know not what you say.” As for

Columbus, on hearing these mutinous words he was at first for going back to bind the man and take him home in chains; but second thought showed him the peril of it, and so he continued for the caravel. Still, the rash words of the sailor showed him the mutinous spirit of the men he had left ashore to found the first settlement in America, for not one of the others there but had tacitly sanctioned the hasty speech. Only Diego de Arana, the commander, had resented them, and he, perhaps, more on account of his position than from any inclination to befriend Columbus. So it was in sadness and silence that the Admiral boarded the "Niña," and, after seeing that all those destined to return with him were there, gave the order to sail.

The spirits of the party were somewhat restored when, as the "Niña" slowly made her way out of the harbor, a lombard from the fort sent out a salute enveloping the tower in a volume of smoke, and showed that Commander Arana had the men under sufficient discipline to tender his superior the proper courtesies. The salute was answered by a discharge of cannon from the caravel, which awoke the echoes of the shore and carried terror to the savages lurking in the forests back of Guarico. As the point was rounded which would conceal the Indian set-

tlement from sight, a last view was obtained of King Guacanagari and his retinue, still grouped on the beach and gazing after the caravel as if loath to lose her.

The wind was baffling and the "Niña" made little headway until the afternoon, by night arriving under the lee of a great, tent-shaped mountain, where, as the harbor was good, anchor was cast and everything made snug. Crowded as she was, with many more than the complement of her crew, the quarters aboard the caravel were far from comfortable, and, as the wind drew ahead and prevented further passage around the mountain promontory, two days were spent in the harbor putting things to rights. The mountain, with its tent-shaped or triangular top, was called Monte Cristi by Columbus, and this name it still bears and may be identified by it to-day on any map of Haiti and the north coast of Santo Domingo. On the third day, after rounding the promontory, a glad surprise was the reward of this devoted crew, for a sailor on watch at the mast-head proclaimed a vessel in the distance which he thought must be the "Pinta." And sure enough, so it proved to be, for that recreant vessel soon came bearing down upon the "Niña" with all sails set and a fair, fresh breeze

behind her. Then there were many and happy greetings exchanged between the two vessels when they approached near enough to hail each other ; but we may be sure that among them those between Columbus and Captain Martin Alonzo were none of the heartiest. The former recalled the circumstances under which Captain Pinzon had deserted his fleet on the coast of Cuba, while the latter had good cause to believe he had committed the unpardonable sin and would never be forgiven by his superior officer in command. And so it was, for while Columbus thought it expedient to temporize at that time, he cherished a grudge against Martin Alonzo Pinzon which was never effaced and which blighted his future fortunes.

But, as Martin Alonzo was master of the "Pinta" and his brother Vicente captain of the "Niña," the only vessels remaining, in which the voyage back to Spain must be accomplished, the Admiral avoided a controversy off the coast of Hispaniola, and nursed his wrath until a more favorable moment should arrive for redress. Once again together, the two vessels kept company until separated by a storm off the coast of Spain or Portugal ; though the "Pinta" was the first to arrive at Palos with news of the discovery.

Although Captain Martin Alonzo tried to make out that he was driven out of his course and away from the fleet by a storm, and could not regain it, Columbus shrewdly surmised that there were other reasons for his conduct, as there really were. In fact, the real reason for his departure was found in the information he had received from an Indian of Cuba of the region in which the gold was to be obtained, and he had set sail for it in advance of Columbus, hoping to enrich himself and his men before the Admiral should arrive. From the revelations of his crew, the people who had stayed with Columbus learned that every man of his company had a goodly quantity of the precious metal, the master himself having acquired as much, probably, as Columbus had been able to get, with all his advantage in bartering with the king.

It was while the "Niña" was wind-bound at Monte Cristi, one day, as the men were filling their water casks at the mouth of a river near that where the Spaniards discovered the first signs of gold in its place of deposit. As they were rolling the casks out of the water they observed thousands of glittering particles attached to the iron hoops, and following up this clew they found that the sands of the river were filled with gold. Then all the men were set

at work washing the golden sands, with such success that Columbus was moved to call the stream the "*Rio del Oro*," or the River of Gold, which name it retained for many years after. It is now known as the Yaqui, and is one of the most important streams in the island, the headwaters of which are still celebrated for their deposits of gold. The next year, after his return from Spain with a large fleet, Columbus sent an exploring party up the banks of the Yaqui, commanded by a celebrated Spanish cavalier, and containing mounted men. The horses these men rode were the first the natives of the New World ever saw, and they were frightened nearly to death, falling down in terror and worshipping them as deities.

The two days spent at the mouth of the golden river were delightful ones to all the men, as well as to the boys, for though the time was mainly spent in washing the sands and collecting its precious particles, there was leisure enough for recreation. They fished in the waters of the bay, they swam in the protected pools behind the coral reefs, and made short excursions into the woods that lined the shore. Finding an abandoned canoe floating at the river mouth, Pablo and Adolfo extemporized paddles from some driftwood on the beach and pushed up the

stream among the reeds and rushes, where they saw much to astonish and attract them. As they were penetrating a veritable jungle of tall reeds and grasses, at some distance from the sea, they suddenly saw rise before them a big round head with a face resembling (they thought) that of a human being. It had bright black eyes, a smooth and shining skin and yellow bristles or hairs around its mouth.

Pablo saw it first, being in the prow parting the reeds that impeded their course. "Oh, look, Adolfo! See that monster right ahead. Quick, back the canoe, or it may devour us!"

Adolfo did as ordered, but not before he had gratified his curiosity by a long look at the animal, which reared its big head above the water and gazed at them as if quite as astonished at sight of them as they were at this wonderful apparition.

"What is it, Adolfo? Did you ever see its like before?"

"No, never. I don't know. But we had better get back to the shore if it will let us, and ask the Admiral. He knows everything, and perhaps can tell us what it is. It must be one of the great sea monsters that the ancient books make mention of,

and which are so terrible when aroused. I only hope it will not pursue us, Pablo.”

The monster did not follow them, but soon sank beneath the water and disappeared. As the water was deep, though the channel was narrow, the boys were fearful that it might rise beneath the canoe and destroy it, so they made all haste for the river mouth, where, once arrived, they sought Columbus and told him of their adventure.

“What say you?” he asked. “It had big eyes and a human face? Then surely it must be a mermaid or a merman, of which I have read, and which I fully expected to find in this locality. Let me into the canoe, lads, and we will go in search of it, for verily I would like to see one of those creatures with my own eyes.”

“Hadn’t we better take an arquebuse or a harpoon?” asked Pablo. “It might attack us, you know, and as we are now we are defenseless.”

“Right thou art, lad,” assented Columbus. “Ho there, men, one of you bring me an arquebuse, and perchance there be one, also a lance or harpoon, with a long line attached.”

It took some time to find a lance and equip it as a harpoon by attaching a line to its staff; but after a

while all was ready and the trio set off up stream in the crazy canoe on their perilous errand. As the men saw them depart some of them shook their heads, and one exclaimed under his breath: "Truly, the Admiral sometimes acts like a *loco* (a crazy man). Ah me, I only hope he will bring us safe home again; but I have doubts!"

"Aye, doubts many," said another, rising from his bent posture over the dish in which he was washing out the gold;—"doubts many well we may have after what we have observed of his actions. But still, he has been fair with us, treating nearly all alike."

There was a chorus of dissent from the company; but Columbus heard it not, for he was by this time far up the stream. Arrived at or near the spot where the monster had been first observed, the canoe was moved cautiously through the reeds, while three pairs of eyes searched the clear water for signs of the aquatic creature.

"There he is," cried Adolfo,—“there, right ahead, down by that clump of water plants, which he seems to be tearing up by the roots!” The Admiral grasped the arquebuse, while Pablo poised the lance, and Adolfo carefully paddled to a position nearly above the monster, which seemed to be

about ten feet in length. “Look out! He is coming up!” shouted Adolfo, who was keeping watch. He had no sooner said this, than up bobbed a round, shiny head, so close to the bow of the canoe that Columbus might have touched it.

CHAPTER XXI.

A "MONSTER OF THE DEEP."

THE Admiral was so astonished at the sudden appearance of the water animal that he fell back in the canoe, at the same time losing his grip on the arquebuse, which dropped into the water and was lost to sight. The canoe was nearly overturned, also, and the boys had all they could do to preserve its balance and prevent the water from coming over the rail. Soon as the disturbance had subsided, all eyes were turned in search of the object that had caused this consternation, and it was discovered that the creature had not been frightened, but was calmly grazing among the reeds, its smooth, round head being visible only a few feet away. It had probably never seen a white person before, if indeed any human being, and so was not aware of the danger it ran in allowing a man so near.

Whatever kind of monster it was, it was an in-offensive one, to all appearances, and the invaders

of its domain really had no excuse for attacking it; but they were excited, and Pablo, who had preserved his equanimity, as soon as he got a good sight of the head amongst the reeds, let drive the lance with a line attached to its haft, after the manner of a harpoon. He aimed at the neck, just back of the base of the head, and the lance went true to its mark, as was quickly proved by the great commotion that ensued. No sooner had the weapon struck the creature, than it made a plunge for the bottom of the river, carrying out the line at a rapid rate, then swam swiftly toward the sea. The line was not long enough to give "play," as is done in whaling, and the front end of the canoe was drawn under water, at times, so that it was with a perfect cataract playing over the bows that the little craft started off on its perilous voyage. Hollowed from a log hewn from some great tree of the forest, the canoe was not the stanchest of craft imaginable, and in point of fact was extremely "cranky," so it was with considerable difficulty that its passengers kept it from tipping over. They huddled together amidships—or Columbus and Pablo did—holding to the rail on either side, while Adolfo put forth his best efforts at steering with the paddle, himself crouched in the stern.

This arrangement brought the bows higher up, out of the water; but such was the great strength of the creature that was towing them, the canoe was nearly swamped by the waves that came in every now and then.

Everything had transpired so suddenly that the affrighted occupants of the canoe had spoken not a word; but after they were well on their trip Columbus ventured to remark upon the vast size and strength of the animal, and expressed a fear that it might take them out to sea amongst the breakers on the reefs.

“And the line is so short,” wailed poor Pablo, “that we cannot go much farther without being drawn under water. I pray the saints that we go not far.”

“Cut it! cut it!” exclaimed Adolfo. “Is there not a knife aboard?”

“A good suggestion,” said the Admiral approvingly; “but a quick search showed that there was no knife, sword, or cutting instrument of any sort on board the canoe.”

“Oh, if I had not allowed the sneers of the men to make me put off my good keen blade,” said Adolfo. “They said I always had it on my hip, you know, and appeared as if going about looking

for a quarrel; so I put it aside, and have left it on the caravel."

"And I, too," muttered Columbus, "so much gave attention to the criticisms of my men as to the wearing of a sword continually that I did likewise. After this, God willing, I will do as I wist, and pay heed to no man's remarks. But what we do must transpire quickly, for we are now drenched to the skin, and verily the speed of the monster has by no means abated."

Fortunate, it seemed to the canoe's frightened passengers, that the course taken by the creature led quite near to the river bank on which the men were engaged in washing out the gold, else there might have been a more disastrous ending to this extraordinary voyage. These men heard the shouts sent up from the canoe and were amazed to discover their Admiral and the two boys gliding swiftly past them in mid-stream, in that crazy old craft, hurried forward as if upon the top of a wave, and with no visible means of propulsion.

"Haste, my men, haste!" cried Columbus. "Put out the boat and head us off. Bring, too, some arquebuses and long ropes, for we are in the grasp of a monster of the deep, which is taking us to its lair."

The astonished men ashore dropped their pans and hastened for a boat, which they launched with celerity and rowed with all speed seaward, so as to cut athwart the course taken by the canoe. But with all their efforts they could not attain the pace taken by the monster, and constantly fell behind. Seeing this, the Admiral shouted as if in a forlorn hope, "Keep as close as you can, my men, peradventure we be spilled into the sea you may pick us up before the sharks scent us as prospective prey."

"Aye, aye, sir, trust us to do our best," shouted the captain of the boat, while the men at the oars strained every nerve. But, despite their utmost endeavors, they continued to fall back, until there was a great space between the boat and the canoe.

They were now out in the open bay, and the reefs were not far away, over which rolled immense breakers tipped with foam. The roar of the breakers sounded in the ears of the helpless voyagers, and, though they said nothing, each one knew the peril they were in.

"But look!" shouted Adolfo, who had maintained as well as he could his position as helmsman; "Look, there is a canoe coming to our rescue. It

is well ahead, and aims to cut us off before we reach the reefs."

"Which may the Almighty grant!" murmured Columbus, crossing himself devoutly.

"In it is an Indian," exclaimed Pablo. "It is Juan, our friend from the Lucayos. See his mighty arms strain at the paddle; see him bend to his work, with all the strength in his frame. At all events, we shall be saved, because even if we are stranded and cast into the breakers, he will at once be there to pick us up."

"For this deliverance, may the great God be praised!" said Columbus, and the boys added a fervent "amen!"

The Indian approached diagonally across their course, his canoe propelled by mighty sweeps of his paddle, and the foam flying like mist from its prow. A shout went up at his approach, but he seemed to heed it not, every fiber of his body being taut and tense, the perspiration glittering in beady drops on his skin of golden bronze.

"Ah, but he is magnificent!" exclaimed the Admiral in admiration. "Verily, it is almost worth this experience to witness such an exhibition of skill, such a glorious sight."

The approaching canoe swept on, described a

curve as it shot athwart their course, and bringing up against the bow of the captive canoe, at that instant a sinewy arm shot out and a glittering blade severed the line that connected with the monster. The canoes kept on a moment together, then were swerved shoreward by deft manipulation of the paddles, and were soon in calm water, safe from the breakers that howled and foamed on the reefs, scarce a hundred yards away.

“A gallant rescue,” exclaimed Columbus, as he was being assisted into the Indian’s canoe. “Tell him, Infante,” he added, when he was seated, “that I shall reward him richly when we return to Spain; that my sovereigns will make him great and wealthy.”

When this was interpreted to the Indian he spread out his hands deprecatingly and assured the youth that he desired no reward. He was glad he could have been of service to the great Admiral, whom he had grown to love as well as respect, having observed his consideration of King Guacanagari and his subjects, and his tender regard for his men.

“But what was this monster?” demanded Columbus. “Ask him, my son, what it was that towed us out to sea and showed such mighty strength. It must have been a mermaid or a merman; per-

chance it was one of those great chimeras dire of which the ancients have left us records, and if so we have indeed had a narrow escape from a most dreadful fate, for they inhabit in the deeps of the sea and drag men down to destruction, sometimes by alluring them thither with their siren songs."

The Indian laughed, when the Admiral's observation was explained to him. "No," he said, "it was not a monster of the deep at all. It was a most harmless, inoffensive animal that inhabits the rivers of this coast, as well as the coast of Cuba. It is called the *maniti*, and is like a great man-fish, with mild eyes and breasts like those of a human being. It may be as long as this canoe, and its hide is tough like the leather of which you make the armor in which your soldiers are encased."

"Not a mermaid, nor a monster of the deep?" ejaculated Columbus, when the Indian's description was given him. "Well, but it was a creature new to us, and I do wish we had seen it."

Then the Indian told the boys, as they floated along together toward the shore, that the natives of this island sometimes tamed the manatis so that they came at call, and as a friendship was established between them, and the creatures feared not man and never attacked human beings, being animals that

fed on grasses and roots, though amphibious and rarely departing from the water. In a little pond ashore, he told them, he had been informed there was a manati so tame that it came at its master's call and even allowed his children to float about on its back. But its strength is prodigious and when excited it had been known to smash canoes, but never to attack man, having a mouth fitted only for feeding as it did, and not for biting or destroying.

At all this the Admiral wondered, and when he had regained the caravel he lost no time in putting it down in the journal he was writing for the King and Queen of Spain.

At last the wind hauled around to a favorable point, and, the sands having been deprived so far as possible of their golden treasure, Columbus gave the order to hoist sail and continue on the cruise along the coast. The next day sighting the "Pinta," and after a consultation keeping her company over a course she had somewhat explored, a country was descried so beautiful that the Admiral was enamored of it. They left the port of Monte Cristi at midnight on the ninth of January, 1493, and went in search of "Babeque," the true land of gold; or as Guacanagari had called it, "Cibao," which name is

still applied to the region interior from this coast. This name Columbus confounded with the "Cipango" of Marco Polo, and really thought the two identical; but in after years found it not so.

"This country beyond Monte Cristi," wrote Columbus in his diary, "is level and beautiful, with tall mountains in the interior reminding me of the sierras of Cordova in Spain, and the whole aboundeth in streams and offereth views of such variety that the thousandth part cannot be described." They crossed a deep bay, in the course of this cruise, which was destined to become historic, for it was on the shore of it, one year later, that Columbus founded the first European city in the New World, Isabella, the ruins of which are yet to be seen amid the tangle of tropic trees that has grown up around and covered it. The writer has spent a week on its site, searching for relics of that time so far distant in the past, and, like the two boys whose adventures we are following, he was charmed with its scenery.

The Lucayan was drawn to Columbus, as we have seen, by his tender regard for the Indians whom he first met in America; but if he had accompanied the Admiral on his second voyage, when he sent his captains into the country to subdue the natives, he

could not but have changed his opinion. For, after the site for Isabella was chosen in December, 1493, and after the buildings were under construction, Columbus despatched armed bodies of soldiers, infantry and cavalry, armed with arquebuses and clad in steel armor, to search out the land of gold and bring the natives under subjection. These captains were brave but cruel, and hesitated at no kind of torture by which to induce the poor Indians to give up their accumulations of gold. The natives were of the same sort as Guacanagari's people, gentle, confiding, unused to war, and at first received the Spaniards with generous hospitality, but finally the cruelties of the invaders drove them to declare war against them, and then they mercilessly slaughtered them. They could make no stand against the mail-clad cavaliers comprising the commands of Columbus, for they were armed only with bows, arrows and spears, which were of no avail in opposition to arquebuses and cannon. As if it were not enough to mow down the naked Indians by means of steel and gunpowder, the Spaniards used packs of fierce bloodhounds, which sprang upon the poor wretches and tore them limb from limb. So it came to pass that the beautiful island which Columbus had discovered in peace and happiness, was in a short time

converted into an inferno of slaughter and bloodshed, thousands of Indians being killed and their lands made desolate. These terrible deeds took place the year after the first voyage and in years succeeding; but it was the first voyage, on which the boys sailed, that led up to it.

CHAPTER XXII.

FIRST FIGHT WITH THE CARIBS.

THUS far, though there had been many private quarrels with the Indians, owing to the proneness of the Spanish sailors to indulge in the strong drinks of the country, not much blood had been shed, either of white man or of Indian. But the voyage was not to end without at least one sanguinary encounter, and this took place but a few days before Columbus finally left the island and steered for Spain. Sailing leisurely along the north coast, tempted by its beauty to land at many points and explore the fascinating forests that lined the shores, yet feeling unprepared for such attempts, Columbus entered and investigated all the harbors that seemed to him likely to afford good sites for future settlements. Among these there was one of surpassing loveliness, situated at the foot of a high mountain which, from its summit having a wreath of white clouds nearly always around it, he called

Puerto de Monte Plata, the Port of the Silver Mountain, now known as Puerto Plata, one of the finest settlements in Santo Domingo. He found here a good harbor with great depth of water, and was strongly inclined to leave some sailors as the nucleus for a settlement ; but he resisted the inclination and sailed onward, passing a great promontory, which he named Enamorado, and which is now called Ballandra, or the Head of the Whale. It is a magnificent headland, scarped as though hewn out artificially, with projecting rocks behind which Columbus found shelter from a storm.

Here was a bay of exceeding beauty, crescent-shaped, with beaches of silver sands o'ertopped by golden palms, and so inviting of aspect that the Admiral could not withstand the temptation to rest awhile and recuperate in preparation for the long voyage ahead of him. So he ordered the "Pinta" to sail in company with the "Niña" as closely as possible to the beach and cast anchor behind a group of islets that lay in the middle of the bay.

Several days were passed here, during which the sailors were busy in mending the sails, filling the water casks, repairing the boats, and furbishing up their arms. Exploring parties were sent inland as far as they dare venture in search of provisions,

for Columbus had found the native vegetables, like the yucca, Indian corn, *ajé*, etc., to be agreeable substitutes for the dried meats, and secured all he could of them, wherever discovered.

Adolfo was in command of one party and Vicente Yanez Pinzon, captain of the "Niña," in command of the other, and there was quite a spirit of rivalry between them as to which should show the better results of their foraging. While Pinzon was the better sailor, still he was more at home at sea than on land, and the young Prince was the more expert swordsman and adventurous leader, so he penetrated farther into the forest than the other and held his little band compactly together. Pinzon, on the contrary, lingered near the shore, with an occasional foray into the forest; but his men strayed about at their sweet will, and accomplished nothing more than the finding of a small collection of Indian huts, which they ravaged of their stores of fruits and vegetables, greatly to the indignation of their owners, who were incited thereby to revenge.

The men broke for the forest, and some of the women and children, though a few of the latter remained behind and were maltreated by the Spaniards, who reasoned rashly that they were soon to

depart, never to return, and could safely commit such depredations as they pleased. This was a false assumption, of course, and directly contrary to the Admiral's orders; but little cared the rude sailors for that.

One thing they neglected to note, and that was the difference between these people found here and those they had recently left at Guarico. The latter were gentle by nature and inoffensive, enduring great indignities rather than fight; while these were of a fiercer aspect, stronger of build and better armed. No sooner, in fact, did the cries of the wounded women and children reach the savages who had fled to the forest than they answered by a war-cry that sent a shiver of surprise, almost of terror, through the brutal Spaniards. The cry was taken up throughout the forest and along the shore, until the air resounded with it, so that the Spaniards knew hardly what to do. In a short time, indeed, the savage warriors began to appear, at first in little detached groups of half a dozen or so, then in larger bands, until their number had swelled to more than a hundred and they showed an inclination for aggressive attack. They came on boldly, at last, led by a huge warrior of extremely savage aspect, flocking from all directions, until the Spaniards

were entirely surrounded. Accustomed as the latter were to dealing with the inoffensive Indians of the other end of the island, they expected these to disperse at the first signs of attack, and so Captain Pinzon ordered two of his arquebusiers to fire off their guns. They did so, and the smoke and noise startled the savages visibly; but beyond bolting in the direction of the forest a short distance they gave no other manifestation of alarm, returning directly the smoke had subsided and the echoes of the reports had ceased. It seemed, indeed, as though the reports of the guns had let loose a pack of demons, who sprang up on all sides as if from the earth, and advanced without fear to dislodge their enemies from their position. Their yells of fury resounded among the rocks and trees, and as they were entirely naked, with their bodies painted in various colors, they presented an aspect that might have daunted the bravest hearts, let alone the rascally sailors, timorous by nature and without any feeling of right to back them up. They were the aggressors and they knew it; they had abused the hospitality of these people and had no claim upon their regard, so if the savages persisted in their hostility the fight must be to a finish, and victory belong to the bravest.

The Spaniards had the advantage in point of arms, having their arquebuses and crossbows, swords and lances; while the Indians were armed only with war-clubs, wooden swords, lancewood bows and arrows made of reeds. But the clubs were as hard as iron and the swords of ironwood almost as sharp as if they had been of steel. With one of the swords a savage more venturesome than the rest suddenly smote a Spaniard over his head and cleft his helmet through as if it had been paper, cutting his skull almost to the brains, and with one of the war-clubs another savage giant crushed a sailor to the ground. The weapons of the Spaniards may have been more terrible than those of the Indians, but the spirit of the latter was invincible. Though the Spaniards knew it not at first, they were then opposing the fierce Caribs, the cannibal man-eaters, of whom they had heard the Guarico Indians speak with awe and dread. They were comparatively new arrivals in Hispaniola, having come up from the Caribbee islands in their war canoes, being venturesome sailors as well as fighters. Finding the country to their liking, they had sent for their wives and children and had formed a settlement at this spot, from which they were gradually extending over the island.

“ Verily, men,” spake up doughty Vicente Pinzon, “ these be devils let loose from hell, methinks; but devils or no, our only hope is to overcome them and beat a retreat to the ships. So charge your arquebuses, my arquebusiers; let fly your arrows, gallant crossbowmen; and ye swordsmen, give them a taste of your steel! ”

The firearms spake again, and this time with some effect; the crossbows shot their bolts into the serried ranks of the savages with yet better aim; but the Indians still stood their ground, dauntless though amazed. They answered the reports of the guns and the twang of bowstrings with demoniac yells, the wounded tearing savagely at their wounds, only moved to increased fury, if possible, by the sight of blood. For indeed they were men used to bloodshed, reveling in it, living for little else than the gratifying of their instinct for carnage. They were willing to take as well as give; but charge as they might against the Spanish phalanx, they could not find an opening for good work with their swords.

Like the ancient Romans, their best work was at close quarters, and hitherto they had had their way with the unwarlike Indians they had encountered. But these men, arrived as they believed from Heav-

en by way of the sea, were beyond their comprehension. Still, they were undaunted, believing as they did that death in battle was more glorious than a life of ease, and that they would be carried to paradise directly from the field of strife. The chieftain of the band, a huge Carib over six feet tall, reminded his men of this, promising them all sorts of celestial delights if they fell, and the booty of the enemy if they prevailed. He himself set the example, and seemed to have a charmed life, for he evaded the shots and blows that were aimed at him and almost reached the Spanish commander with his ponderous club.

The day was hot and the Spaniards, little used to exertion of such violence, were beginning to waver; while the enemy seemed to increase in number and to receive new vigor from their terrific onslaughts. Back to back, stubbornly contesting the Indian advance, the Spaniards fought with all their might; this must be said to their credit, though they fought in a losing cause. But they could not last long at this rate, and Commander Pinzon began to cast about for some way of retreat. He hoped, almost against hope, that the noise of the engagement might be heard at the bay and some reinforcements be sent him; but a steep hill intervened between

the scene of battle and the ships, so the sounds might be obstructed.

There was one other chance for succor, however, which he had either overlooked or ignored, and that was from the other band led by Adolfo, which had gone he knew not whither. In point of fact, Captain Pinzon did not share the Admiral's belief in the Infante, and viewed his military acquirements with contempt. Columbus knew the stuff of which the boy was made and had every confidence in his ability; a feeling he had arrived at much against his inclination—as we who have followed his career thus far know very well. But the stuff was in him of which heroes are made, and no sooner did he hear the sounds of battle, as he was leading his men through the forest on the further side of the hill, than he proposed to seek the scene of strife.

“It may be nothing but a drunken frolic of the sailors,” he remarked to Pablo, who as usual was his lieutenant; “but if I mistake not, those savage yells portend something more than a mere drinking bout with the Indians.”

“So it seems to me,” answered the boy. “At all events, we can go in that direction, for one way is good as another in this unknown wilderness, without roads or guides.” Adolfo then put it to the



Adolfo's band opportunely appeared in the rear of the Indians and let fly a destructive discharge of crossbows and arquebuses.—Page 253.

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vote of the men, and they held with him that it might be well to investigate, so off they started in the direction of the noise. Gaining the crest of the hill, they were convinced, by the terrible tumult and uproar, that something more than ordinary was going on, and so were warned in advance. The forest was so dense, however, that they could see nothing of either Spaniards or Indians, so they felt their way foot by foot, until an opening presented through which a glimpse was obtained of the clearing in which stood the Indian huts. Then they saw what the matter was, and Adolfo formed his plans accordingly. He caused his men to make ready their arms, enjoining upon them the strictest caution and above all to keep silent until close upon and in the rear of the savages.

Captain Pinzon's command was well-nigh exhausted, and the story of this first fight with savages in the New World might have had a different version, if Adolfo's band had not so opportunely appeared in the rear of the Indians and let fly a destructive discharge of crossbows and arquebuses. It ill accorded with Adolfo's inclinations to thus attack a foe, without warning and by stealth; but he reasoned that his comrades were in peril, that they might succumb to the attack of the Indians without

his aid, and this feeling overcame every other, with the result that the Spaniards were saved. For, attacked from behind, when they thought their only foe was in front, the Indians became panic-stricken and fled tumultuously.

They left several wounded on the ground, who were cared for by Adolfo's orders, and treated with such consideration that when let loose they hastened to their friends and told them of it. So the final result was the re-assembling of the Caribs, who, entertaining, as they did, a great respect for a worthy foe, soon came with signs of peace and offerings of amity. They even traded with the Spaniards the very bows, arrows and war-clubs with which a short time before they had so fiercely attacked them, and in the end there was peace and friendship between the erstwhile enemies.

As for Captain Pinzon and his men: they could not at first believe they owed their rescue to the despised "foreigner," the youth with no apparent fortune but his sword; but when they were convinced that such was the case, they experienced a complete revulsion of feelings and overwhelmed him with their protestations of gratitude.

CHAPTER XXIII.

LOOKING FOR AMAZON ISLAND.

ON account of the many arrows found scattered over the ground after the encounter was over, Columbus named the bay near which the fight took place, and in which his vessels lay all the time it was going on, *la Bahiade las Flechas*, or the Bay of Arrows. It may be located to-day, for it has ever since retained the name, on the west side of the great Gulf of Samana, which indents the north coast of Santo Domingo. This Gulf, or Bay, of Samana was at one time the subject of negotiation between the Dominicans and the Government of the United States, during the presidency of General Grant, and came very near becoming a possession of the great Republic founded so many years after Columbus showed the way to America.

Samana is a magnificent body of water and its shores are very inviting, clad as they are in tropical vegetation, ranks and rows of beautiful palm

trees standing guard over the fertile gardens of the natives. The peninsula of Samana is extremely attractive, from the diversity of its scenery, and its healthful location. The Indians of this region disappeared centuries ago, victims of the Spaniards' cruelties, and now, strange to say, it is mainly occupied by descendants of black people who were formerly slaves in the United States, liberated by philanthropists and colonized at Samana.

The Spaniards hardly had time to gather up their wounded and collect their plunder, before the Caribs were again flocking around them; but this time with evident desire to greet them in a friendly spirit. The giant chief, who showed a severe wound in his right shoulder, strode ahead of his followers, bearing his ponderous war-club, his hair bedecked with parrot's feathers of gaudy hue and his face painted with stripes of red and yellow.

As he approached the Spaniards he placed his club on the ground, in token of his peaceful intentions, and all his men likewise laid down their arms, awaiting the decision of their former foes as to whether they would accept the proffers of peace.

Pinzon and the Prince held a short consultation, the result of which was that they signified their permission for friendly intercourse, of which the

Caribs at once availed themselves. Then began the strangest kind of traffic, on the one side the savage Caribs, with the war-paint still fresh on their naked bodies, and on the other the mail-clad Spaniards. The Indians brought all the fruits and vegetables they could find in the half-wild gardens, and when these objects of barter ran short offered their bows and arrows, their spears and clubs—seeing that the strangers regarded them with evident interest. So it happened that by the time the shore was reached, off which lay the vessels, the victors were laden with a great variety of weapons which they had not seen a few hours previously, and marched at the head of a long procession of naked savages bearing burdens of provisions. The Admiral was doubly glad at the return of his fighting men, having been extremely anxious on account of the tumult in the forest, and welcoming the trophies of the conquest warmly.

The provisions brought by the Caribs served to keep the Spaniards from starving on the homeward voyage, and the strange weapons they yielded up afterward figured in the triumphal procession Columbus led across Spain after his arrival at Palos. Indeed, some of the Caribs themselves were among the trophies of Spanish valor shown to the wonder-

ing people of Spain, for several of the warriors insisted upon accompanying Columbus on the voyage and would not take no for an answer. For they were themselves adventurous sailors, making long water journeys in their frail canoes, and besides, they had a great admiration for a valiant foe and wished to see the country from which had come the only men who had ever defeated them in battle. They were more intelligent, as well as more warlike, than the Arawaks, the natives of Cuba and Hispaniola. Coming northward from their original home in South America, they had conquered the natives of all the islands as far north as Puerto Rico and Hispaniola, and if the Spaniards had not arrived when they did it is possible they would have eventually acquired possession of all the Greater Antilles.

It was on account of the tales told by these Caribs, after the trading had been concluded, the water-casks filled and the vessels trimmed for departure, that Columbus started on the strangest quest that ever mortal man conceived: no less than the finding of an island inhabited solely by women, or Carib Amazons. Taking a great liking to Juan, the young Lucayan, one of the Caribs told him that if Columbus wished to find a foe worthy of his prowess he

should seek out the wonderful Amazons, the female warriors who lived on an island to the south, about two days' sail in the great canoes with wings—as they termed the caravels. Juan repeated the substance of this information to Pablo and he told the Admiral, whose imagination was at once inflamed at the prospect of finding such strange people; for he had read of such in ancient books, and really expected to discover them in his travels.

“Where does the island lie, son Pablo?” he asked the boy. “Get exact details from the Indian and we will go in search of it.” Questioned closely, the Carib said it was, as he had already told the Lucayan, only two days' distant, to the south of Hispaniola. He himself had never seen it, but his father had once visited it and had met with such a rough reception that neither he nor any other warrior of the tribe had ventured to land there again. “Sometimes,” he said, “the women warriors will permit young men or boys to land, of whom they make slaves, but treat with kindness; but if an adult approaches the island he is warned to land at his peril.”

“And are there any islands which contain the dog-headed men, and the Cyclopes with one eye each and heads between their shoulders?” asked

Columbus. He had read also of these, and concluded that if there were women warriors, there might be likewise some other freaks of nature, as well, of whom he had information from the ancient books.

Questioned as to these, the Carib shook his head. "No," he answered, "not in these seas; but in the great continent from which his ancestors had come (South America) the forests held both the dog-headed men and the giants with heads between their shoulders. This answer gave his information about the Amazons an air of verity, and so Columbus concluded to give over a few days to the search. If he could add a few of those wonderful Amazons to his collection of captives, he reasoned, they would form brilliant ornaments to the triumphal procession he contemplated in Spain and cause his sovereigns to regard him with greater favor than otherwise they might. As he was about to order the caravels to up anchor and away, a signal from shore informed him that another band of Indians was coming and he concluded to wait. This party was headed by the actual cacique of the tribe, a man of more pacific presence than the war chief, and evidently possessed of greater wealth, for he gave Columbus a coronet of gold, similar to the

one that Guacanagari wore, and brought also cotton hammocks, parrots, and delicious fruits of the tropics. He made known to the Admiral that he was ruler of the great province of Ciguay, and was probably the same cacique Mayonabex who a few years later was murdered by the Spaniards. No premonition of this cruel fate, however, came to him then, and he treated Columbus with the greatest consideration. When asked as to the island of the Amazons, he too pointed to the southward, and offered to send along four of his young men as pilots or guides. This offer was gratefully accepted by the Admiral, and after the cacique had left and the Caribs came aboard, the order was finally issued for making sail, and at last the coast where the first Indian blood was shed by white men was left behind. This Bay of Arrows was, in fact, the real point of departure for Spain when the homeward trip began, as no other landing was made; and thus Samana is a place of great historic interest in a double sense.

This story of the Amazons always haunted Columbus, who really believed it, and during all his voyages was always on the alert for a glimpse of those strange warriors. But he was disappointed, as he never saw them; nor, it may be remarked in pass-

ing, did any one else find substantial traces of them. When, years later, Orellana descended the river Amazon, he heard stories similar to those told the Admiral; and in fact the great river of South America received the name it bears on that account. The island which they inhabited in the Caribbean Sea is supposed to have been that now called Montserrat, and which was discovered by Columbus on his second voyage, in 1493. The Indians on board the two vessels, who now numbered about a dozen, were at variance among themselves as to the exact location of the Amazon's island, at first saying it was in the southeast, then in the northeast, and again settling upon the southeast. Columbus changed the direction of sailing several times, after he had extricated his vessels from the Gulf of Samana, and at last bore southwardly, and easterly, in a direction that would have taken him at last to Puerto Rico. It was left for him to discover that island, however, on his next voyage, for seeing that his sailors did not apparently relish a continuance on a course that took them farther from Spain than ever, he sent for Adolfo and asked him to ascertain if possible what they wished. The weather was calm, so calm in fact that several of the Indians leaped overboard occasionally and swam like water

dogs about the caravels, so Adolfo took one of the small boats and went over to consult with the master of the "Pinta." Captain Martin Alonzo had a feeling of great respect for the youth by this time, not only on account of his prowess with the sword, but also for his action at the Bay of Arrows, when he rescued his brother, Vicente Yanez, so he received him cordially and set out the best he had on board, insisting that he stay to dine. During the meal the two carefully canvassed the situation; and it may be believed that Captain Pinzon did not make out the Admiral's actions any better than they were.

"What do I believe as to the isle of the Amazonas?" asked Captain Pinzon, bringing his fist down upon the table with a bang. "Why, it is all of a piece with the rest of Don Cristobal Colon's egregious mistakes and fanciful foibles. There may be an island where the women warriors dwell, and it may not be more than two days' sail, as the red man has said; but if so, what of it? Do we wish to spill more Spanish blood in taking captive a few more savage Indians, be they male warriors or female warriors, merely that the vanity of Don Cristobal Colon be gratified at court by presenting them to our sovereigns? We have had adventure

enough, say I, and there is no man aboard my craft that wishes to risk any more or venture any more, to make war upon women. There is no credit in it, to my way of thinking. If they possessed mines of gold or precious stones, why, that would be another matter; but so far as I can learn, they have neither one nor the other, and live like the rest of the savages, devoid of all civilized comforts and as poor as they were born. They have no liking for men, the Indians say, save to partake of their flesh, like the cannibals that they are; and if that is their preference, I say let them live in it. I and my men desire to put about for Spain, and the sooner the better. Here we are, provisioned for the voyage; but none too well, and every day but adds to the dangers from famine, peradventure we be delayed by storms or contrary winds. Then again, this old 'Pinta' is far from seaworthy; her foremast is sprung and I cannot carry more than half sail in an ordinary wind. What we shall do if a storm springs upon us, the good Lord only knows!"

Just about this time, as if to emphasize the sailor's remarks, the wind, which had been blowing from the northward, suddenly shifted and came in favoring gales from the southwest. This fact decided Columbus, when he learned of Captain Pinzon's

declaration, to about ship and start on the homeward voyage in good earnest, abandoning with regret the search for the island of Amazons. When the sailors heard the order and saw that indeed they were about taking the direct course for their native shores, they set up a loud cheer, getting at their work with alacrity, and on all faces except perhaps those of the Indians, there was an expression of joy and gladness. The dangers that had been encountered and the privations suffered were for the moment forgotten, as the vessels were brought upon the homeward course, with a favoring breeze behind them that filled every sail.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE TEMPESTUOUS HOMEWARD VOYAGE.

As the sailors predicted when on the outward voyage, the gales that so persistently blew from the northeast and were so favorable for them when seeking the New World, were now an obstacle to their progress on the homeward trip. These so-called "trade winds," which cool the tropics with their fresh breezes, soon asserted their power, and for many days the two vessels beat up against them, making very little progress toward the haven of the Admiral's desires.

At last, after more than two weeks of continual rebuffs, the northern verge of the tropic belt was reached and the "trades" died away, giving place to more favorable winds. But with the cessation of the trade winds came extremely boisterous seas in place of the calm waters the voyagers had enjoyed in the southern ocean, and they almost longed for a change back again to the old conditions. In

fact, they were never satisfied, those sailors who accompanied Columbus on his first voyage to America, and though they had experienced every kind of weather and witnessed the most varied scenes in nature, they were still grumbling and discontented. They soon had good cause to repine, indeed, when, after sailing for nearly a month, a storm burst upon the crazy little craft that threatened to overwhelm and send them to the bottom of the sea. It was about the fourteenth of February that the wind, which had been constantly increasing in violence, finally reached the intensity of a tempest, the fury of which was such that all sail was taken in and the vessels sent spinning under bare poles before the blasts. The waves were "mountain high," and in the darkness of the succeeding night the "Niña" and the "Pinta" parted company, never again being within sight of each other at sea. This time, indeed, Captain Pinzon had a good excuse for disobeying the Admiral's orders to keep him company, for it was impossible for him to see the signals set by Columbus to that effect, the seas were so vast and the wind blew the spray about with such violence. Dawn of the fifteenth found the little "Niña," that open boat into which were crowded nearly half a hundred men, adrift at the mercy of

the wind and waves. Scant sail was set, just enough to keep her before the gale, and the despairing sailors abandoned themselves to their fate. Believing that their last moments would soon arrive, they cast lots as to which of the survivors, in case of shipwreck, and if there should be any, should make pilgrimages to holy shrines, and the lot fell to Columbus, twice out of three times drawing. The sequel showed that he faithfully performed his vow, and the first night after landing at Palos he spent silent before the altar in the church at Moguer.

The storm still continuing, the Admiral made a last attempt to perpetuate the knowledge of his discoveries, in case the caravel should founder, by writing a short account of them on parchment and after enclosing the manuscript in a cake of wax, placing it in a water-tight cask, which he then threw overboard. Another account was also written and placed within another cask, which was kept on the poop of the caravel, where it might be washed overboard if the vessel went to pieces.

“You are witnesses,” he said to Pablo and Adolfo, “of this act of mine by which I seek to perpetuate the knowledge of our doings in the New World. Death alone I fear not; but the thought that, after all that has been done by my sovereigns

and myself, the shipwreck of our craft should consign our deeds to oblivion, gives me great sorrow. My heart is torn with anguish at the thought of my two sons, about your own ages, now at school at Cordova, and whom I may never see again; but despite this sad reflection, I would not fear to die, if I knew that the tidings of what has been accomplished would sometime reach the coast of Spain. This parchment which I have enclosed in wax and placed in the cask is addressed to the Spanish sovereigns, with a promised reward of a thousand ducats to whomsoever shall find and deliver it to them intact. God grant that this at least may survive, even if our ship and its company perish in the sea.”

No authenticated account of the discovery of this cask was ever given; but many years ago a story was prevalent that it had been picked up by the captain of an American ship, off the northwest coast of Africa. He and his crew were taking in ballast at a beach, when one of the men found what appeared to be a gigantic piece of pumice all encrusted over with barnacles. Breaking open this the outer crust, within was found a keg, inside which was a cocoanut enveloped in a kind of gum or resinous substance containing a parchment covered with Spanish-Gothic characters.

These characters were nearly illegible, but a learned Armenian who kept a bookshop in an old city near, succeeded in deciphering the inscription, which was translated into French and then into English. According to this man, it was a short but concise account of the discovery of Cathay or farther India, addressed to Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, stating that the ships could not possibly survive the tempest another day, and that they were then between the Western Isles and Spain. This narrative, with another like it, was written and thrown into the sea, in the event that, should the caravel go to the bottom, some mariner might pick up one or the other, and send it to its destination. This account bore date 1493, was signed by Christopher Columbus, in a bold, dashing hand, and at the time of its discovery had been afloat three hundred and fifty years. The American captain who claimed to have found this precious document sent news of it from Gibraltar, whence he promised to take it to the United States; but as nothing was ever heard of him afterward, it is supposed that his ship was lost at sea, and with it the Columbian treasure.

Having done all he could to secure a memorial of his voyage, Columbus was somewhat easier in his

mind, but distressed still on account of the peril to which his friends were subjected. He was deeply attached to the boys, who reminded him of his own sons, whom he had left in Spain, Diego and Fernando, and confided to them many things which no one else on board the caravel ever learned.

For example, on the morning of the second day of the storm, after he and the pilots had been consulting as to their situation, he said to Pablo and Adolfo, "Those men think we are off the coast of Spain or Portugal, but, in confidence let me tell you, sons, we are much nearer to the Azores than to the mainland. But as those islands belong to Portugal, I would almost rather trust myself to the fury of the tempest than to the tender mercies of their governor, who is an old acquaintance, and also an enemy, of mine. Still, I am bearing up for the isles as well as possible, for we are nearly out of water and food, and perchance we escape shipwreck may yet perish of starvation. But what thinkest thou, son Adolfo, cannot you, as an Infante of Portugal, command the governor to treat us as we deserve and give us succor on royal account?"

Adolfo looked distressed. "Your Excellency," he answered, "do not call me Infante, for I am not permitted to be known as a prince of the

blood-royal. I have some influence with the King, my sire, but——”

“What?” demanded Columbus. “How is this? Not an Infante, and yet related to the King? Explain thyself, my son.”

“I cannot,” faltered Adolfo. “At least, I do not wish to. But, do you forget that the King has no sons? That is, he has no acknowledged sons who will succeed him on the throne.”

“My faith! that is so,” admitted Columbus. “And I had not recalled that fact, all this time I have addressed you as a prince. But still——”

“Your Excellency,” rejoined Adolfo, looking up with great distress plainly visible in his face, yet boldly, as if he had concluded to settle the matter, once for all, “I bear the same relation to the King that your son Fernando does to you. My mother, like his, was of humble birth, and has never been acknowledged as—as——”

“Ah, I see,” said Columbus, with a sigh. “You bring home to me the great omission of my life. And yet Fernando is as dear to me as is Diego, my first-born, and I cannot conceive how the King should forsake thee because of thy mother’s humble birth.”

“Neither has he done so,” answered Adolfo with

spirit. “But do you not see, he would by no means acknowledge me as his heir. He is a great and generous king; but——”

“Yes, yes, I see. Pardon me, son Adolfo; thy distress adds poignancy to my grief on account of my son Fernando. I shall not allude to it again; but, believe me, none the less do I honor thee.”

“It was not my fault, surely,” said Adolfo, bitterly, “yet I have been made to suffer for it, as though it were my own.”

“Poor boy, thou hast said truly, it was no fault of thine. But let us change the subject and again recur to the possibility of making a landing in these isles, peradventure we may be so fortunate or unfortunate, I know not which. Dost know the governor, and if so hast not some influence with him?”

“Slightly, your Excellency, and he has cause to remember me, for I once saved his son from drowning, when bathing in the Tagus.”

“Ah then, no longer shall I hesitate to bear up for the isles. What ho, mariners! Keep her up as much as possible, for I have reason to believe——”

“Land, land ahead!” shouted the man on the lookout. “Land on the weather bow!” At this news all the sailors broke out into exclamations of

joy, their depression suddenly changed to rejoicing.

Still, their troubles were by no means over, for though land lay right in sight, and they approached it within ten or fifteen miles, the wind suddenly veered directly ahead, and for two days the unfortunate sailors lay hovering about the island without being able to reach it. When finally they did reach a harbor, with all hands worn out from constant watching and labor, they had no sooner cast anchor than the cable parted and the caravel was driven out to sea again. The next morning the caravel crawled slowly back to harbor, and this time the cable held and a boat was finally sent ashore. Their place of refuge proved to be the island of Saint Mary's, one of the Azores, and when Columbus learned this he hailed the fact as an auspicious omen, and commanded that half the crew should immediately land and perform their vows, as they had promised to do if they were saved, by walking in procession to the nearest shrine or church, barefoot and clad only in their shirts. After they had done their duty and refreshed themselves, they were to return to the caravel and the remaining members of the crew were to follow their example.

But the Admiral's devotion to his vows came near being the means of his undoing, for it turned out that the first men ashore were set upon by a mob and made prisoners. When they appealed to the governor he gave them no satisfaction, but instead kept them in jail until he should communicate with Columbus. The latter waited for hours, unaware of what had happened until he changed the position of the caravel and saw the mob ashore, previously hidden by an intervening headland. Then he was very angry, and turning to Adolfo, who was ever at his side, he said, "Verily, son, those wretches ashore, even though they be subjects of thy king, are worse than the heathen savages whom we met in Guanahani, for they treated us like friends, while these have received my men, even though on a holy mission, like enemies. Go thou, Adolfo, in the small boat ashore and reason with this barbarous governor of the isle, telling him what thou likest, only make him release my men and prevail upon him to send us some water and provisions, ere we perish."

"With pleasure, your Excellency," answered Adolfo; "and may I take Pablo with me?"

"Of course, take him and two others; but beware lest thy tongue lead thee astray. Tell the

governor just enough to whet his curiosity but not to gratify it, remember. I trust thee, Prince, needless for me to say, and our fate is in thy hands.”

“Rest assured, your Excellency, your confidence is not misplaced. My own father could not draw from me secrets you would have me keep. Methinks I can cause this man to change his attitude.”

“Go, then, and may thy mission prosper.”

Taking the only remaining boat, Adolfo hastened ashore with Pablo and two men to row, and was soon holding an interview with the governor. Scarce had he reached the landing when a sudden tempest sprang up which caused Columbus to slip his cable and put out to sea, where for two days he remained, storm tossed and anxious, unable to regain the shore.

CHAPTER XXV.

A HOSTILE RECEPTION IN THE AZORES.

BEWILDERED by the strange events of the few days past and brought almost to the verge of despair by the hostile reception of his men, Columbus knew not what to think of the situation. He imagined that war must have been declared between Spain and Portugal, or that the king of the latter country, moved by jealousy of the former's success in the first expedition to the New World, wished to forestall Ferdinand by seizing the person of his Admiral and detaining his vessels. It turned out that the latter surmise was correct, for King John of Portugal had indeed issued orders to the governors of all islands on the coast of Africa, at which it was possible Columbus might touch on his return, to do that very thing, which in itself might prove a cause of war between his kingdom and that of Spain. It did not matter to the King, so chagrined was he that one whom he once listened to and who had urged him to equip an expedition, should have

carried his proffers of services to Spain and won laurels for his deadly rival.

Meanwhile, Columbus being a prey to doubt and perplexity at sea, and unable to afford assistance to his envoy, the latter was not having everything his own way on shore. He was allowed to land, and when he sent his name and credentials to the governor, that individual hastened to do him honor as a connection of the sovereign whom he served. He despatched a horse richly caparisoned to the quay, with attendants in livery, and thus Adolfo was taken into his presence without unnecessary delay. His modest yet dignified bearing proclaimed him a great *hidalgo* (a "son of somebody") and irrespective of his personality, which was already favorably known to the governor, who had not forgotten the service he had once rendered him in rescuing his son from a watery grave. He was greatly astonished, however, to find him in the company of a Spanish adventurer (as he regarded Columbus), and after the greetings had been passed he gave expression to this astonishment. "How is it, Prince Adolfo, that you come to find yourself engaged in the service of the Spanish government? Is it with the consent of your royal sire, or is this some adventure on your own account?"

“Both, your Excellency,” replied Adolfo, seating himself at the governor’s table, after indicating to Pablo that he was also to remain, and sipping the generous wine of the Azores set before him. “Both with the consent of my father, and also on my own account. That is, though it is true the King did not approve my coming, and would have interposed insuperable obstacles; yet I knew he would appreciate the information I might gain and would forgive me after my return.”

“Ho, ho, then you ran away from court and essayed this venture all by yourself, incognito, as it were?”

“Yes, to put it that way, I ran away from Portugal,—or rather, left without informing any one of my intended journey,—and shipped with his Excellency, the Admiral, without betraying my name or nativity.”

“His Excellency? The Admiral? What, do you mean that Genoese, or rather Spanish, adventurer, Colon? Since how long has he been an admiral, forsooth? I recall that he was, not many months since, begging from door to door, as it were, for his daily bread.”

“True, so he was, in a sense; but by the ‘capitulation’ signed by Queen Isabella and King Fer-

dinand, he is to be styled the Lord High Admiral of the Ocean Sea, and was commissioned viceroy over all the countries he might discover.”

“ Ah yes, and this brings me back to the original question. What lands has he discovered, and how came he to reach them. In sooth, it seems passing strange that he should have discovered any countries not already appropriated by your royal sire. And let me tell you in strictest confidence, thy sire hath issued orders for me to detain this proud ‘ Admiral of the Ocean Sea ’ until the matter shall be investigated. Rather, until an expedition shall have been despatched on the course he pursued and returned therefrom. So thou wilt make thyself at home in my palace until this shall have been accomplished.”

“ Nay, nay, not so, your Excellency,” exclaimed Prince Adolfo. “ The Admiral has landed half his crew here in performance of a vow, and after they shall have returned the other half will wish to come ashore for the same holy purpose. Then, after that has been accomplished, we intend to sail for home without delay; tarrying only for the water and provisions which you will be gracious enough to sell us, taking therefor written orders on the Spanish crown.”

“Oh ho, I will do that, will I? And what about the orders of thy sire for his detention? They are peremptory, and I have no choice but to obey. To disobey would mean the forfeit of my position.”

“And to obey them will mean that, also, if my influence at court amounts to aught,” retorted Adolfo, rising as if to go. “The King’s orders (and I say it with all due respect) were issued in ignorance of what has transpired and of the true nature of the voyage. Again, if carried out, they would be like to precipitate war between two kingdoms now at peace. As one very nearly concerned in the affair and more clearly cognizant of the import of the voyage, I command you to at once release the poor sailors you have detained, to furnish us with needed provisions and then allow us to continue on our voyage. Unless you do, I shall make such representations at court as will lose you not only your position, but what you may value nearly as much,—your precious life itself. Now choose, as between the orders of a distant king and a present prince. I know this man, Columbus, and know him to be true and just. It is true that he at first took his plans to my father, who rejected them before they were accepted by the sovereigns of Spain. If he has issued

orders to detain him and rob him of his laurels, it was in a fit of pique, of which ere this he has repented.”

“Well, well, Prince Adolfo, thou speakest as with authority. I am not so much moved to grant thy request—or rather command—on account of thy position by right of birth as thy good services rendered me in rescuing my son. However, be the reason what it may, there are the royal orders. What shall I do with them?”

“Bring them to me. I will cancel them with my signature. Upon my own head I take all the blame, if there be any. Bring them hither?”

The governor sent for the parchments bearing the King’s signature and seal, and Adolfo, after attentively perusing the same, called for writing material and wrote across the document, “Canceled by order of Adolfo, Infante (by courtesy) and the King’s representative.”

“It is well,” remarked the governor quietly. “But had I not known thee previously I should not have allowed this interposition in official affairs. I trust, however, that all will be well when this transaction is reported at court?”

“It shall be,” rejoined Adolfo simply. “I shall make it my first concern to acquaint my father

with what you have done and also with what I have assumed upon myself.”

The governor called an aide and despatched him to shore with orders to release the imprisoned sailors and to make all the amends in his power for their detention. Also to command his commander of commissariat to issue provisions for the caravel, when it should return to its anchorage. “Meanwhile,” said the governor to Adolfo, “you will be my guest. Thy chamber is ready, and to it retire, thou and thy young friend, for you both must be weary with such long buffetings at sea. After a *siesta*, long or short, as pleaseth thee, rejoin me here and we will dine.”

“Thanks, your Excellency,” replied the Prince; “but I cannot rest while my noble Admiral is beset by wind and wave out at sea; and to partake of your hospitality, while my fellow sailors are perhaps famishing, would go against my feelings, I assure you.”

“Rest on that score, Prince, for while the storm lasts thou canst do nothing for the Admiral; and as for the mariners: those ashore shall be fed most bountifully, my word for it, and those on shipboard filled with cheer at once they return.”

“Again, thanks. I knew you would treat them

well, once you were acquainted with the true motives for this voyage.”

“Indeed, I had no other inclination, Prince; but the orders gave me no discretion. Now, if thou wilt not retire to rest, suppose thou relatest me some of the incidents of this wonderful voyage. A new world, sayest thou? A new people, also, red of hue and savages? I must see those aboard the caravel, for in sooth I am curious.”

Adolfo related the chief incidents of the voyage, taking care to confine his remarks to inconsequential things and to betray nothing great that would give an inkling of the route thither and back.

The governor was overcome with wonder and did not withhold his admiration at the great discretion of Columbus in dealing with his refractory mariners and with the people of the newly-discovered lands. When he learned that nearly forty men had been left to garrison a fort in the New World, he saw at once the futility of any scheme of the Portuguese for detaining the caravel or sending out another expedition; for the men left behind furnished proof positive of the great discovery, whether Columbus were detained and slain or allowed to complete his voyage. Then again, there was the “Pinta,” which might have survived the tempest and, even in case

the "Niña" were detained or destroyed, would carry the news of the discovery to Spain.

"Truly, Prince, thou wert right. Thy father is a man of uncommon sense, and he will see how futile it were to molest or detain the Admiral, for history like that you and he have made is not to be concealed. His error lay in allowing Colon to carry his schemes to Spain, and he cannot rectify it now by any untoward act. Still, I will have to insist upon the Admiral showing me his papers of commission bearing the royal signatures, perchance he have any, when he returns to port."

"Oh, he has them, believe me, your Excellency. And when you meet him, peradventure he be not too indignant at the treatment he has received to land, you will be impressed with his dignity and nobility of mind. He is one man in a thousand; yea, a man of a million, and perhaps the world has not his like to-day."

"Say you so? Then I must surely see him and do all in my power to make amends for my seeming brutality. Go, now, and rest awhile. Just as soon as the caravel is reported I will inform thee, and we together will go to meet the Admiral at the mole."

It was towards the end of the second day after Adolfo's arrival on shore that the storm-beaten

craft crept slowly into harbor and cast anchor off shore. The governor lost no time in sending an invitation to Columbus to come and make the palace his abiding place so long as he should wish to do so; but the Admiral sternly refused to accept of his hospitality. He felt it incumbent upon him to rescue his men and also to land the second portion of the crew for the purpose of complying with their vows; but further than this, and the acceptance of a few casks of water, he refused to go. When, in accordance with his expressed intentions, the governor sent a priest and a notary on board the "Niña" to examine the Admiral's commission, the paper bearing the royal signatures was scornfully shown the Portuguese emissaries, whose bearing at once underwent a decided change.

They also pressed Columbus to go ashore with them and partake of the governor's bounty; but the Admiral refused, saying that he much mistrusted the good-will of one whose behavior had been so bad. For the courtesies which he had rendered at the eleventh hour, he, Columbus, tendered his thanks, in the name of his eminent sovereigns; but he also should report the actions that had preceded them. If, then, they would convey his orders for his envoy and the sailors to return to the caravel, and allow

the men aboard to perform their duty to their religion, he would soon rid the island of his presence.

Governor Castañeda was greatly chagrined at the refusal of the Admiral to accept his tardily-tendered favors, and asked Adolfo to go aboard and urge Columbus to reconsider his determination to proceed without having paid him at least a visit of ceremony. But, though impressed by the account Adolfo rendered of his reception, and glad to learn of the governor's change of heart, Columbus steadily persisted in his refusal and finally sailed without having become indebted to the insular government for anything beyond what would have been bestowed upon any mariners wrecked upon its shores.

“As for the governor's present inclination, let that go; but as for the indignity offered me and my men, that must be settled between the respective crowns of Spain and Portugal,” he remarked to Adolfo, as the caravel left the hostile coast of Saint Mary's behind.

CHAPTER XXVI.

COLUMBUS AT THE COURT OF PORTUGAL.

THE untoward events at Saint Mary's had consumed ten precious days, and it was not until the twenty-fourth of February that the caravel finally set sail for Spain. The weary sailors were rewarded with three days of pleasant weather, but on the twenty-seventh rising seas betokened another storm, which actually burst upon them on the second of March. At midnight of that date, the frail vessel was struck by a squall which tore her sails to ribbons, and she was sent scudding before the blast under bare poles, as on a former occasion, the second time in this vexatious voyage. As all the signs indicated that the coast of the continent was near,—but whether that portion belonging to Spain or Portugal, they knew not,—the hapless mariners were fearful they would be wrecked, almost within sight of home. During two nights and a day, the caravel was driven before the storm, and when daylight

broke on the morning of the fourth of March, a rough and rocky shore was revealed. The more experienced of the sailors recognized a well-known landmark, in the rock of Cintra, off the mouth of the river Tagus, and when convinced of his landfall Columbus knew not whether to rejoice or repine. For he was again in the grasp of his enemy, the King of Portugal, should he land; and the condition of the "Nina" did not permit of continuing further without repairs, while the provisions were nearly gone.

"Frankly, now, Prince Adolfo," he said to the youth, whom he had called for consultation, "can I risk the results of this terrible voyage, after all we have been through to gain the treasures my small vessel bears, by sailing right into the lion's mouth?"

"If your Excellency means his Majesty the King of Portugal, and my respected parent," answered Adolfo, "I will answer for your safety and the safety of the treasure with my life. King John is grasping and ambitious; but he also is just and prone to honesty, that is, when he is put to the test. I am sure he will not harm you, nor will he dare lay hands upon the fruits of this adventure."

"Be it so, then," rejoined Columbus. "Though I

do not share thy faith in his Majesty, yet I see no other course at present open. And, moreover, we are now right off the wretched settlement of Rastello, inhabited by wreckers, who will surely rob us, perhaps even commit murder, for the sake of the gold we have aboard.”

Making a virtue of dire necessity, then, the Admiral cast anchor off the piratical hamlet of Rastello; though he had no sooner done so than the caravel was surrounded by the wreckers in their boats, who had learned, from the few Portuguese sailors aboard, that the “Niña” was laden with golden treasure. They also learned that the vessel had survived the most wonderful voyage in the world, and catching glimpses of the strange Indians as they peered over the rail, they carried the news ashore, so that shortly the river was alive with craft of every description, containing not only the hardened wreckers with sinister intentions, but hundreds of Portuguese impelled merely by curiosity.

It so happened that a large man-of-war was at anchor in the river, the commander of which, Don Alonzo de Acuña, a gallant officer in the Portuguese service, hearing of what Columbus had done, at once ordered him aboard his ship to report. He

had never, perhaps, heard of a man named Columbus, and had but a hazy conception of the momentous possibilities of the voyage he had accomplished, and as to his rank, he knew nothing and probably cared less. But Columbus, well aware that he outranked the commander of the Portuguese ship, stood squarely on his dignity and refused to obey. "What?" he exclaimed to Adolfo. "Does not that captain of a single ship know that I am an admiral, and entitled to command a fleet? It is probably through ignorance; but know he must that I am Admiral of the Ocean Sea, by right of my capitulation with the sovereigns of Spain, and if I am received at all, it must be with the honors due my rank and station." It was the first time that Columbus had had the opportunity to insist upon the recognition of his title from the commander of a war-vessel, and he must be pardoned for indulging his vanity to this extent. And when the Portuguese commander, informed of the facts by Adolfo, became aware of the high rank of the new arrival at the river Tagus, he made full amends,—to his credit be it said. He at once ordered his great boat to be launched, and himself went to visit the Admiral, accompanied by drummers, fifers and trumpeters, so that all the people in the harbor

knew that some distinguished man had arrived in that insignificant little caravel, and not merely a common sailor without rank or distinction.

Columbus was deeply touched by this manifestation of approval, at this generous recognition of his position, after so many long months of unrequited effort, battling with stormy seas and treating with uncivilized savages. His heart swelled with emotion, and when an admiral's salute thundered over the harbor he could hardly restrain his tears. "It augurs well," he remarked to the Prince, "that my first official reception should be so just and generous. Methinks this officer of thy navy must be a gentleman born, he has such a correct conception of the honors due one of my rank."

"All his Majesty's officers are gentlemen, I trust," said Adolfo simply; but he intended no rebuke to the Admiral.

"Yea, verily," rejoined Columbus hastily; "I meant not otherwise. But here he appears. Do thou, Prince, receive him at the taffrail and conduct him o'er the caravel, after we have passed the compliments of the occasion."

The Admiral embraced his guest heartily, as he was presented by the Prince; but the visitor was too astonished to return the greeting properly, see-

ing who it was that introduced him. "What? An Infante of Portugal on this first adventure into the western ocean?" he exclaimed, gazing at Adolfo as though hardly believing his eyes.

"The same," answered the Prince easily, "and through the generosity of this great man, for whom I bespeak all the courtesies of the crown, for verily he is entitled to our gratitude."

Captain Acuña was more and more astounded as he was led over the vessel and saw what treasure it contained; for Columbus withheld nothing from his view, having an ulterior purpose, as well as desire to gratify the curiosity of this, the first official in Portugal's service to pay him a visit of his own accord. "I shall despatch a courier at once to the King," said Captain Acuña, informing him of your arrival and entreating his most gracious approval of your actions. The Prince, I am sure, will join with me in bespeaking for you a reception at court and permission to depart for Spain after necessary refreshment."

"I would be glad," replied Adolfo, "to myself convey to the King the first tidings of the discovery;" but neither Columbus nor Acuña approved of this, and so a courier was sent to Valparaiso, where the court was then being held, several miles distant from

Lisbon the capital. During the absence of the courier the harbor presented a festive appearance, it appearing as though all the people for a hundred miles around had gathered here to look upon the vessel and crew that had performed the most wonderful voyage that ever was recorded. Four days after the arrival of the "Niña" in the Tagus, the King's messenger, one Don Martin de Noroña, a cavalier of distinction, arrived with an invitation for Columbus to wait upon his Majesty at the court; and though the Admiral had suspicions that some danger to himself lay in the journey, he made haste to comply with the royal commands. Adolfo accompanied him, and also, at his earnest request, his friend Pablo, who had hung in the background during the past few days, feeling altogether out of his element. Pablo's honest face was shining with excitement, his chubby figure was clad in rich raiment; but if his own inclination had been consulted he would much rather have remained on shipboard. He knew, of course, that he was to lose his good friend Adolfo; for, now that his rank and birth were revealed to all, how could he continue with the caravel to Spain? He had surmised, months before, that his chum was of no common lineage; in fact, had overheard so much of the conversations

between the Prince and Columbus that he could not but have held this opinion. But as Adolfo had not chosen to reveal himself in so many words, and in fact had always insisted that Pablo should treat him as a comrade, without regard to any possible difference of rank, the latter had done so, keeping his own counsel, meanwhile, and in his heart wondering at the many strange happenings in which he had taken part.

So the boy went along; though this fact is not recorded in the journal of the Admiral. That does not matter, for the event has survived in the traditions of Palos, Pablo's native place, and it is from them that his part in the great affair has been obtained. In view of their prospective separation, Adolfo and Pablo were even more attached to each other, seemingly, than before. They traveled close together, each being mounted on a gaily caparisoned donkey, while the Admiral rode a stately mule. As the weather was rainy and the roads in bad condition, the journey to court occupied the greater portion of two days, and it was not until the second night that the travelers arrived at Valparaiso. The name, Val Paraiso, Valley of Paradise, must have reminded them of that other place on the coast of Hispaniola, upon which Columbus had bestowed the same appel-

lation, on account of its exceeding beauty ; but there were more points of contrast than of similarity in the two places. There, in the western world, the beauties were solely of Nature's creation, and there were no stately palaces and magnificent structures of man's making ; only huts of palm, inhabited by naked savages.

If the King's courier, Don Martin de Noroña, had any suspicion that Adolfo was an illegitimate son of his sovereign, he gave no sign of the fact, except to treat him with distinguished courtesy ; and if King John were aware that the Infante was with Columbus, he allowed no token of it to appear. The Admiral and his friends were received with ceremony by cavaliers who rode forth to meet them, and after they had refreshed themselves were commanded to appear before the King. Columbus and Adolfo had held no conversation on the subject, but it was tacitly understood between them that no reference whatever should be made to the latter's existence, even ; and that is probably the reason why his name does not appear in records of the voyage. When they arrived at the palace, the Admiral was taken to one apartment and the youths to another, and when Columbus was summoned before the King he looked in vain for his

young associates. Adolfo had taken Pablo with him to his own rooms in a quarter of the palace unvisited by the public, and there he kept him concealed, while the historic interview took place between Columbus and King John of Portugal. What transpired at that interview is a matter of history and can be learned by a perusal of the printed records; but what occurred between Prince Adolfo and his father after it was over has never been made public.

It is narrated that King John bade the Admiral seat himself at his side, an honor granted only to his equals in royal rank, and gave outward manifestations of the great esteem he held for Columbus. But it is also told that King John was secretly disturbed by the fact that Columbus had accomplished for the sovereigns of Spain the very expedition he himself once had the opportunity to send out, and he must have been more than mortal not to be disturbed by this reflection. In fact, it is no secret that he was urged by his counsellors to take revenge upon the man who had offered to discover for him a new world and who had taken his services to another crown, by having him assassinated. Whatever the truth, it is a part of the traditions to which reference has been made, that only upon the intercession

of Prince Adolfo was he induced to abandon this scheme and preserve his escutcheon from the stain it would otherwise have borne. When the Prince told him with what kindness he had been treated by Columbus (who, when he discovered his connection with the Portuguese Crown, might have served his own interests and those of his sovereigns better by despatching him than allowing him to continue with the expedition, but who never even harbored the thought), the King could not but show equal magnanimity to the Admiral. This is the reason, the traditions have it, for King John's great consideration of Columbus at his court, when, if he had consulted inclination and interest, it might have been far otherwise.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE "NINÁ" BEATS THE "PINTA" INTO PORT.

Two days the King detained Columbus at his court, greedily absorbing all the information relating to the New World that his guest freely communicated in answer to his inquiries. Then, having acquired as much as possible relating to the country beyond the sea and the way thither, King John allowed Columbus to depart, fully resolved in his own mind to despatch an expedition immediately over the route described, and forestall so far as he could the glory coming to the Spanish crown. The extreme measure of making way with Columbus he dismissed as unworthy a generous monarch, moved thereto, it is said, by the entreaties of his son. Adolfo remained secluded in the palace, by the orders of King John, the latter hardly being willing to acknowledge his remote share in allowing him to accompany, even clandestinely, the great discoverer on his voyage. So it was barely possible for the

Prince to obtain one last interview with Columbus ere he took his departure; and as for Pablo, though Adolfo had begged his father to allow him to remain with him, at least for a while, the King would not hear of it. "There is no knowing what the boy might reveal of your misadventures," said his royal sire; "and though you may be, as you claim, greatly attached to him, yet it is necessary, for reasons of state, that he should depart, not only for his own country, but from your remembrance. Forget him, then, and also forget that you ever took part in the expedition fitted out by my rivals the king and queen of Spain."

Obliged to obey the royal mandate, his own position being far from secure, owing to his tenuous hold upon his father's affections, Adolfo sadly complied, seeking but one last interview with his former commander and companion, just prior to their leaving court. He embraced Pablo again and again, telling him that he should never forget him, and assuring him that if ever he came to a position or influence in the land he would at once send for him. Pablo, on his side, promised to keep the contingency in mind, and finally took a tearful farewell of his friend, retaining his hand until about to mount his burro for departure.

"Your Excellency is now going to see the Queen, my father's consort," said Adolfo to Columbus, and you will doubtless be royally entertained by her and her women of honor; but I cannot accompany you, owing to reasons which I have already explained. I am not a favorite with her Majesty; but she is a good woman, your Excellency, and will treat you well. Farewell, now, my dear friend. Be good to Pablo, señor, for he is honest and faithful, and besides, he has no kin or comrades to aid him in time of trouble."

"I promise, Prince, that the boy shall be looked after on our return to Spain. I intend to take him with me to court and present him to the King and Queen, soliciting their favor for him. Is there nothing else I can do for you? You have served well the cause and hence have served well my sovereigns. Would it were possible for me to requite you as your deeds deserve."

"There is nothing more, your Excellency. I shall always treasure this experience as the choicest of my life. More I cannot say, the commands of the King being upon me. So farewell, and God speed you both."

Accompanied by a band of gay cavaliers, Columbus, Pablo and the chief pilot set forth on

their return to the caravel, on the way tarrying a while at the convent of San Antonio, where the Queen and her women were passing a period of seclusion. Her Majesty received the distinguished visitor with every attention; but she could not drive away the feeling of sadness that oppressed him at the thought of parting with the Prince, nor bring even one smile to the face of the usually gay and cheerful Pablo. Sleeping that night at lodgings prepared by order of the King, the travelers next day continued their journey and at noon arrived at the harbor, from which, the caravel being ready to sail, a departure was taken for Palos, which they safely reached at sunrise of the fifteenth of March.

And what a reception awaited the weary voyagers, as their battered caravel gained the harbor inside the bar of Saltes, which they had left nearly seven months and a half before! A watchman in the mirador of La Rabida proclaimed the arrival of the long-expected vessel, and the bells of the monastery rang out joyously, carrying the news to the people of Palos, who thronged the shore, as willing now to extend a welcome to the successful discoverer, as they were a few months before to execrate his departure. Their joy at beholding the

caravel was tempered by their distress at finding it alone, with no sign of the two vessels that had set forth with it more than seven months before, and containing less than one-third the total number of sailors that had departed in the fleet. Lamentation succeeded to rejoicings as the crowd pressed upon the "Niña's" crew, demanding excitedly what had become of this one and that; why any had been left, and whether any had been drowned or murdered by the savages in the far-distant country. Columbus could only tell them that about one-third the men had been left to garrison the fort, as many more had returned in the caravel; but of the "Pinta" and her crew he knew absolutely nothing. It so happened, however, that on the evening of that very day the "Pinta" came stealing in, as if desirous of attracting as little attention as possible. She cast anchor in the river and her commander, Captain Alonzo Pinzon, came ashore quietly and immediately sought the seclusion of his dwelling at Moguer. He had been driven by the storm into the turbulent Bay of Biscay and had made land at the port of Bayonne, whence he had despatched letters to the Spanish court informing his sovereigns that to the best of his belief Columbus was lost, and requesting permission to visit them and present an

account of his discoveries. Whatever the faults of Captain Martin Alonzo, he was honest and sincere, a man of generous nature, born to command and not fitted for the position of a subordinate. But he had committed the fault of sailing away from the fleet when off the coast of Cuba, contrary to the Admiral's orders, and for this fault the Spanish crown reprimanded him after the report of Columbus had been received at court. Pierced to the heart by the treatment he received from his sovereigns, whom he had so nobly served; and from Columbus, whose success was mainly owing to his invaluable assistance, Captain Pinzon fell sick and died, soon after his arrival home. The Admiral had studiously avoided him at Palos, apparently forgetting his great indebtedness to this noble mariner, and when the news of his death reached him at Seville he made no comment. But Captain Martin Alonzo had one sincere mourner outside his immediate family, and that one was Pablo, who gratefully remembered the many times he had befriended him, and the bluff, hearty manner of the sailor, whose heart, as tender as it was great, burst with grief at the scorn and neglect of those he had served so loyally.

Having no kindred at Palos, Pablo accepted the

Admiral's invitation to accompany him to court, which was then being held at Barcelona, many days' journey across the country from the port at which they had arrived. He could not understand the character of Columbus, any more than other of the Admiral's friends: how a man of so many great and noble traits could entertain base suspicions and be capable of treating a generous man like Pinzon with such neglect. But the character of the Admiral, as history has informed us, was a puzzle to all, and probably even to himself. It shows merely how a man of great ambitions and high aspirations can be capable of actions susceptible of an accusation of meanness. The fact remains, after all, that Columbus was ungenerous to the Pinzons, as he afterwards was to others with whom he was associated and to whom he was also indebted. But to Pablo, who wonderingly viewed these questionable acts of his master, Columbus was true to his word, and seeing that the boy had no friends or near relatives in the village of his birth, he kept him near his person and watched over him with fatherly solicitude. Perhaps this was owing to the fact that he himself had a son about Pablo's age, and he felt a tenderness for him on this account. Whatever the reason, he kept an oversight of the fatherless boy, and when he

went to Seville, preparatory to making the longer journey, he took him along. At Seville, that beautiful city on the noble Guadalquivir, and one of the chief ports of Spain in the time of her greatness, Columbus assembled his retinue for the triumphal journey to Barcelona. He had sent a letter to Ferdinand and Isabella from Palos, informing them of his great achievement and enclosing a copy of the journal which he had so painfully written, giving a detailed account of all the happenings during his absence from Spain. In it was narrated every trivial incident of the voyage; the discovery of land, the arrival on Cuba's coast, the treatment he received from the savages, the lamentable affair of the shipwreck, Captain Pinzon's defection, the wealth and generosity of Cacique Guacanagari, the gold that was given him and also that which was found in the Rio del Oro, the sail along the north coast of Hispaniola, the first fight with the Caribs and the subsequent adventures, with an account of his hostile reception at Saint Mary's, and finally his interview with the King of Portugal. After about a week at Seville a letter arrived from court, congratulating "Our Admiral of the Ocean Sea, Viceroy and Governor of the islands discovered in the Indies," on his great and glorious achievements. Having

been informed that the King of Portugal probably intended sending an expedition over his route,—as the Admiral had shrewdly surmised when he so closely questioned him,—the sovereigns urged Columbus to lose no time in preparing for still another voyage, in order to consummate the great work already so auspiciously begun. So Columbus passed the time (when he was not summoned to attend interviews by high officials or to accept the laudations of the multitudes who came to Seville for the express purpose of meeting him) in making preparations for a second expedition. His executive ability is shown in the thoroughness of these preparations, at a time when worn with the fatigues of the first voyage and borne down by many labors. But he was then at the best period of his life, about fifty-seven or fifty-eight years of age, erect of carriage, sinewy and stalwart; though his hair was gray and his aspect that of a man much older than he really was. Certainly, at that time Columbus was at the height of his glory, reveling in the adulations of the people who, but a few short months previously, had reviled him as a base adventurer. He magnanimously forgave all his enemies, as well he could afford to, made new and powerful friends among the nobility, inspired others with his own

enthusiasm for adventure in the New World he had discovered, and set all Spain afire with a desire for further conquests.

By the time the preparations were made for departure from Seville, everything was well advanced for the beginning of the second voyage: ships were engaged, sailors enlisted; and there were so many applicants from cavaliers of high degree for permission to accompany him that Columbus might have fitted out a fleet twice as large as he did, with settlers enough to colonize a province.

Pablo, meanwhile, came in for a small share of the glory that surrounded the achievements of his great master, for few of the sailors of the fleet had come from Palos with Columbus, and the boy was kept quite busy answering the thousand questions that were put to him by the excited people. Columbus himself was too much engaged with great affairs to attend to the commonalty, and was accessible only to the nobility and high officials of the Church; so it fell to Pablo to act as "master of ceremonies" at the many gatherings held for the gratification of the popular curiosity. He held the place of "honorary custodian of the golden treasures," and as showman-in-chief of the Indians, whom the Spaniards never tired of looking at, they were so

different from any other people they had ever seen. Juan the Lucayan and his sister, little Julia, were the boy's constant companions, and now that Adolfo was absent he was the only person who could converse with them in their own tongue, and hence an indispensable member of the community.

Especially a favorite with the Admiral's younger son, Ferdinand, who was about Pablo's age, and who, with his brother, Don Diego, met Columbus at Seville, the boy became more than ever attached to the family. Like Diego and Ferdinand, he was motherless, and like them, also, he had hitherto been almost friendless; so there was a double tie between these youths, he and Ferdinand in after life becoming almost inseparable.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE BOY OF PALOS WINS ROYAL FAVOR.

IMPATIENT as Columbus must have been at the delays in setting out for Barcelona, where the court was held at the time, he was also greatly pleased that to reach it he had to cross the greater portion of Spain, as thereby he would enjoy a prolonged ovation. The receptions at Palos and Seville were only a foretaste of what was to follow in greater measure,—that Columbus knew full well, and so made his preparations accordingly. He had been beaten back for years in his endeavors to win the commanding position to which he knew he was entitled; but at last the supreme hour had come, and he was to reap his long-delayed reward! So he made the most of it; and who can blame him?

“Son Pablo,” said the Admiral on the morning of their departure from Seville, “we are about to enjoy a protracted triumph, in our journey to the court at Barcelona. Unless the signs portend amiss,

we are to receive such an ovation as never yet hath been accorded any man, or men. I say this, not in pride and boasting, but from the fulness of my heart; for it is but the consummation of my plans, lo, these many years delayed and frustrated. What sayest thou, my boy, art thou elated at the forthcoming triumph?"

"Your Excellency, I am but a boy of the people. I have done nothing of my own accord. What has come to me has been through your favor; so why should I feel elated, Excellency?"

"True, why shouldst thou? And yet, there may be cause, my boy. There be many reasons why thou shouldst feel pride in thy position, elevated as thou hast been from the commonalty to sit with kings and consort with princes. And speaking of princes; it only lacks the presence here of that amiable youth, Prince Adolfo, to make our triumph complete. But, to revert to thyself: Thou hast every reason to feel proud, for thou hast done thy duty, and that, son of my adoption, is more to thy credit than great attainments. Thou hast done thy duty, by me and by thy sovereigns, and verily thou shalt receive thy reward, my boy."

"My reward is already greater than my deserts," rejoined Pablo modestly, and recalling his

share in causing the wreck of the Santa Maria, the remembrance of which had been a thorn in his breast ever since it happened. "And, moreover, to be near your Excellency, in time of peril and in peace, is enough; yes, more than enough, to satisfy me all my life long."

"Well, well, thy modesty is refreshing, after the experience I have had with these empty-headed cavaliers, who have come vaunting of achievements never known to man. Thy loyalty is another thing to thy credit, also, and the two traits go well together. But, are thy friends, the red Indians, ready for the journey? Tell them to be prepared for the longest jaunt they ever took, and be forewarned that they will be gazed at by thousands of people, yea, perhaps by millions, ere the journey's end be reached. See to it that they are well mounted, for I have ordered *burros* and mules enough for all the party, besides spare mounts in case of disaster. We left Hispaniola with a full dozen of the savages, but as four of them are ill, we shall take along with us only eight, including thy two intimates, Juan and Julia. Methinks these red barbarians will make a deep impression upon their majesties; and as for the gold and the barbaric trinkets, the rude arms

and war-trophies, mind cannot conceive of how it will affect them.”

All the world of the present day knows of that prolonged triumphal journey across the land then so recently won from the Moors by the prowess of the Spanish monarchs, and it will suffice for our purpose that we merely allude to it in general terms. At the head of the procession rode the Admiral, mounted on a stately mule so richly caparisoned that some of the people mistook its rider for royalty personified. Sensible as he was to the high honors accorded him, Columbus yet maintained a grave and even humble demeanor that won the hearts of all who saw him then. He was preceded by a band of couriers clad in rich raiment, and surrounded by a group of cavaliers who added *éclat* to the occasion by their presence. Following after the Admiral and his attendants came the Indians, who, to tell the truth, attracted more attention than Columbus himself. First of all, the people wished to see the man who had added a vast domain to the possessions of Spain ; then they desired to gaze upon the natives of that country far beyond the vast ocean, who, decorated with paint and golden ornaments and with bright parrots' feathers in the raven tresses hanging down their backs, were in-

deed well worth looking at. By this time the Indians had become used to being gazed on, and even pointed at and prodded with sticks and swords; but they were confused by all this hubbub and commotion caused by their presence in the procession and heartily wished themselves back in their native wilds.

“Are we taken for wild beasts?” demanded Juan the Lucayan indignantly of Pablo, as the crowds pressed upon and nearly dismounted them, in their eagerness to get near the strange, copper-colored creatures from the Western World. “Why, my people in Guanahani, barbarians as you call them, were even more polite than these. See, they have nearly pressed my sister from her saddle.”

“It is only curiosity, Juan,” answered Pablo, “but vulgar curiosity, I must admit. Suppose you let out a war-whoop, Juan, just for fun.”

The Lucayan accepted the suggestion eagerly and placing his hand to his mouth emitted a shrill, terrible cry, such as the Caribs used when they descended upon the inoffensive islanders. As this fierce cry rent the air the effect was magical, the crowd about the procession dissolving as if it had been melted away by a blast from a fiery furnace,

men and boys, girls and women, falling over each other in their terror.

The commotion extended to the head of the cavalcade, and a courier came galloping back with a demand from Columbus as to the cause of the disturbance. Juan and Pablo, as well as their companions, were so convulsed with laughter that they could not at first answer the courier's demand for information; but when they did he also joined with them, and having reported to the Admiral, soon returned with permission for Juan to "whoop it up" whenever the crowd became too importunate.

And thus the triumphal procession passed through Spain, everywhere exciting the greatest curiosity, everywhere received with *éclat* and hospitality, until at last the walls of Barcelona appeared before the travelers, and their journey came to an end, after a brilliant street parade in the city of the royal court. Not only the streets of the city, but the plazas, the windows, the balconies and even the roof-tops of the houses, were alive with spectators, thousands upon thousands, gathered to welcome home the great discoverer of America. Realizing that the press of people would be too great to allow of the Admiral and his cavalcade being received within doors, the Spanish monarchs had ordered a

grand pavilion erected in the chief plaza, where, underneath a gorgeous canopy and surrounded by the nobility of the land, they received their Admiral of the Ocean Sea and accorded him the honors that were his due.

We know, for it has been on record for more than four hundred years, that after Columbus had dismounted and had been conducted into the royal presence, he knelt before Ferdinand and Isabella, and kissed their hands as an act of homage due the sovereigns he had so faithfully and gloriously served. They on their part treated him with great condescension, and after he had made his obeisance ordered him to sit between the thrones they occupied, while they listened to his story of the discovery. Ranged in a semicircle in front of the royal pair were the Indians, resplendent in gorgeous colors and golden ornaments, forming such a strange spectacle that the King and Queen could hardly refrain from gazing at them continually. They paid the most profound attention to Columbus, losing not a word of his wonderful narrative; but they were also attracted by the visible tokens of his discovery, the copper-colored natives of the New World, the golden treasure, the rare birds and plants, outspread before them. Their hearts were filled to overflow-



Ferdinand and Isabella listening to Columbus as he tells the story of the discovery of America.—Page 316.
A Voyage with Columbus.

ing with gratitude to God for so conspicuously rewarding their venture upon the unknown seas, and after the Admiral had concluded his discourse the devout monarchs fell upon their knees and gave thanks to the Almighty for His gifts and manifold mercies. The deep hush that followed this devout ceremony was broken by the royal choir, assembled in the background, chanting to the accompaniment of instrumental music that noble and ancient anthem, *Te Deum laudamus*,—"We praise Thee, O God,"—and for the first time in their lives the barbarians from America looked upon the splendors of a royal court and witnessed the Christian sovereigns' acknowledgment of dependence upon the Most High.

After this was concluded the King and Queen unbent still further and held an informal reception, at which the different members of the expedition were presented by Columbus. Foremost among them, of course, were the eight Indians, who were entreated to converse in their own tongue, in order that the sovereigns might hear its liquid syllables. As there was no one but Pablo who could translate their speech to make it intelligible to the royal ear, the boy was really the most conspicuous personage present, as well as the only indispensable one. Despite his

own declaration, when in Guanahani, that he never could learn another language than his own, he had really become quite proficient in the Indian speech, having applied himself diligently to its acquisition, in order to win favor with his great friend, the Admiral. So now, when the Indians haltingly pronounced a speech filled with expressions of loyalty and homage to the Spanish monarchs, through Juan the Lucayan as their mouthpiece, Pablo translated it into elegant Castilian, which also he had acquired through indefatigable application and observation of the speech of those higher in the social scale than himself. The monarchs were delighted, and King Ferdinand said to Columbus, "Who is the modest-looking youth who so ably interprets the Indian language? Verily, my Admiral, it seems to me he must be an indispensable member of your company."

"And that he is, your Majesty," replied Columbus, glad of an opportunity for bringing Pablo forward at this time; though he had determined to introduce him later on. "He is a boy of Palos, your Majesty, who accompanied the expedition much against my better judgment, but who soon became of greatest service to me, and also to your Majesty's cause. He and another, almost solely, acquired

sufficient acquaintance with the aboriginal speech to interpret for us by the time we arrived at Hispaniola; and, moreover, he, boy though he be, has been my stanchest friend and welcome companion.”

“And is his moral worth equal to his intelligence, Admiral? Peradventure he be dependable and also possessed of high character, it might be to our advantage to attach him to the court. It is our royal purpose to seek out and secure the youth of the land pre-eminent for worth and loyalty, in order to have around us the promise for future servitors. This youth, too, is about the age of Prince Juan, our son and probable successor, who is in sore need of a companion who can be trusted, stanch and dependable.”

“Sire, your Majesty can receive my assurance without distrust, that this youth is all you might desire. I will answer for his conduct with my life. Indeed, I perhaps owe my life to his watchfulness when on the voyage, when he frustrated a villains’ plot to murder me,—he and Prince—; I mean a companion. If your Majesty will accept my credentials for him, you will never have cause to regret attaching him to your sacred person. But, at the same time, your Majesty, I shall be depriving

myself of a faithful servitor, for I had reckoned upon taking Pablo with me on the coming expedition to the New-found World. Still, as it is your cause I serve, and both of us hold no higher purpose than to forward it, I relinquish all claims in deference to your expressed desire.”

“My Admiral, I would not deprive you of so valuable an assistant; but let that matter rest in abeyance. When opportunity offers, I will have my notary inscribe him on the royal rolls as an attendant at court with a salary of ten thousand maravedis. Then, peradventure it seem best to allow him to go with you again, we will decide according to the exigency of the moment. Meanwhile, this youth and one of your own sons shall be retained as pages at our court and as companions for Prince Juan.”

“Your Majesty, I thank you for this expression of favor. I had told the boy he should be rewarded; but this exceeds all I had hoped for him, as well as for my son.”

“It is well, especially as the Queen has seemingly taken a fancy for the youth. See, she is conversing with him, and I mistake greatly if she be not impressed by his modesty and manliness. My consort is o'erborne by the pressing cares of state, and sel-

dom do we see her smile; but verily, she is now laughing with approval at his remarks. My Admiral, now that the Queen hath discovered virtue in the boy, his fortune is assured, for her judgment is inerrant;—and as well, her desire, or rather her command, is not to be gainsaid.”

King Ferdinand spoke feelingly this latter sentence, and let it drop with a sigh, for, unless history has been at fault, he had frequent cause to know that the Queen’s commands must be obeyed, even by no less a personage than her royal consort himself.

It was as the King had said: Queen Isabella had taken a great fancy to Pablo, and as well to the little Indian girl, Julia, whose name she proposed to change in honor of her own.

“My lord,” she said imperiously to the King, “come see this quaint specimen from America. Doth she not wear a most engaging expression on her face? I have concluded to adopt her, and also—whether or not it may receive your sanction—this youth who hath so ably rendered her speech into our own Castilian.”

“Is not thy motive open to a question of haste, dear Consort?” asked King Ferdinand, then saying to Columbus: “If I should too hastily assent

to her proposition all might go awry. The only way to manage a woman of imperious will is to pretend an opposition one may not really mean, my Admiral."

"Taste or not, the fiat hath gone forth, Consort," rejoined the Queen with offended dignity. "I have discovered in this youth qualities that appear to fit him eminently for a companion to the Prince. Let that suffice, for it is my will that he be attached to the court."

"Ahem!" said the King. "If it be thy will, let that suffice, as thou hast said." And he turned aside to hide a smile, while the grave Columbus, who was seldom moved to mirth, had also to hide his face, seeing that the Queen was of a mind to do as he and the King had decided in advance.

Thus it came about, more quickly than had been anticipated, that Pablo's reward reached him at court. The march of events had swiftly rescued this homeless boy from obscurity and shaped his future. The waif of Palos gained friends and influence by loyally doing his duty on that first voyage of Columbus to America, and drifted subsequently into comparative renown. He rose to eminence at the court of Isabella and Ferdinand; but in his old age retired to the obscurity of his native Palos,

around which still thickly cluster the traditions from which the writer has drawn this narrative of his adventures.

THE END.

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The story is chock full of stirring incidents, while the amusing situations are furnished by Joshua Bickford, from Pumpkin Hollow, and the fellow who modestly styles himself the "Rip-tail Roarer, from Pike Co., Missouri." Mr. Alger never writes a poor book, and "Joe's Luck" is certainly one of his best.

Tom the Bootblack; or, The Road to Success. By

HORATIO ALGER, JR. 12mo, cloth, illustrated, price \$1.00.

A bright, enterprising lad was Tom the Bootblack. He was not at all ashamed of his humble calling, though always on the lookout to better himself. The lad started for Cincinnati to look up his heritage. Mr. Grey, the uncle, did not hesitate to employ a ruffian to kill the lad. The plan failed, and Gilbert Grey, once Tom the bootblack, came into a comfortable fortune. This is one of Mr. Alger's best stories.

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Dan Mordaunt and his mother live in a poor tenement, and the lad is pluckily trying to make ends meet by selling papers in the streets of New York. A little heiress of six years is confided to the care of the Mordaunts. The child is kidnapped and Dan tracks the child to the house where she is hidden, and rescues her. The wealthy aunt of the little heiress is so delighted with Dan's courage and many good qualities that she adopts him as her heir.

Tony the Hero: A Brave Boy's Adventure with a

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Tony, a sturdy bright-eyed boy of fourteen, is under the control of Rudolph Rugg, a thorough rascal. After much abuse Tony runs away and gets a job as stable boy in a country hotel. Tony is heir to a large estate. Rudolph for a consideration hunts up Tony and throws him down a deep well. Of course Tony escapes from the fate provided for him, and by a brave act, a rich friend secures his rights and Tony is prosperous. A very entertaining book.

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Tom Temple is a bright, self-reliant lad. He leaves Plympton village to seek work in New York, whence he undertakes an important mission to California. Some of his adventures in the far west are so startling that the reader will scarcely close the book until the last page shall have been reached. The tale is written in Mr. Alger's most fascinating style.

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This tale smacks of the salt sea. From the moment that the Sea Queen leaves lower New York bay till the breeze leaves her becalmed off the coast of Florida, one can almost hear the whistle of the wind through her rigging, the creak of her straining cordage as she heels to the leeward. The adventures of Ben Clark, the hero of the story and Jake the cook, cannot fail to charm the reader. As a writer for young people Mr. Otis is a prime favorite.

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