

more hid and obscure. So it is that some, who would cast a cloud upon his fame, say he was of Nervi, others of Cugureo, and others of Bugiesco, all small towns near the city of Genoa, and upon its coast *. Others, who were for exalting of him, say, he was a native of Savona, others of Genoa; others, more vain, make him of Piacenza, in which city there are some honourable persons of his family, and tombs with the arms and inscriptions of the family of Colombi, this being then the usual surname of his predecessors; though he, complying with the country whither he went to live, and begin a new state of life, modelled the word that it might be like the ancient, and distinguished the direct from the collateral line, calling himself Colon. This made me apt to believe, that as most of his affairs were guarded by some special providence, so this very particular concerning his name and surname was not without some mystery. We may instance many names which were given by secret impulse to denote the effects those persons were to produce, as in his is foretold and expressed the wonder he performed. For if we look upon the common surname of his ancestors we may say he was true Columbus, or Columba, so far as he conveyed the grace of the Holy Ghost into that new world which he discovered, shewing those people who knew him not, which was God's beloved Son, as the Holy Ghost did in the figure of a dove at St. John's baptism; and because he also carried the olive branch and oil of baptism over the waters of the ocean, like Noah's dove, to denote the peace and union of those people with the church, after they had been shut up in the ark of darkness and confusion. And the surname of Colon which he revived was proper to him, which in Greek signifies a member, that his proper name being Christopher, it might be known he was a member of Christ, by whom salvation was to be conveyed to those people. Moreover if we would bring his name to the Latin pronunciation, that is Christophorus Colonus; we may say, that as St. Christopher is reported to have bore that name, because he carried Christ over the deep waters with great danger to himself, whence came the denomination of Christopher; and as he conveyed over the people whom no other could have been able to carry, so the Admiral Christophorus Colonus, imploring the assistance of Christ in that dangerous passage, went over safe himself and his company, that those Indian nations might become citizens and inhabitants of the church triumphant in heaven; for it is to be believed, that many souls which the devil expected to make a prey of, had they not passed through the water of baptism, were by him made inhabitants and dwellers in the eternal glory of heaven.

CHAP. II. — *Of the Admiral's Father and Mother, and their Quality, and of the false Account one Justiniani gives of his Employ, before he had the Title of Admiral.*

NOT to go upon the etymology, derivation and meaning of the word admiral, but to return to the quality and persons of his progenitors; I say, that how considerable soever they were, being reduced to poverty and want by the wars and factions in Lombardy, I do not find after what manner they lived; though the admiral himself in a letter says that his ancestors and he always traded by sea. For my farther information in this particular, as I passed through Cugureo, I endeavoured to receive some information from two brothers of the Coloni, who were the richest in those parts, and reported to be somewhat a-kin to him; but the youngest of them being above one hundred years old, they could give me no account of this affair. Nor do I think that this is any dishonour to us who descend from him, because I think it better that all the honour be

* From an authentic record, in a law-suit, we now know that the great Colon was born at Ferrara. *Estalla*, xi. 238.