

THE STORY OF COLUMBUS.

We are never tired of reading or hearing the stories of great men who have faithfully served their generation. It matters not how far distant may be the age in which they lived, or how different from our own the manners of the people amongst whom they grew up, there is a perpetual beauty, freshness, and pathos about their lives of which we never weary.

Such are our feelings as we turn to the story of Christopher Columbus. We know but little of the early life of the great navigator who added the knowledge of a new hemisphere to our globe; but that little is extremely interesting. He is supposed to have been born at Genoa about the year 1436. The discoverer of America, and the most illustrious example perhaps on record of what may be achieved by a settled purpose in life, could not boast of wealthy parentage. Like many other men of genius he was born poor, and grew up in straitened circumstances. He received but a few educational advantages from his father, who was a woolcomber, working hard for his daily bread. At an early age, however, Christopher revealed proofs that he had been endowed with mental gifts of no common order. He could very soon read and write, and while quite a child showed considerable skill in drawing, painting, and arithmetic. As he grew up and attended the great school of learning in Pavia, his love for these studies increased, and he also took a decided interest in geometry and astronomy.

When he had learnt all that he could in the school at Pavia, Christopher had to look around him and answer the questions, "What are you going to be? By what means do you intend to earn your bread?" He made answer by going to sea when he was little more than fourteen years of age.

We cannot follow him as he sailed from port to port in the Mediterranean, in a craft in which no man in his senses would now like to venture. We have hints that his early life was passed in the midst of dangers and difficulties which would not be without their compensating brightness and pleasure to a youth of daring spirit. But we are told that he was not overcome by circumstances, and that he contended successfully against being degraded and drawn down by the brutish, and vitiated superstitious, mariners of the fifteenth century.

At Lisbon, in 1470, we find Christopher Columbus settled and married, and constructing maps and charts to support his family. Here he seems first to have conceived the notion, which soon became one of the firmest of convictions, that there was land to the westward. This idea he was destined, after long years of disheartening effort, to establish as a fact. He was now in the prime of life, tall, muscular, and of commanding aspect. We first find Columbus propounding his settled and cherished conviction before the Court of the King of Portugal. He gave the leading grounds of his belief in the existence of an undiscovered country in the Western Ocean, and asked for the means of ascertaining the truth of it. King John referred the scheme to a number of nautical and scientific men, who all decided against it. The monarch, however, believing perhaps that there was something in it, secretly despatched a vessel to examine the route detailed by Columbus, and to report thereon. The pilots sent out were too timid to diverge far from the accustomed track, and they soon returned to Lisbon only to throw ridicule on the whole project.

Had Columbus been a half-hearted man he would have been overwhelmed by the contempt which now assailed his idea; he was not, however, to be daunted, and he determined to try to get support elsewhere. Taking with him his motherless little boy, Diego, he secretly left Lisbon and made his way to his native state, Genoa. But with

no greater success! He explained his scheme as he had done before the Court of Portugal, stating it as his firm conviction that there was land to the westward and priceless riches for all who would be bold enough to discover this land. In reply the public laughed at him, and treated his idea as the silly project of a visionary brain. Disappointed, but nothing daunted, he next went to the Venetians, and from them he received similar treatment.

And now indeed it seemed as if it were no longer any use to persevere, and that it would be better to relinquish the idea of planting his foot upon those shores, which as yet appeared to exist but in his own imagination. He was inspired, however, to

seven years of hope deferred, during which Columbus had applied to other courts, but with no better success. At length, in 1492, under the patronage of Ferdinand and Isabella, after these seven years of waiting, he was permitted to make trial of his frequently proposed scheme. Three small vessels, only one of which was decked, were placed under his command; with these, and one hundred and twenty men, he set out on his voyage of discovery when he was nearly fifty-six years old.

He had no sooner set sail than he discovered that he was the only man who had any faith in the enterprise. The sailors were sceptical and timid, and, as they sailed over unknown seas, soon began to give vent to

varied instrument and a branch of a tree filled with red berries. Soon after the grey arose, "Land! Land!" There was land indeed; Columbus had been no dreamer, and, in the course of two or three days, he landed on the island St. Salvador, in the Bahamas!

We cannot pause to tell of his triumphant feelings, or to follow him as he proceeded on his voyage of discovery. After discovering several other of the West India Islands, he set sail again for Spain. It was in the month of April, 1493, we are told, and a fine spring morning, that Columbus entered Barcelona. On the city walls and house-tops waved clouds of banners and ensigns, and every ship in harbor was dressed with flags from stem to stern. Columbus marched through the street surrounded by more than royal pomp. The procession at last arrived at the palace, where Ferdinand and Isabella awaited the triumphant voyager. Surrounded by a brilliant crowd of Spanish knights, the grey-haired Columbus entered. The sovereigns rose up to receive him, and a murmur of applause burst from the crowd. Columbus bent the knee before the throne, but Isabella bade him rise, and having kissed the hands of their highnesses, he took his seat among the nobles. He then gave an account of the most important events of his voyage, exhibited his maps, with the gold, the spices, and other productions of the countries he had discovered, and declared that all this was but the harbinger of still greater marvels.

After having been thus triumphantly received by Court and people, Columbus in the autumn of the same year again set sail on a second expedition, and during this voyage he discovered the Caribbe Islands and Jamaica. During a third voyage he discovered Trinidad and landed at Paria, on the coast of South America.

One would like, after thus recounting the splendid services which Columbus had rendered, to see him spending a calm, green old age. This, however, was not to be, and the old man's last days were embittered by treachery and injustice. He died in poverty at Valladolid, May 20th, 1506. Biography, it has been well said, furnishes no parallel to the life of Columbus. Great men there have been who have met with disappointment and injustice; but there is perhaps no other instance of a great man whom disappointment and injustice did not dishearten and disgust; who had his greatness recognized and in his lifetime, and yet was robbed of the emolument it entitled him to, and who, after his death, had the honor he had so hardly won conferred upon another. His life, nevertheless, is one eloquent commentary upon the success which crowns singleness of purpose.—*Family Friend.*

WE ALL PAY.—Eli Perkins shows how even the very best temperance men are financial sufferers, if nothing more, by the existence of the drink traffic. He says: "I paid \$425 taxes on my New York house last year. What was this tax used for? It was to govern a city where three-fourths of the arrests were made on account of drunkenness. I can govern myself, but I have to pay \$425 a year to be protected from the criminal classes, made criminal through rum."

CURRIED SARDINES.—Take a box of sardines and drain off all the oil into a frying-pan. Add to this a dessert-spoonful of curry powder, previously mixed with cold water. Thicken the oil with a little arrow-root, previously mixed with water. As soon as the curry and oil make a sauce about as thick as good melted butter, the sauce is ready. Pour this over the sardines and place them in the oven long enough for them to get heated through. When quite hot, serve with slices of toast.



COLUMBUS EXPLAINING HIS DISCOVERY OF AMERICA TO KING FERDINAND AND QUEEN ISABELLA.
(After a Drawing by Sir John Gilbert.)

make yet one effort more before relinquishing his hope, and this time he turned his steps towards Spain.

Columbus first appeared before the Minister Mendoza, and shortly after was introduced to the far-famed Ferdinand and Isabella. Ferdinand, while he appreciated the character of Columbus, would not immediately commit himself to his scheme. It seemed so visionary; there might be something in it; if, were so, a council of astronomers and geographers would be the most fitting to decide.

The council met at Salamanca, but did not entertain his notion, rather throwing ridicule upon it.

Seven long, weary years passed away,

their fears, and, when these were unavailing, to threaten mutiny. Columbus did his best to quell the discontent of his crew, but to little purpose. At length, after a voyage of sixty days, the sailors began to look at each other with wonder, and to look at Columbus with mysterious dread! For strange birds began to settle on the rigging of the ships, and every now and then plants and pieces of driftwood were seen floating on the sea. These things all betokened that they were nearing a country of some kind, and that the dream of Columbus' life was perhaps about to be fulfilled! At last when every heart was beating with excitement, a sailor who was leaning over the side of the vessel fished up a curiously-car-

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