

derived to us from his person, than to go about to enquire whether his father was a merchant or a man of quality that kept his hawks and hounds; whereas it is certain there have been a thousand such in all parts, whose memory was utterly lost in a very short time among their neighbours and kindred, so as it is not known whether there ever were any such men. But I am of opinion that their nobility can add less lustre to me than the honour I receive from such a father. And since his own honourable exploits made him not stand in need of the wealth of his predecessors (who, notwithstanding their poverty, were not destitute of virtue, but only of fortune), he ought at least, by his name and worth, to have been raised by authors above the rank of mechanics and handicrafts. Which yet, if any will affirm, grounding his assertion on what one Augustin Justiniani writes in his chronicle; I say, that I will not set myself to deny it, begging time or means to prove the contrary by testimonials; for as much as Justiniani's writing it does not make that to be looked upon as an article of faith, which is no longer in the memory of man; so neither will it be thought undeniable, should I say I received the contrary from a thousand persons. Nor will I shew his falsehood by the histories others have writ of Christopher Colon, but by this same author's testimony, and writing, in whom is verified the proverb, that "Liars ought to have good memories," because otherwise they contradict themselves, as Justiniani did in this case; saying in his comparison of the four languages, upon that expression of the psalm, *in omnem terram exiit sonus eorum*, these very words: "This Christopher Colon having in his tender years attained some elements of learning, when he came to manly years applied himself to the art of navigation, and went to Lisbon, in Portugal, where he learned cosmography, taught him by a brother of his who there made sea-charts; with which improvement, and discoursing with those that sailed to S. George de la Mira, in Afric, and his own reading in cosmography, he entertained thoughts of sailing to those countries he discovered." By which words it appears that he followed no mechanic employment, or handicraft; since, he says, he employed his childhood in learning, his youth in navigation and cosmography, and his riper years in discoveries. Thus Justiniani convinces himself of falsehood, and proves himself an inconsiderate, rash, and malicious countryman: for when he speaks of a renowned person who did so much honour to his country, whose historiographer Justiniani made himself, though the admiral's parents had been very mean, it had been more decent to speak of his origin as other authors in the like case do, saying he was of low parentage, or come of very poor friends, than to use injurious words, as he did in his psalter and afterwards in his chronicle, falsely calling him a mechanic. And supposing he had not contradicted himself, reason itself made it appear that a man who had been employed in art manual, or handicraft, must be born and grow old in it to become a perfect master; and that he would not from his youth have travelled so many countries, as also that he would not have attained so much learning and knowledge, as his actions demonstrate he had; especially in those four principal sciences required to perform what he did, which are astrology, cosmography, geometry and navigation. But it is no wonder that Justiniani should dare to deliver an untruth in this particular, which is hidden, since in affairs well known concerning his discovery and navigation, he has inserted above a dozen falsehoods in half a sheet of paper in his psalter, which I shall briefly hint at, without staying to give him an answer, to avoid interrupting the series of the history; since by the very course of it, and what others have writ on that subject, the falsehood of his writing will be made out. The first therefore was, that the admiral went to Lisbon to learn cosmography of a brother of his own that was there; which is quite contrary, because he lived in that city before, and taught his brother what he knew. The second