

by Columbus  
galley. They  
missiles, and  
the vessels were  
grapplings, and  
involved in one  
blazing mass.  
Columbus  
in reach, and,  
the shore, though  
God, adds his  
that he might  
after recovering  
upon, where he  
en, and was in-

undo of his fa-  
has been cur-  
That Columbus  
impossible, but  
iod of his life.  
as having oc-  
was nearly a  
gal. The only  
out impeaching  
sume that Fer-  
ther action, in  
this which he  
illicus.

Myrrhaph, this  
on the shores  
at nautical en-  
engaged at the  
of his character  
ever, it is ne-  
historical events  
which rendered  
of men skilled  
from all parts of

Y OF PORTUGAL.

d commenced  
the Atlantic  
scenes of nau-  
its origin to  
the fourteenth  
of Macham,  
he was ena-  
and by stress  
the high seas,  
d island, co-  
s afterwards  
this account

article CAPTURE

IRA.

as a fable, and have pronounced the Canaries to be the first fruits of modern discovery. This famous group, the Fortunate Islands of the ancients, in which they placed their garden of the Hesperides, and from whence Ptolemy commenced to count the longitude, had been long lost to the world.

There are vague accounts, it is true, of their having received casual visits, at wide intervals, during the obscure ages, from the wandering bark of some Arabian, Norman, or Genoese adventurer; but all this was involved in uncertainty, and led to no beneficial result. It was not until the fourteenth century that they were effectually rediscovered, and restored to mankind. From that time they were occasionally visited by the hardy navigators of various countries. The greatest benefit produced by their discovery was, that the frequent expeditions made to them emboldened mariners to venture far upon the Atlantic, and familiarized them, in some degree, to its dangers.

The grand impulse to discovery was not given by chance, but was the deeply meditated effort of one master mind. This was Prince Henry of Portugal, son of John the First, surnamed the Avenger, and Philippa of Lancaster, sister of Henry the Fourth of England. The character of this illustrious man, from whose enterprises the genius of Columbus took excitement, deserves particular mention.

At an early age, Prince Henry accompanied his father into Africa, in an expedition against the Moors, in which he planted his victorious banners on the walls of Ceuta. Henry signalized himself repeatedly in this campaign. His passion, however, was more for arts than arms, and he pursued, even amidst the din of war, those inquiries most worthy of a prince.

While at Ceuta he received much information from the Moors concerning the interior of Africa and the coast of Guinea—regions unknown to Europeans. He conceived an idea that important discoveries were to be made, by navigating along the western coast of Africa. On returning to Portugal, this idea became his ruling thought. Withdrawing himself from the tumult of a court, he buried himself in retirement, in a country retreat in the Algarves, near to Sagres, in the neighbourhood of Cape St Vincent, and in full view of the ocean. Here he drew around him men eminent in science, and prosecuted the study of those branches of knowledge connected with the maritime arts. He was an able mathematician, and made himself master of all the astronomy known to the Arabians of Spain.

On studying the works of the ancients, Prince Henry had found what he considered abundant proofs that Africa was circumnavigable; so that it was possible, by keeping along its shores, to arrive at India. He had been struck with the account given of the voyage of Eudoxus of Cyzicus, who was said to have sailed from the Red Sea into the ocean, and to have continued on to Gibraltar; which appeared to be corroborated by the expedition of Hanno the Carthaginian, who, sailing from Gibraltar with a fleet of

sixty ships, and following the African coast, was said to have reached the shores of Arabia.\* It is true these voyages had been discredited by several ancient writers; and the possibility of circumnavigating Africa, after being for a long time admitted by geographers, was denied by Hipparchus, and since his time had continued to be disbelieved. He considered each sea as shut up and land-bound in its peculiar basin; and that Africa was a continent continuing onward to the south pole, and surrounding the Indian sea, so as to join Asia beyond the Ganges. This opinion had been adopted and perpetuated by Ptolemy, whose works, in the time of Prince Henry, were the highest authority in geography. Still the Prince reverted to the ancient belief, that Africa was circumnavigable, and he found his opinion sanctioned by various learned men of more modern date. To settle this question, and to achieve the circumnavigation of Africa, was an object worthy the ambition of a prince, and his mind was fired with the idea of the vast benefits that would arise to his country should it be accomplished by Portuguese enterprise.

The Italians, or, as they were called in the north of Europe, the Lombards, had long monopolized the opulent trade of Asia. They had formed commercial establishments at Constantinople and in the Black Sea, where they received the rich produce of the Spice Islands, which lie near the equator; and the silks, the gums, the perfumes, the precious stones, and other luxurious commodities of Egypt and Southern Asia, and distributed them over the whole of Europe. The republics of Venice and Genoa rose to power and opulence in consequence of this trade. They had factories in the most remote parts, even in the frozen regions of Muscovy and Norway. Their merchants emulated the magnificence of princes. All Europe was tributary to their commerce. Yet this trade had to be carried on with distant countries of the East, by the most circuitous and expensive routes. It passed through various intermediate hands, and was subjected to the delays and charges of internal navigation, and the tedious and uncertain journeys of the caravan. For a long time, the merchandise of India had to be conveyed by the Gulf of Persia, the Euphrates, the Indus, and the Oxus, to the Caspian and the Mediterranean seas; thence to take a new destination for the various marts of Europe. After the Soldan of Egypt had conquered the Arabs, and restored trade to its ancient channel, it was still attended with great cost and delay. Its precious commodities had to be conveyed by the Red Sea, thence on camels' backs to the banks of the Nile, whence they were transported to Egypt to meet the Italian merchants. Thus, while the opulent traffic of the East was engrossed by these adventurous monopolists, the price of every article was enhanced by the great expense of transportation.

It was the grand idea of Prince Henry, by circum-

\* See Illustrations, article CIRCUMNAVIGATION OF AFRICA BY THE ANCIENTS.