

## CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.

## NO. I. DESTINY—PREPARATION.

IT is an auspicious year, which now dawns upon a world already predisposed to recognize the grandeur and appreciate the value of the achievements and services rendered to mankind by one whose memory has waited four hundred years for the full measure of human justice. Christopher Columbus, discoverer of a New World, was the most fortunate and the most unfortunate of men. It is difficult to say which was the greater, his glory or his sorrow. A gladsome thing it is that now his misfortunes exist only in history; the future is one of unalloyed benediction. While nations honor his memory and sovereigns come together to proclaim his exalted virtues and transcendent services, a nation, whose country he revealed to mankind, and which would be proud to bear his name, offers a national homage at his shrine, and now great cities become monumental with his memorials. Literature, too, embalms the hero's name and deeds in choicest forms of poetry, history, drama and panegyric, while every journal, review and magazine published in this favored land will signalize the quarto-centennial year with fervid tributes to the great discoverer. This REVIEW will cordially unite in the universal acclaim, and will make its issues of 1892 so many grateful souvenirs of the discoverer of America.

Christopher Columbus was a man of destiny. Not that he was destined from eternity by an invincible and inexorable necessity to be the discoverer of the new world, so that no other man could possibly achieve that grand result; but that he was so fitted for the task, so pre-eminently endowed with the virtues and knowledge and courage necessary to its accomplishment, that he saw so clearly in himself the man that was to attain this great result, comprehended it and dedicated himself unchangeably to it so ardently, that, in the natural order at least, he was the man destined to perform the act. He came to know and feel assured so well of his destined part on earth, that from an early time in his life he drew such inspiration from the altar of prayer and grace, it was evident

"Thither he  
Will come to know his destiny."—*Shakespeare.*

But Christopher Columbus was the man of destiny in a higher sense, in that he was a providential man, one destined, in the mer-

ciful designs of Providence, to reveal the New World to the Old, to carry the Cross over the trackless ocean to unknown peoples, and to bring Christendom face to face with the heathen tribes and nations of the earth. Columbus regarded himself as the chosen one of God for the fulfillment of great undertakings. After his third voyage, and while awaiting, in Spain, the authority and sanction of Ferdinand and Isabella for undertaking his fourth voyage, he prepared a most remarkable work, entitled "Collection of Prophecies Concerning the Recovery of Jerusalem and the Discovery of the Indies (America)," in which he applied, with great acumen, learning and logic, to the New World and to himself, many of the ancient prophecies of the Old Testament. That learned Italian publicist, Francisco Tarducci (Mr. Brownson's English translation), referring to the letter addressed by the admiral to the Spanish sovereigns, and accompanying the "Collection of Prophecies" which he sent to them, writes: "He freely asserted his conviction that he had been chosen by God, *from his earliest years*, to carry out these two great undertakings—the discovery of the New World and the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre. For this purpose God had led him to embrace a sailor's life, in which one is naturally inclined to study to penetrate the secrets of nature, and he had, in addition, a spirit of curiosity which caused him to read every sort of chronicles and books of philosophy. While meditating on these books, his mind had been opened by God 'as by a hand,' and it was then that he discovered a way by sea to the Indies, and felt himself all on fire with the desire of opening it. 'Then it was,' he says, 'that I sought Your Majesties. Every one that heard of my undertaking ridiculed it; all the knowledge I had acquired was of no use to me. I spent ten years at your august court in discussions with persons of great merit and profound learning, who, after much argument, ended by declaring my projects to be chimerical. Your Majesties alone had faith and constancy. Who can doubt that it was the light derived from the Sacred Scriptures that enlightened your minds with the same rays as mine?'" In this same letter, so remarkable and characteristic of the man, he alleges the wondrous methods of the Holy Ghost in guiding the minds of the chosen instruments of Providence in the knowledge of their vocations and in the means of their accomplishment. He learnedly and ably sets forth definite canons for interpreting the sacred Scriptures, based upon the writings of St. Augustine, St. Thomas, St. Isidore and Gerson. He based the arguments of his extraordinary discourse upon the divine assurance that "before the consummation of the world all that has been written shall be fulfilled." He then presents *seriatim*, and with great cogency, the grand chain of prophecies relating, as he contended,

to the two great aspirations of his life, the Discovery of the New World and the Redemption of the Holy Land, and follows these up with an elaborate and cogent series of reasonings sustained by arguments, logical propositions, interpretations and citations of authorities of sacred writers, and especially from the Fathers of the Church. When this extraordinary document, in the preparation of which it is said he was aided by a learned ecclesiastical and theological sympathizer and friend, was completed, the author sent it for revision and correction to Father Gaspare Goricio, a Carthusian monk of Seville famous for his theological learning. The accomplished and astute theologian returned the document to its illustrious author, with answer that he found nothing to correct and nothing to add to it, and expressing himself with wonder at its learning and research and with praise for its piety and devotion. Columbus entertained these sentiments to the end of his life, for in the most solemn act of his life, his last will and testament, he devoutly commences with these words: "In the name of the Most Holy Trinity, who inspired me with the idea, and afterwards made it perfectly clear to me, that I should navigate and go to the Indies from Spain, by traversing the ocean westwardly." The same sentiments are reiterated in many of the letters and writings of the admiral. This was certainly the inspiration that carried him through so many obstacles, trials, disasters and misfortunes to success and glory.

But it was not he alone that entertained these sentiments. Many of his contemporaries and many learned historians of subsequent periods and of our own times have fully sympathized with them. It is well known that Columbus addressed several letters to the Sovereign Pontiffs on the subject of his discoveries and the consequent crusade for the delivery of the Holy Land, in which he always alluded to his providential and apostolic mission, and it is a well-established fact that he received repeated and renewed encouragement from Rome. It is now one of the movements in honor of the approaching Columbian celebrations, that our present Holy Father has appointed a learned scholar and theologian near his person to collect from the Vatican archives and publish the proofs that it was owing in a great measure to the assurances, encouragements and benedictions of the Holy See that Columbus was sustained and inspired with hope and perseverance to prosecute his great work to such glorious and successful results, and that the chief motive that inspired Columbus was an ardent zeal for the conversion of heathen nations to Christianity. Some of the facts on this head will be given by us hereafter.

So also in his own days there were many other learned and pious ecclesiastics and laymen, who united with him in the belief that he

held a special mission from Divine Providence to reveal to mankind the existence of the New World. Amongst his sympathizers were eminent persons of different countries—persons of high birth, distinguished rank and rare abilities. The learned and famous scientist and lapidary, Jayme Ferrer, whom Isabella herself had introduced to Columbus, only voiced the sentiments of many other learned and pious scholars and Christians of his day when, in his letter to the queen on January 27, 1495, he thus referred to Columbus: "I believe that in its deep, mysterious designs, Divine Providence selected him as its agent in this work, which I look upon as the introduction and preparation of things which the same Divine Providence has determined to make known to us for its own glory and the salvation and happiness of the world." And, on August 5th of the same year, he thus addresses Columbus himself: "I behold in this a great mystery; divine and infallible Providence sent the great Thomas (the apostle) from the west to the east to preach our Holy Catholic faith in the Indies, and has sent you, Señor, by the opposite way, from the east to the west, till, by God's will, you reached the utmost limits of Upper India, in order that the inhabitants might learn those truths, which their progenitors cared not to receive from the preaching of St. Thomas. And thus are fulfilled the words of the prophet: 'Their sound is gone out through all the earth.'" And again in the same letter: "In your mission, Señor, you seem an apostle, a messenger of God, to spread His name in unknown lands." The great and learned Agostino Giustiniani, in his famous Polyglot Psalter, sustains the opinion of Jayme Ferrer as to the divine mission of Columbus; and Father Ventura said, "Columbus is the man of the Church."

Our own gifted and eloquent countryman, Washington Irving, writes in strains of respect, if not of sympathy, of this profoundly religious and confiding view which Columbus so honestly took and so fervently felt in the heaven-inspired mission which he was sent to perform. "These ideas," he says, "so repeatedly and solemnly and artlessly expressed by a man of the fervent piety of Columbus show how truly his discovery arose from the working of his own mind, and not from information furnished by others. He considered it a divine intimation, a light from heaven, and the fulfilment of what had been foretold by our Saviour and the prophets. Still, he regarded it as a minor event, preparatory to the great enterprise, the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre. He pronounced it a miracle effected by heaven to animate himself and others to that holy undertaking, and he assured the sovereigns that if they had faith in his present as in his former proposition, they would be assuredly rewarded with equally triumphant success. He conjured them not to heed the sneers of such

as might scoff at him as one unlearned, as an ignorant mariner, a worldly man, reminding them that the Holy Spirit works not merely in the learned, but also in the ignorant. And then, after showing how much the religious views and proposals of Columbus were consonant with the sentiments and convictions of the times and of the country in which he lived, the accomplished author proceeds to say: "There was nothing, therefore, in the proposition of Columbus that could be regarded as preposterous, considering the period and circumstances in which it was made, though it strongly illustrates his own enthusiastic and visionary character. It must be recollected that it was meditated in the courts of the Alhambra, among the splendid remains of Moorish grandeur, where, but a few years before, he had beheld the standard of the faith elevated in triumph above symbols of infidelity. It appears to have been the offspring of one of those moods of high excitement, when, as has been observed, his soul was elevated by the contemplation of his great and glorious office; when he considered himself under divine inspiration, imparting the will of Heaven, and fulfilling the high and holy purposes for which he had been predestined."

The very names which our hero bore from his infancy have been regarded as evidences of his Christian Apostolate; Colombo, a Dove; and Christopher, the Christ-Bearer. He has been compared to the prophets and patriarchs of old, and many points of resemblance have been discovered between them. He has been compared with Moses, who, fifteen hundred years before the advent of Christ gave a law to the oppressed people of God, led them out of the land of bondage, instructed them in the true religion and worship of God, and consolidated and isolated them from the contamination of idolatry; Columbus in like manner and like another Moses, fifteen hundred years after the coming of the Saviour, extended the boundaries of the known earth, restored the union and brotherhood of all men, and enlarged the realms of Christendom. Even Columbus himself likened himself unto Moses and to David. Like Moses his name was highly symbolical; both were forty years of age when they commenced the execution of their respective missions, which they received from the same God; and both left wife and family heroically to do the will of God with perfection. While the sea opened to give Moses and his followers a safe passage over, the great ocean, "the Sea of Darkness," smoothed its tempestuous bosom and became calm and pleasant for the Christ-Bearer to reach the New World he was seeking. While Moses promulgated the Law of the Covenant, Columbus announced that of the New Testament, and while the former prophetically appealed to the sign of the Cross on the

post in the form of the Greek letter *Tau*, Columbus triumphed by the Cross, which he emblazoned on his banners, erected with huge trees cut from the virgin forests wherever he landed, and which he bore on his breast; Moses received the ingratitude, the opposition, the violence of his people, while the inheritance of Columbus were desertion, destitution, revolts, chains, imprisonment, calumnies, obscurity and neglect. While Moses was denied the privilege of entering the promised land, Columbus never saw the Indies nor Asia, which he sought, knew not the very Continent which he discovered; and the very world which he revealed, received its name from another.

The Rev. Arthur George Knight, of the Society of Jesus in England, opens his beautiful and learned "Life of Columbus" with that devout and favorite prayer of the great admiral:

Jesu cum Maria  
Sit nobis in via.

From his intelligent and fervid pages we can but learn how powerfully Columbus grasped the fundamental truth that the actions of men have their meaning and value from reference to the life of God Incarnate; he saw in his own name, the Christ-Bearer, a symbol of his work; how Columbus, in his famous vision, received a message from God, a solemn admonition, and the restoration of his energies, at the moment they were most needed, on the eve of his shipwreck; and how the vicissitudes of a life of peril, his repeated rescues from the jaws of death, constitute a standing miracle of a special Providence visibly exerted in his behalf.

The tendency of modern writers, those who belong to non-Catholic schools, is to regard the life and achievements of Columbus as the mere results of human genius and courage, great and invaluable though they are, as the splendid development and successful execution of theories long entertained, and by him for the first time visibly applied, without any recognition of a providential mission, or divine vocation. Even the sympathetic Mr. Irving reveals insuperable aversion to recognize anything providential in the life of Columbus, while he acknowledges that the admiral's belief in his own divine mission furnished him the chief motive, and inward stimulus to face every danger and suffering in executing his self-recognized divine vocation. So, too, Mr. Winsor, of Boston, in his work on Columbus which will have been published before this article reaches the readers of the REVIEW, treats the whole achievement of the discovery of America as the successful and brilliant culmination of a theory recognizing the sphericity of the earth, which had been first broached six hundred years before Christ, and which Columbus was the first

of philosophers and scientists to put into visible and tangible realization. He strings the whole history of the discovery of the New World upon a faint tradition among a learned few, dim in origin, scarcely discernible in centuries, with here and there a slight recognition, accepted by few if any, and finally discarded by the learned generally, and by the entire mass of mankind. Columbus, on the other hand, felt his mind enlightened from on high, his steps guided by divine Providence, a religious support and ever-flowing renewal of strength and resources under the most appalling difficulties and misfortunes, a perseverance under unparalleled denials, delays, obstructions, and injustices, which we can but recognize, as he did, to be a supernatural grace. The Count de Lorgues takes a higher view when he states that, "Columbus possessed, visibly, the three theological virtues; he practiced constantly the four cardinal virtues; the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost were apparent in his life, and we find God admirable in him, as He is always in His Saints." And again this Christian writer says, "Evidently God chose Christopher Columbus as a Messenger of Salvation."

It is undeniable, indeed it is a grand and luminous feature in his extraordinary and unparalleled career, that he felt the inadequacy of human resources to sustain himself under the ordeal through which he had to pass; he was frequently on the point of utter failure and collapse, at one time engulfed in a deep lethargy, at another shipwrecked, and at another sick unto death, and in every crisis he felt and recognized in his recovery the direct hand of a superintending and sustaining Providence. Columbus believed in his own providential mission, and it was this belief which carried him onward to the most glorious success. This is the key to a proper understanding of his life and character, the selection of characteristic features in his life, the motive-power of a splendid career. From this it will be seen how important, how necessary, it is for us to present this point in some detail, for now, as we are about to commence the more historic part of our treatise, the historian cannot but recognize as we proceed with his glory, how every circumstance, fact, apparent accident, and every surrounding of the man from his birth, evidently seemed to unite in preparing him for what he persistently avowed was his providential call and divine mission. It would be impossible to comprehend the life of Columbus in any other light than that which is shed by his own thoughts, aspirations, prayers, visions and avowed impulses and resources. Without this recognition his life is an enigma. It is true that he was a profound student of science and of nature, and that he followed scientific methods; but why was it that other scientists, even more learned than he, could never undertake or accomplish the

great discovery ; why were they all astonished and incredulous at his theories and still more at his achievements? Again, it was not the learning of Columbus, nor his scientific attainments, that met the real difficulties of his crucified life ; it was the strength of his faith, the force of his religious hope, the power of his prayer, the virtues of his character, his incessant appeals to heaven, his recognition of a providential mission, his obedience to the divine call, the whole moral and devout momentum of his pious personality, that enabled him to practice an unparalleled perseverance under unequalled difficulties and disasters, to overcome every social, moral and political obstacle, to meet even the conscientious but mistaken objections of devout churchmen and divines, to bear or overcome the insults, intrigues, malice and calumnies of his enemies, and to be silent under the ingratitude of his own sovereign. It can be noticed by the intelligent and gentle reader, that Providence from his birth and throughout his manhood, as we detail his singular and fascinating history, surrounded him by the circumstances which prepared him, both as an apostle and as a scientist for the successful accomplishment of his great mission on earth. What was his preparation for his mission? The history of the first half of his life will show.

Although a fierce contest has been waged among historians and scholars as to the precise place of birth of Christopher Columbus, now the struggle has been definitely decided in favor of the proud city of Genoa, Genoa the Magnificent. This beautiful city had sprung from the sea, derived its support from the sea, and its glory was drawn from the sea ; a city almost cut off from the inland and from the pursuits of the land by a chain of high mountains surrounding it in the rear, whilst its majestic palaces, temples, fortifications and noble streets turned incessantly towards the water, and looking across the graceful semi-circle of the harbor, intuitively schooled its gallant men and agile youth to look ardently and ambitiously to the sea. The Genoese were essentially and from necessity a maritime people

“ Whose ready sails, with every wind can fly  
And make cov'nant with the inconstant sky ;  
Whose oaks secure as if they there took root,  
Who tread on billows with a steady foot.”—*Waller.*

The ordinary life of a Genoese was commenced from early youth and spent on the water. It was a daily school for fascinating danger and bold adventure. Particularly was this the case at the time of the birth and boyhood of Columbus. For while long controversies were carried on by critics and biographers as to the time of his birth ; this question has been settled in favor of the year of



grace, 1436. At this period of time it was, as had been the case for centuries, when the battles of Christian Europe against the Turks and Mussulmen, when struggles of merchantmen on the high seas with outlaws and corsairs, when incessant broils and contests with the Mediterranean pirates, fired the hearts and aroused the ambition of every spirited and generous Genoese youth. The atmosphere which young Columbus breathed, the stirring tales of maritime adventure which the aged and retired sailors then told beneath the vines that crowned the neighboring hills, and in the vineyards tilled by veteran retired tars, which formed the traditional literature of his youth, the daily sight of gallant fleets of men-of-war and armed merchantmen going out the majestic harbor to join in the dangerous fray or glorious battle, the very sight of sea and smell of salt, the ozone of the ocean, and the seafaring heredity sucked in with his mother's milk, the very school books all historic of battle and illustrated with naval contests, all united to inspire the mind and heart of Christopher Columbus with a love of the water from his infancy. The providence, whose call to mighty deeds and sublime achievements he obeyed in after life, could not have cast his youthful lot in a school more fitted to form the character of the future discoverer of worlds. The generous boy was equal to his opportunities—for he was a precocious sailor, and made his first voyage to sea at the age of fourteen.

But there was another training, deeper and more beneficent which Columbus received during the first fourteen years of his life, which ran parallel with his seafaring aspirations, which girded his loins and his soul with the armor of faith, purity, and virtue, and which made him first the Christian sailor, then the Christian discoverer, admiral, and apostle. He was the son of Domenico Columbus and Susana Fontanarossa. The Italian form of the name was Colombo, which signified a dove. His parents were in humble circumstances, though not destitute, and it is confidently stated that his ancestors belonged to the nobility. His father followed the trade of a wool comber, and when his family had grown to number four sons, Christopher, the oldest, Bartholomew, Pellegrino, and James, and one daughter, he prudently rented out his own house and took the lease of another and humbler home, No. 166 Mulcento street, having the Benedictines as his landlords and his neighbors. The oldest of the sons of Domenico Colombo was baptized soon after his birth in the ancient Benedictine church of St. Stephen, which as a venerable relic is pointed out to this day to reverent tourists, and here the future admiral received the highly symbolical name of Christopher, the Christ Bearer, a name which was truly prophetic of the brilliant services he was to render in after life to the Christ, the Incarnate, the Redeemer, the Saviour.

Christopher and his brothers assisted the good and pious father in his trade as a wool comber, in which also he had hired assistance and an apprentice. But Domenico Colombo did not claim the entire services of his oldest son at the shop, but made every effort to give him an education in keeping with his conspicuous and rare abilities. After bestowing upon him some elementary instruction, he sent him at the tender age of ten years to the University of Pavia. At this gentle age, and at this famous university, the oldest son of the Colombos studied the elements of mathematics, physics, astronomy, Latin, and mental and moral philosophy, for such were the studies for which this noted school was famous, and such too were the principal attainments of Christopher Columbus, until, in the working out of his world-wide career, he added navigation and seamanship. While it is not claimed that Christopher mastered these studies, the fact of his spending two years at the university shows the precocity of his mind and points out the providence that gave a scientific trend to his mind and life. At the age of twelve he returned to his father's shop and to the labors of a wool comber. It was during these years that he received the Sacraments of Confirmation, which made him through life a soldier of the Cross, and of the Holy Eucharist, by which he became in fact, as in name, the Bearer of the Christ. The family of Colombo had an excellent name for honesty, virtue and intelligence. Their ancestral traditions, running back to noble blood in Lombardy, Piedmont, the Plaisantin, and Liguria, preserved the striking virtues and loyalty of the Middle Ages, and these qualities were perpetuated at the humble fireside of the wool comber of Genoa.

Various authors have discussed the interesting question as to the nature and extent of Columbus' education when he embraced a seafaring life at the age of fourteen. While some have limited his attainments to the elements of grammar and arithmetic, others have credited him with elementary studies in science, and with finally, as years passed on, an entire devotion to the science of navigation. His son Fernando, his historian, making the most of the slender fact that he studied at Pavia, with justice claims for his father the additional accomplishments of astronomy and geometry, geography, cosmography, and drawing. It is claimed that already he was fond of reading works on cosmography, and that he even then commenced drawing maps, which in after life proved his only protection from hunger and nakedness. He claims, therefore, that he was a student at the University of Pavia, which many others have doubted or denied. It is certain, however, that the University of Pavia has, in recent years, erected a monument to commemorate its own honorable association with Columbus as one of

its students, and Monsignor Rocco Cocchia, who had the glory of finding the remains of Columbus at San Domingo, sent a portion of them to the University of Pavia, in recognition of its claim to be the Alma Mater of the admiral.

It is to be regretted that this seafaring life of Columbus, from the time of his embarking as a sailor about the year 1449, when fourteen years old, to the year 1470, when he arrived in Portugal at the age of thirty-five, is involved in so much obscurity. That he was a youth of piety and faith, of integrity and truth, of energy and fidelity, is well known from the facts that these qualities naturally formed the training of a youth fresh from the shrine of a good Catholic home, and that he preserved his purity and devout character through the dangerous ordeal of twenty years or more of seafaring life, and at Lisbon, in the prime of life, he was a man of profound faith, tender piety and religious zeal. This was a rare and precious inheritance to preserve through such a life as a sailor and a naval officer, in those times especially, and in those countries, he was compelled to lead. It was a life of danger, hardships, and suffering, one of daring adventure, of exciting risk, of rude and reckless encounter, of danger to health and limb, and of constant peril to life. A sailor's companions and friends were as reckless and desperate as the enemies he had to encounter, and the danger of becoming like unto them was imminent. His first service as a sailor, humble and laborious, exposed him to the violence of tempests and of the waves, to the dangers of battle and personal encounter, to wounds, privations, suffering, and exposures of every kind. The conditions of the times, that turbulent and reckless period, show what must have been the life of Christopher Columbus for a period of twenty years. The numerous States along the Mediterranean, and especially those of Italy, were turbulent in their habits and reckless in their careers; each one seemed to be at perpetual war with its neighbors; alliances were sometimes formed of several weaker ones against a more powerful neighbor; treachery and intrigue were freely resorted to, and piracy was openly practised and universally licensed. The high seas became the theatre of perpetual warfare, the ships of each petty state were constantly engaged in chase or battle with those of a neighboring state. They depredated like pirates on each other's commerce; piracy supplanted commerce, and no ship afloat was ever at rest or at peace. Fleets of privateers roamed the sea in search of booty or adventure, and were ready to enter the service of any belligerent or adventurer that provided the richest plunder, the most thrilling service, or the most reckless fighting. Petty lords or chieftains maintained fleets of their own, under pretense of defending their domains,

but ready at any moment to avenge an offence real or imaginary, to pounce upon richly laden merchantmen, or to take part in any public or private war. The danger to which merchantmen were constantly exposed, from the practice of universal piracy, caused them to carry armaments and fighting equipments like men-of-war. To this lawless state of the sea, among the maritime States of Europe, was added the incessant appearance on these scenes of blood, pillage, and death, of Mahometan corsairs and fleets of infidels, bent on destroying all they encountered and putting to the sword every Christian antagonist; and this feature in the tumultuous state of the seafaring life added danger and zest to the life they led, and was accompanied by the rancor and woes of religious strife and race extermination. Such was the stirring school in which Columbus was trained to be a sailor, a seaman, a navigator, a commander, a future discoverer. We have no details of this formative and preparative period of his life. We know, however, that at the age of twenty-four, he had reached the rank of a captain, and commanded a ship in the service of Jean of Anjou, who, with the aid of France, was struggling to assert his sovereignty over the kingdom of Naples against Alfonso V. of Aragon. Genoa took sides with Jean of Anjou and Charles VII. of France, and a combined fleet of French, Neapolitan and Genoese, for four years spread terror among the squadrons of Aragon. It was in 1459 that Columbus became an active participant in the war, and from his own pen we learn how he bore himself in the personal service, the special commission, and in the chase confided to him by his chief. "King René happened to send me to Tunis to capture the galley *Fernandina*; and arriving at the head of the island of San Pietro in Sardinia, I learned that there were two ships and a carrac with the galley. At this my crew were so troubled that they determined to proceed no further, but to return to Marseilles for another vessel and more men. Seeing that I had no other means of forcing them, I pretended to yield to their wishes, and altered the point of the compass, and spread sail, it being then evening. The next morning at sunrise, we found ourselves off Carthagena, while all were firmly convinced we were sailing towards Marseilles." This incident shows the characteristic courage of Columbus in seeking an encounter with a force three times greater than his own, a courage for which he was distinguished through life, and to which he owed much of his success. The stratagem, by which he forced his timid crew to meet the foe against their will, casts light upon another and more pregnant and perilous and glorious period of his life and successful career, when, in his first Atlantic voyage, that resulted in the discovery of America, he altered the reckoning of the distance from Spain, and thus held his

panic-stricken crews to the westward course, and to ultimate success, and imperishable renown.

Not only was it claimed in behalf of Columbus, especially by his son and historian, Fernando Columbus, that his ancestors were of noble estate and blood, but it was also claimed that he was a near relative and comrade on sea, and in the naval service, of two distinguished admirals of his own name, Colombo the Elder and Colombo the Younger, who were uncle and nephew. This claim is not without probable foundation, though Tarducci and other authors have thrown doubts upon parts of the story. Most authors, including Mr. Irving, give the account as authentic. That the two Admirals Colombo were active and bold leaders in the wars of the Mediterranean when Columbus was a young naval officer, and that he served gallantly under the banner of at least the Younger Colombo, and took part with him in a bloody encounter of the French fleet with the Venetian ships, is undoubted. Our admiral has himself, moreover, given authority to the claim of relationship with these noted admirals by a passage in one of his most famous letters—one which he addressed from the New World to a distinguished lady, the governess of the Infanta, Don Juan of Castile. "I am not the first admiral of my family," wrote Columbus; and then, as if despising all earthly pride and honor, and clinging only to his providential and divine mission, he likened himself unto David, and continued: "Let them give me what name they will for, in fine, David, the wise king, was a shepherd, and became King of Jerusalem, and I serve the same Lord who raised him to such high estate." These aspirations of the son and family of Columbus affect his position in history and before the world but little, since he won for himself, by his own genius and achievements, a patent of nobility and a rank in naval records higher and more glorious than the most famous admirals of naval history.

In 1470 Christopher Columbus commenced a career more pregnant of good to the world and of glory to himself than all the battles and victories which the historic waters of the Mediterranean could have ever witnessed, even in the days of classic Greece or imperial Rome. This was when he entered Portugal, and took up his residence at Lisbon, then the central and focal spot, where the science of navigation, the energy and thirst of adventure and discovery, the brilliant achievements of illustrious naval leaders, and the grand incentives to chivalrous and scientific deeds and service on the ocean culminated, and astonished the world. We have two accounts of the manner and motive of his going to Portugal. One represents him as having been engaged off the coast of that country in one of the most terrible and sanguinary battles of that warlike age, in which the hostile ships came together in

mortal encounter, were grappled and chained together, and the officers and crews met each other on the bloody decks in general struggle and in single combat, when suddenly a destructive fire swept across the struggling fleets, involving the combatants on both sides in dangers more terrific than human war. Columbus is said to have seized an oar, providentially cast in his way, and by its aid to have reached the shores of Portugal, and thence, assisted by public charity—such was now his poverty—travelled to the capital, awaiting the next turn in the wheel of fortune. If this be so, the hand of Providence threw in his way a ready passage from disaster and death to the initial approaches towards glory and immortality. Tarducci favors this account. At Lisbon he met many friends and congenial spirits, and among them his noble and devoted brother, Bartholomew.

But it seems to us more probable, and we believe, with Fernando Columbus, the admiral's son and historian, without discrediting the story of his shipwreck, that he was a voluntary seeker of this great rendezvous for navigators, cosmographers, seamen and leaders of the marine, scientists, geographers and discoverers. That he was drawn thither by the congenial air and sympathetic society of men, who, like himself, were bent on grand conceptions, useful explorations and practical discoveries. The Genoese boy, who, at the age of twelve and fourteen, had studied the great cosmographical authors, and had turned his talent for drawing to the delineations of the earth, could not have spent twenty years in active maritime service among distinguished admirals, experienced navigators and veteran voyagers, without an observant appreciation of all he saw, a careful study of the sea which he loved so much, and an intense inquiry into the causes which for centuries had left the earth so unexplored and its known limits so restricted. The same causes, which had for some years attracted to Lisbon the aspiring and energetic men of the maritime professions, most naturally operated on the mind and heart of the most intelligent, the most logical, the most profound and the bravest of them all. What other centre was there of maritime energy and enterprise than Lisbon for the future discoverer of the New World to make his headquarters? This very question, as to the motives which impelled the steps of Columbus towards Lisbon, assuming, as we now do, that it was the desire of maritime adventure, development and discovery, and the congenial pursuits of its court, king and people, makes this the proper point for the consideration of another more interesting and pregnant question—one of paramount attraction and fascination—When did the great admiral first conceive the thought, the inspiration, the providential mission, that there was another and unknown world, and that he was the chosen instrument of heaven for its discovery?

This question is involved in great obscurity, owing to, first, the active and engrossing life which Columbus led from the age of fourteen to the age of thirty-four, when he entered Portugal, and the consequent absence of any correspondence or record of his thoughts, studies or plans; and, second, the comparatively obscure and modest life he led in Lisbon up to the time of his public announcement of his proposals. It is certain that Columbus had his convictions, theories and proposals all brought to completion and formal arrangement by the year 1474, as we shall see hereafter from his correspondence with the celebrated cosmographer of Florence, Dr. Toscanelli. But how much sooner?

He arrived in Lisbon in 1470 (Mr. Winsor makes it 1473), and soon thereafter, either in that year or in 1471, he must have lived in Porto Santo, and there are rumors and charges of his having learned from an old pilot of the existence of land in the western ocean during his residence there. It was frequently reported, and even charged, that he knew the secret, and kept it as such for some time before he communicated it to Dr. Toscanelli or the King of Portugal. While the specific accusation has been proved to be unfounded, its existence is proof of a belief that he then knew the theory and fact. Mr. Irving proves that the whole thought originated exclusively in his own mind, and such assuredly was the case. But under any circumstances, so vast and profound a study and discovery, such an intricate and complicated system of reasonings, so much knowledge, observation, experience and research, such vast reading and study of voluminous works, such a fixed and definite view and conviction, such elaborate preparation, such vastness of detail and proof, such a well-arranged, studied and elaborated series of scientific and practical propositions, could never have been the fruits of a few years, but must have been the results of a lifetime of laborious application. At the age of fourteen he had studied cosmography and kindred sciences, and as the gifted youth looked out from the mountains encircling his native Genoa, his gaze rested on the sea, and through this highway or channel he could but see the only means of solving the many cosmographical questions discussed in the books he read. It is not probable, or even possible, that his earliest thoughts reached so far as a theory of the existence of western lands; but the germ was laid in his early boyhood, and his mind rested not until the germ had burst forth and borne fruit in an early period of his life. From the moment of this conviction in his youthful mind his life's leisure and his early and late hours were devoted to study and the discovery and collection of proofs and authorities to sustain his convictions. While it is not in our power to fix the date when his grand conception took defi-

nite shape in his mind, he himself assures us, and thus proves from his own words, that it was from his earliest years; for in the letter which he addressed to the Spanish sovereigns, accompanying his book of prophecies, as Tarducci states, and as we have already quoted, "He freely asserted his conviction that he had been chosen by God, *from his earliest years*, to carry out these two great undertakings—the discovery of the New World and the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre." Thus *from his earliest years* the trend of his mind, study and convictions must have been in this channel, and must have resulted in an early decision.

Columbus, on his arrival at Lisbon, was in the prime of life, and was a noble type of manhood. He is described as of a tall stature, powerfully built and admirably proportioned, and was graceful, dignified and noble in his carriage and bearing. His face was somewhat oval, long, but not fat or thin, complexion bright and tending towards ruddy, his face receiving animation from numerous freckles; his nose was aquiline, eyes bright, and his jaws were slightly projecting. In his diet he was frugal, and in his dress plain, though exceedingly neat. While his manner was affable in conversation with strangers and mild with servants, he was naturally grave. His natural disposition was subject to anger, but this imperfection he had overcome by spiritual discipline and a strong will. He was ever charitable and just in his comments on others. But it was his religious character and practices, at this time in particular, and during his whole life, which especially challenges our admiration. He spent much time in prayer, observed the most rigid fasts, attended the holy Mass every day, and recited daily the whole canonical office of a religious. He began nothing in life without first devoutly saying the pious prayer we have already mentioned, *Jesu cum Maria Sit nobis in Via*. He was a devout client of the Blessed Virgin, and a great admirer and imitator of St. Francis of Assisium. The Franciscans, in turn, were his especial friends in life and in death. That a man should have preserved his purity of life and so pious and religious a character through twenty years of a seafaring life, amid such scenes of strife, and in the companionship of turbulent and often unscrupulous adventurers and leaders, is the strongest proof that Columbus was a vessel of election, a representative of the Most High, a man blending at once the character of the patriarch, the apostle, the missionary, the ambassador of the faith and the chosen one of Providence.

Columbus was a daily and devout attendant at holy Mass, and at Lisbon he was present every day most piously at the holy sacrifice offered in the Convent-Church of All Saints. Among the pious ladies attending the convent schools was one of his own race, Felipa Moñis de Perestrella, of Italian descent, and of a family dis-



tinguished in the maritime history of Portugal. Her father had been one of the earliest followers of Prince Henry the Navigator, and had achieved early discoveries in that service; and at his death, owing to the destructive plague of the rabbits in the island of Porto Santo, he had become impoverished; his fame and an unsullied honor were all he left to his family, with the exception of a small share or remnant of property on that island. The future discoverer made the acquaintance of Felipa, their association ripened into friendship, finally into a mutual attachment, and they were married. From the time of his arrival at Lisbon he supported himself by making geographical maps, an art he commenced to practice when a boy at Genoa. Now his mother-in-law became a member of his household at Lisbon, and at Porto Santo, where he soon after went to reside. Here his son and successor, Diego, was born, and here he continued the occupation of map making. So accomplished was he in this art that it proved sufficiently lucrative to enable him to support his family, and assist his aged father at Genoa, a filial duty he always performed with generosity, even in the most impoverished periods of his life. His studies of navigation, and the absorption of his thoughts in the great problem of the earth, must have led ultimately to his neglecting his maps and his charts, and to his consequent pecuniary embarrassment. We do not know when he became a widower. In the midst of his own poverty we find that he visited his venerable parents in 1472 and 1473, and always assisted them; and continued his visits until he became engaged in his voyages to the New World. It was about this time that he must have conversed with King Alfonso V., of Portugal on his magnificent projects, and it is argued from his visits to court and the free converse of the king with him, that he had emerged from his obscurity, and had won repute as a man of science, especially learned in cosmography and navigation. In one of his visits to the king, the latter showed to him some reeds of immense size, which had been cast upon the shores of the Azores by the waters of the Atlantic. This fact was afterwards referred to by the Admiral as evidence of the existence of land across the western ocean. Columbus was now surely in possession of his great theory; a theory, which at an early period, assumed the shape of assumed conviction.

The Portuguese had now become the foremost nation in maritime adventure, energy and enterprise, had undertaken with enlightened and brilliant policy and ability, the solution of the great problem of reaching Asia by sea, had selected for that achievement the route on the Atlantic Ocean southward along the coast of Africa, then south-eastwardly and turning the Cape of Good Hope, eastwardly to the empires of the Grand Khan, teeming with

millions of subjects, enriched with gold and spices and precious stones and the richest fabrics of an oriental overland commerce. Now they had achieved a substantial and honorable progress in approaching the golden land of Ophir, and the dazzling riches and uncounted millions of the vast empires of the East. From the remotest antiquity Africa had been an enigma to philosophers, scientists, navigators and cosmographers.

It was the dark Continent, whose eastern, western and southern boundaries were almost as unknown as its vast interior. All was mystery concerning the land of the burning sun, and the man of color; Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Venetians, Genoese, the French, had essayed the solution of the problem. Centuries had been vainly spent in these brave and costly attempts to explore a Continent. For forty years the Portuguese had become the pioneers in this long and then fruitless effort, and, under the leadership of Prince Henry the navigator, third son of King John I., of Portugal, and Grand Master of the Order of Christ, had triumphantly carried the Portuguese flag to the south as far as Cape Non and beyond it then to Cape Bojador and beyond even that. The Madeira Islands and the Cape Verde Islands had now become familiar to mariners. The discovery of Porto Santo by Prestrella, the father-in-law of Columbus, was like a new discovery of an old island; Portuguese colonies studded the islands of the Atlantic along the coast of Africa, and in 1442, Gileanez, a Portuguese captain, reached Cape da Gallee, 170 miles beyond Cape Bojador, and from the gold dust found called the place Rio d'Oro. Some of the most powerful princes of Africa had entered into treaties of friendship and commerce with the Portuguese. A gold mine discovered in Guinea was so promising in its anticipated yield of the precious metal that it received the distinguishing name of simply *The Mine*. Portugal, its court and its people were excited and most joyful over the brilliant achievements in African discovery, colonization and commerce. Lisbon, where Columbus now spent most of his time, was the central point of this zeal, energy and ambition for African expeditions; conversation at court, in the market-places, the homes and streets of the city, at the meetings of the navigators and adventurers, and of all classes, the voyages in the Atlantic and along the African coast constituted the whole exciting topic of conversation and discussion. Expeditions returning from successful discoveries, or departing on voyages of brilliant expectations, aroused each time the public excitement to the greatest point. The discovery of the Madeira and Azores Islands seemed to have given rise to the most extravagant tales of vast islands lying farther out at sea and not yet discovered, though dimly seen or ineffectually approached in the imagination

of ever hopeful and excitable sailors. The constant reports of the discovery of new kingdoms on the African coast, and of new islands in the Atlantic on the African route to Asia, fired the imaginations; stimulated the adventures, nerved the energies, and inflamed the fancies of the varied, commingling, diversified and scientific groups of aspiring people attracted together from every quarter of Europe at Lisbon. Commotion and excitement constituted the staple resources of this strange city. Delusions, seeking mythical islands, cities and empires, and the imaginations of overwrought adventurers, filled the Atlantic with phantom islands and lands. The Egyptian narrative of once powerful and vast Atlantis, now submerged by direst cataclysm, was revived. Aristotle's Antilla was again called up from the abyss to the possible horizon of the ocean. The tradition of the *Island of the Seven Cities*, over each of which presided a bishop, and where many an adventurous Portuguese pilot was alleged to have visited and was detained for fear that he might communicate to Spain the existence of the island, was now again repeated with every assurance of its verity. The famous Island of St. Brandan came forth to view, and its mountains and forests had been often and distinctly seen by the inhabitants of the Canaries, and so vividly presented to Prince Henry the Navigator, that several expeditions were sent out to discover and locate it, and the failure of each did not deter others from following the same delusive method; a method not based upon scientific data as were the subsequent triumphant voyages of Christopher Columbus. But in the Portuguese rage for maritime expeditions and new territorial discoveries there was much that was practical blended with the chimerical, much that resulted in extending the known area of the earth, and increasing the domains of that kingdom. The glorious career of Prince Henry, the Navigator in seeking Asia by the southern route around Africa had a brilliant and successful result after the Prince's death, and after Columbus had discovered the New World in seeking Asia. For it was the Portuguese who finally succeeded by that route in reaching Asia. The atmosphere of naval and maritime energy and prowess, which Columbus breathed during his residence at Lisbon, had a vast influence on his intelligent and enthusiastic character and mind, and constituted a part of the schooling, which he received for his illustrious and providential work.

But another powerful element entered here; one which greatly harmonized with the devout character and apostolic mission of Columbus. While the rage for Atlantic adventure and discovery aroused other nations to exertion in the same direction, the Holy See was the most profound, earnest and beneficent participator in these significant movements, to which, however, by its divine and apos-

toxic commission, religion gave a higher and holier purpose and aim. With the two-fold object of promoting the extension of human knowledge of the earth and encouraging science, and still more of opening new fields for the spread of the Gospel, it bestowed every blessing and privilege upon them. In order to confirm the splendid work of Prince Henry and of the Crown of Portugal, the Holy See conferred upon Portugal the primatial right over all the barbarous countries the Portuguese might discover, from Cape Bojador to the *East Indies*. The Holy Father also threatened with spiritual deprivations and penalties all who should thwart these beneficent strides of a Christian nation into the realms of paganism, and a plenary indulgence was granted to all such as might join these now blessed expeditions and perish in promoting them in the manner pointed out by the papal conditions. These generous concessions imparted to these maritime expeditions, virtually, the character of a crusade, and the crown of martyrdom was offered to the self-sacrificed. Neither the aspirations of his boyhood, when looking longingly to the sea from his native Genoese hills, nor the scientific problems evolving in his ever-active mind, nor the robust naval campaigns of over twenty years, nor the conversations of veteran navigators, nor his own struggles to rise from poverty, nor his ambition, nor the correspondence of the learned, so impressed the devout and profound mind and soul of Columbus, all combined, as did the single blessing of the Church.

But there was another school, in which the preparation of Columbus for his sacred mission must have received immense development at this time. His wife's father was Bartholomew Moñis de Perestrella, an Italian gentleman naturalized in Portugal, a protégé of Prince Henry the Navigator, the discoverer and colonizer of the island of Porto Santo. The vastness of his landed estates on this island, the reluctance of the Portuguese for colonization, the sterility of the land, and the annihilating ravages of the swarms of rabbits, had ruined his fortunes, and though he left his family poor, there was to Columbus, besides the attractions of the young, beautiful, and pious wife, whose Italian descent also drew him again more closely to his native country, a mine of wealth and information in the maritime traditions of such a family, in the maps and charts which the deceased navigator had left behind him and which Columbus' mother-in-law took special pleasure in laying before his eager eyes, in the conversations with her, in which she repeated the animating stories her husband had related so often of the sea and of his voyages, and in the companionship of voyagers, navigators, seamen, and captains, who habitually resorted to the home of the family, and perpetuated by their sailor's yarns, and the stories and experiences of many an adventurous voyage,

the history of the past, while they contributed much to the making of future history. So much was this the case that it gave origin after the admiral's death, and as late as 1603, a century and a half after the discovery, to one of the most unjust assaults upon his well-earned fame, a libel upon his life and history, a malignant calumny upon his name and reputation. This unworthy invention is to the effect that while Columbus was living at Terceira, one of the Azores, with his wife, mother, and little son, Diego Columbus, who had been born to him at Porto Santo, he received with hospitality into his humble home five shipwrecked mariners, driven by western Atlantic storms upon that island, these five being the remnants of a crew of seventeen; the rest were lost at sea. That of these five seamen, four died in the house of Columbus, one after another, from the injuries of their shipwreck, that the last survivor was named Alonzo Sanchez, of Huelva in Spain, and that after imparting to Columbus his invaluable secret, he too expired in the arms of the future admiral. The pretended secret of the shipwrecked sailors was that they had sailed from the Canaries for Madeira, and were overtaken by furious storms and forced across the Atlantic to an unknown land, whose latitude they took and whose description they committed to writing, and that on their return they were again overwhelmed with storms, lost all of their number except five, and these were tossed, scarcely alive on the shores of Terceira, that the expiring Sanchez imparted the secret to Columbus, and that the land they thus discovered was the same that was afterwards called Hispaniola by Columbus. It was a part of the libel that Columbus kept this secret and used it as his guide in discovering America. This calumny was so utterly without foundation, so diametrically contradicted by known and undisputed facts, so entirely at variance with the independent, upright, truthful, frank, and honorable character of Columbus, and has been so triumphantly refuted by arguments drawn from history, reason, and authority, that now no one is so reckless as to repeat it. It has served, however, the only purpose of showing how, not only his public associations, but also his private relations, concurred in pointing to Columbus as the discoverer of the New World and in preparing him for the work.

Columbus was thirty-three years old when he was transferred from active, robust, and stirring service on the sea, the school in which he learned so completely the sciences of practical seamanship and navigation, to the more scientific, comprehensive, and cosmographical theatre of geographical adventure and discovery, of national and economic colonization, of statesmanlike expansion, of political progress, and of national aggrandizement. To him it was a school of personal culture, of profound scientific investiga-

tion, of domestic virtues and affections thus developed, from those of a model son to those even more tender ones of husband and father; it was a school of the novitiate for the apostolic vocation of the lay missionary, of the most chivalrous loyalty to the Holy See and the Church, and above all to religion, of Christian self-denial, the correction of a naturally angry disposition and the acquisition of personal and graceful virtues, of the most profound and ascetic type outside of the cloister; a school of divine and earthly wisdom, in which he acquired that ability for affairs the most intricate and difficult, which Washington Irving and historians generally recognize as enabling him afterwards in the drama of discovered worlds to bear himself with consummate action. It was a school in which he studied alike the applied sciences, the geography of the known earth, and penetrated with majestic genius the yet unknown. Here he studied the Sacred Scriptures, and pondered over the prophecies; and here the fathers of the Church, the doctors of the schools, the mystic theology of the Middle Ages, the history of the crusades, the splendid career of the Church, the works of Christian civilization, became familiar to his studious and gifted mind. He assimilated them all, morally and intellectually. He spent seven years at Lisbon, apparently fruitless years so far as active and historic results reveal themselves, but they were the years of his august preparation; years during which his great problem developed to perfection. Tarducci says that "Christopher Columbus was one of the best geographers and cosmographers of the age, and was accustomed to the sea from his infancy; and coming at this time to Portugal he found himself in his natural element, and his delight is easily imagined." Count Roselly de Lorgues speaks of his arrival in Lisbon as miraculous; of the development of his genius; the expansion of his comparative faculties; his holding constant communication with the learned and the great of earth; the completion of his physical vigor and intellectual endowments, the noble largeness of his forehead, now fully developed, indicated thought. It is here his history commences; he associated with kings by the sheer force of his learning and genius, and the potentiality of his vast services to the State. Even his home at Porto Santo during a part of those seven years was a school to the studious discoverer, for here he examined the whole of the progress of the Portuguese discoverers along the coast of Guinea, and the route they followed. "Here," says the Count de Lorgues, "surrounded by the immensity of the ocean—an image of the Infinite—under the dazzling light of a tropical sun, the genius of Columbus matured in the depths of his thoughts a superhuman idea—a project bolder than that of any known heroism. What he had seen, what he had heard, served only to corrob-

rate the justice of his inductions. His habits, his tastes, his family connections seemed to be prearranged for the furtherance of the plan, which was elaborated in the depths of his reflections."

In an age of maritime excitement and self-delusion, the genius of Columbus, acting upon scientific data, distinguished the illusive from the real, rejected the phantom islands and lands of heated imaginations, and stood steadily to the true scientific theory, which he alone among men had discovered and was ready to apply. Mr. Irving says: "The construction of a correct map or chart in those days, required a degree of knowledge and experience sufficient to entitle the possessor to distinction," and speaks of the knowledge, skill, and superior correctness of Columbus as a cosmographer, as winning "for him notoriety among men of science." "His geographical labors elevated him to a communion with the learned." "He was led to know how much of the world remained unknown, and to meditate on the means of exploring it." "The enthusiastic nature of his conceptions gave an elevation to his spirit and a dignity and loftiness to his whole demeanor." . . . "His views were princely and unbounded." Such are the sentiments of Washington Irving on the genius and character of Columbus.

Many more historians could be quoted who have paid exalted tributes to the character of Columbus, had we time to quote from them. Time and space will permit but one additional quotation. The English Jesuit, Father Arthur George Knight, thus speaks of him: "Columbus was certainly a man of prompt action and ready wit, keenly conscious of all that was passing around him, self-possessed in danger and fertile in resources; but he was not the less on that account a great reader, a great student, and a dreamer of splendid dreams. He was acquainted with all the cosmographical learning of the time, and well versed in all the books which were then regarded as oracular in their assertions about the confines of the habitable globe. He had pored over the glowing pages of Marco Polo till the magnificent vision of Cipango and Cathay (founded upon the actual wonders of China and Japan) had fastened upon his soul, and he never doubted that the Grand Khan was such as he had been depicted, and only waited the summons of the Catholic sovereigns, to be baptized with all his people." "Few men indeed, perhaps only Saints, have escaped like Columbus with unwounded conscience from such turbulent scenes." "He had strongly grasped the fundamental truth that the actions of men have their meaning and value from reference to the life of God Incarnate." "The grand idea which filled the mind and claimed the whole soul of Columbus was to make a highway round the earth, and bring the nations in willing homage to the

feet of Jesus Christ, reigning once more in Jerusalem of the Christians."

Little now is needed to complete the delineation of the man, who, feeling his providential mission revealed within him, resolutely bent all his energies for many years to a thorough preparation for his great mission. A few more words will suffice. The rich graces which abounded in his soul from the inexhaustible religious fountains to which he constantly resorted, embraced among them a pious humility which was not ostentatiously practiced, but gently found expression in an innate self-control and outward modesty of appearance, dress, manners and habits. It was this that added such rare grace to his majestic stature and carriage, and elegantly harmonized with his dignified and manly character. So intense had been his studies of all the sciences connected with the great problem he was to solve, and such his checkered life, that his hair, which was naturally blonde inclining to chestnut, was turning gray at the age of thirty-three. His gestures were natural, easy, graceful and impressive, and he was an orator, when need be, of no mediocre power and eloquence. His intellect seemed to rejoice in the strength, proportions and perfections of his perfect physique. His senses were acute to a fine degree; he possessed a rare fineness of hearing, cultured by his constant out-door life and the habit and the necessity of meeting dangers of every kind. His keenness of sight served him in many a dire crisis, and enabled him to discern the most minute differences of colors and classify the finest tints, and to measure distances when he was in search of worlds. His delicacy of taste was equally remarkable, and by it he could trace differences and detect qualities inappreciable to men generally. His delicacy of smell surpassed all these, and with his perfection of other senses enabled him to value and admire more than other men the beautiful works of the Creator, so that he found in the book of nature endless sources of infinite delight and profound study; his knowledge and appreciation of the habits and qualities of flowers, birds, sea products, spices, perfumes, waters, waves, general vegetation, winds, clouds, fishes, and in fact of every object in nature, were manifested constantly, and especially during his first and succeeding voyages to the New World. His sense of touch was like an armor to one who, *levant and couchant*, was exposed to so many dangers. While his clothing was rigidly plain, it was exquisitely clean and white, neat and appropriate. His horsemanship was perfect. He was a valiant knight—a veritable Bayard, without fear or reproach; a crusader; a soldier on land, a mariner on the water—at once a general and an admiral.

Columbus was free from vices of every kind, and his long



contact with rude and vicious people on the seas had never impaired his morals; swearing and profane songs sickened him; he abstained from wine and the delicacies of the table, refrained from games of chance and all effeminate luxuries, restricting himself almost to a vegetable diet. His habits of order and punctuality were exact, and he seemed always to strive to accomplish the best and most perfect thing of which the situation was capable. He was affectionate and tender to his relatives and friends, kind and gentle to inferiors, and to his enemies and criminals he was forbearing and forgiving. To his parents he was the most loyal of sons. He was magnificent, and his liberality was co-extensive with the vast realms he discovered, and excelled even the vice-regal revenues to which he was at once entitled, and of which he was unjustly deprived. He was public-spirited, enterprising and unconventional, fruitful in resources and ever prepared for emergencies. He was eloquent, graceful, graphic, yet natural. He was imaginative and poetic, giving vent, in his later years, to his feelings in verse, and his thoughts expressed assumed an epic and massive grandeur. Whether on land or sea, he was devout, religious, chaste, and regular in his devotions and pious practices. No surroundings, however degraded or vicious, could impair his character. His worship of the Creator in his works, whether on land or sea, was like a perpetual renewal of that sublime anthem, *A solis ortu usque ad occasum, laudabile nomen Domini!* His natural and acquired gifts, whether of body, or mind, or heart or soul, would have pointed him out under more favorable circumstances as the future discoverer of the New World. As it was, he could not pass without notice, though observers never penetrated the cause. These gifts, viewed with his assured and oft asserted claim to a divine mission, toward the accomplishment of which his every aspiration tended until his final accomplishment of the greatest of human deeds, show that with him preparation was equal to destiny, readiness was equal to promise, and finally, accomplishment was equal to prophesy.

The subject of Christopher Columbus will be continued in the issues of April, July and October, with the second, third and fourth progressive articles: Second, for April, The Prophecy—The Offer—The Acceptance. Third, for July, The Accomplishment. Fourth, for October, Ingratitude, Misfortunes, Posthumous Honors. The series will contain every leading fact of his history, will interpret his remarkable and profound character, vindicate his memory from unjust calumnies, maintain his proper place in the annals of our race, and present him to the cordial, generous and patriotic admiration, gratitude and honor of our country.

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