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A NEW, ROYAL AUTHENTIC,  
And COMPLETE SYSTEM of  
UNIVERSAL GEOGRAPHY.

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B O O K I V.  
A M E R I C A,

Including the New Discoveries on the Continent and Islands off the Coast.

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I N T R O D U C T I O N .

IN treating of those parts of the world which have already come under consideration, viz. Asia and Africa, we have, with peculiar care, collected, and, in full display, presented, both the New Discoveries, and the striking descriptions of our celebrated countryman *Captain Cook*, and, we trust, to the satisfaction of our numerous readers. America will afford us no less scope for gratification, nor shall we be less attentive, or less remiss in our endeavours, to render our account of this part of the world as instructive and entertaining as either of the former; to which a description of the different countries therein explored by our eminent Navigator will much conduce, as it will bring to view new countries, new men, and new manners, as well as exhibit novelty in the animal and vegetable systems. But previous to this, and in conformity to the order of our plan, as well as our desire to preserve every important historical event, it is expedient that we should introduce a circumstantial narrative of the first discovery made of America by the great Columbus, together with a general description of the country; to which will succeed, with due propriety, the discoveries of our no less celebrated countryman *Captain Cook*; and tend to hand him down, as well as the former, to future ages, as a character worthy of universal admiration.

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C H A P. I.

FIRST DISCOVERY OF AMERICA BY COLUMBUS.

AS few or no discoveries have displayed more human sagacity and resolution, or been attended with more important consequences than that of America, we deem it expedient to present our readers with a circumstantial detail of that interesting event.

This was made in the fifteenth century, towards the close of which, Venice and Genoa were become, thro' the means of their commerce with the eastern world, the greatest maritime powers in Europe. Frequent voyages, some of which were of extent, introduced several improvements in the practical part of navigation; but the knowledge of mankind was still very imperfect, hardly extending beyond their sensible horizon. The true system of the world was unknown; and the imperfect notions entertained with regard to the figure and magnitude of the earth, had no other foundation than conjecture.

In this state of things Christopher Columbus, a native of Genoa, a man of aspiring genius, whose knowledge of the mathematics exceeded that of his contemporaries in general, conceived a plan of sailing to the Indies by an unknown route, and thereby opening to his country a new source of opulence and power. This plan being presented to his countrymen, and by them rejected as vague and chimerical, Columbus, exasperated at their ungenerous treatment, laid it before the courts of France, England, and Portugal, who like-

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wise spurned at it as imaginary, and reprobated the principles on which it was founded as absurd and illusive. His last resource was the court of Spain, where, after eight years attendance, he succeeded through the special patronage of Queen Isabella, consort of King Ferdinand. This princess raised money necessary for the design upon her own jewels; so that he sailed, to his inexpressible joy, with three ships, in the year 1492, on a voyage, in the event of which the inhabitants of two worlds were concerned.

In this arduous attempt Columbus had many difficulties to encounter. He had no chart to direct him, no lights from former navigators; to which was added the despondency of his sailors, who, on their voyage, threatened to throw him overboard, and insisted on their return. At length, however, when his own invention and hopes were nearly exhausted, they fortunately discovered land, after a voyage of 33 days, which put an end to the commotion, so that his commands were obeyed with alacrity.

Columbus first landed on one of the Bahama Isles. The people, on the 11th of October, 1492, discovered a light upon the Island Guanahani, which the admiral called St. Salvador, as it delivered him and his crew from impending destruction. Here he erected the royal standard, and took possession of the island, by the appellation of St. Salvador, in the name of their Catholic

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Majesties.