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## Portugal's Vasco da Gama.

The stamps recently placed on sale by Portugal to aid in celebrating the Quadricentennial Jubilee in honor of the daring navigator Vasco da Gama, comprises a set of eight stamps beautifully engraved and colored.

This daring navigator who was the first to circumnavigate the globe, had been brought up a seaman and at an early age had taken part in a number of expeditions along the coast of Africa. Prior to this time he, in company with other voyagers, had visited islands, supposed to be the Cape Verde Islands, far out of sight of land. This seemed hazardous to the world which at that time seemed to comprise Europe and the countries around the Mediterranean Sea. This sea and its countries around were believed to be the centre of the world. When a navigator was inspired by love of adventure sufficient to reach and pass the equator, which was then supposed to rest over "boiling hot sea," it was surely a courageous act and can be compared to the adventures of a Peary or a Nansen. The rich products of the East were brought by way of Egypt and the Mediterranean. Cape Non on the African Coast, by its name, told the maritime adventurers that there was nothing to discover beyond.

But Prince Henry and King John II of Portugal stimulated voyagers by gold and presents to seek the riches of India by the water route. Manuel, the succeeding King

of Portugal, was terribly in earnest to out-do rival maritime powers. He fitted out four large ships (supposed to be about the size of a thirty or forty foot ship and about half as wide as long) and knowing the courage of Vasco da Gama, chose him to go around the Cape of Storms and sail up the coast beyond to the rich Indies. This route which was the hope of King John caused the Cape of Storms to be rechristened the Cape of Good Hope. The expedition of King Manuel set sail from Lisbon July 8, 1497 under the command of Vascode Gama. On the third of November they sailed into the Bay of St. Helena not far from Cape of Good Hope. Here they found savages who at first greeted them kindly until an episode occurred between one of his sailors and a native woman which caused the natives to shower stones and javelins at them. They immediately embarked and went up the eastern coast making a landing, after nine day's sailing, in the Bay of St. Braz. Here civilized man first saw the largest of beasts, the elephant. This is represented on one of the stamps of the present Jubilee set. The explorers then sailed to Natal then to Madagascar and then again to the continent touching at Mozambique. One of the stamps has been engraved to represent this landing. Here they were surprised to find a city with walls, towers and minarets, and people as highly civilized as themselves.

The Mohomedans and Mozambique informed Da Gama of the best route to India and on May 17, 1498 the expedition left