

length countenanced by the interest of Queen Isabella, who raised money on her jewels to carry it into execution. Accordingly, in 1492, the adventurous Columbus set sail with three ships. In crossing the Atlantic, his crew, full of apprehensions of danger in a vast unknown ocean, especially from the circumstance of the variation of the compass, which was now first observed, broke out into a mutiny: happily, however, it subsided, when, at the end of thirty-three days, they discovered land, which proved to be the Bahama Islands. These Columbus at first hoped to be a part of the Indies he was in quest of (for, tho' he possibly had an idea of the spherical figure of the earth, he was certainly ignorant of its dimensions, and consequently of the great space still between him and the wished-for country): but soon finding his mistake, he steered to the southward, and fell in with Cuba and Hispaniola; whence he returned to Spain, but not without some samples of gold to be met with in the latter, and gaining a slight knowledge of other islands.

This prosperous voyage procured Columbus, not only the most honourable reception and highest applause, but also a speedy equip-