

extended far and wide. The Spaniards also sent out their fleets, armies and expeditions from time to time in the hope of gaining some new land. While Columbus was making his globes his attention was often drawn to the immense empty space in the middle of the Atlantic. His calculations founded on Ptolemy and the Arabian geographers led him to suppose that the earth was a globe which it was possible to sail around.

The Portuguese were making incessant attempts to connect Asia with Europe by sea, Columbus thinking he could accomplish this by sailing westward across the Atlantic, applied to the Portuguese King, explained his plans and asked for means to carry them out. The King listened to him with interest, appointed a council to examine his plans. This council blinded by popular prejudice declared his plans fanatical.

Despairing of receiving help at the Portuguese Court he turned his steps towards Spain. After many disappointments he at last received a hearing at the Spanish Court, Ferdinand and Isabella listened attentively to him, a council of the wisest men in the land were appointed to examine him. These examiners looked upon him as an adventurer, they ridiculed him and declared his plans were merely visionary. After lingering around the Spanish Court for several years, Columbus was again admitted (in 1492) to the King. This time the King promised him help as soon as his war with the Moors was over. Disappointed so often in his hopes of receiving help at the Spanish Court, Columbus set out for France. But Queen Isabella who had believed in his plans almost from the first, finding he was gone, pleaded that he might be recalled offering to pledge her jewels if need be to furnish means for the voyage.

After having surmounted innumerable obstacles, Columbus set sail from the

little port of Palos, with three vessels on August 3rd, 1492, to sail across the unknown deep. The friends of the seamen bade them good-bye scarcely hoping ever to see them alive again. One of his vessels having been disabled he was forced to stop, much against his will at the Canaries to have it repaired.

Sailing for several weary weeks without sighting land, his men grew mutinous. They declared they would return to Europe. Columbus tried to restrain them promising that in three days if land was not visible he would yield to their wishes and return to Europe. Reluctantly they obeyed him.

In the meantime signs of land became more evident, some rushes recently torn up were seen near the vessel, a plank evidently hewn by an axe, a branch of hawthorn in blossom were seen floating past on the waters. On October 12th, 1492 their eyes first saw the New World, Columbus landed in state, took possession of the New World in the name of his Redeemer and of Ferdinand and Isabella. He supposed he had landed on an outpost of India and gave the people the name of Indians.

After exploring among the islands he set sail for Spain in January, 1493, and after a stormy voyage landed at Palos about the middle of March. Pressing forward to Barcelona, where the King and Queen were staying, he was royally received by them and shown unprecedented marks of favor, honors and titles were bestowed upon him. But some were jealous of the favors he received. At the court one day a guest sneeringly asked him whether he thought no one else would have discovered the New Hemisphere if he had not been born. Columbus did not answer the question directly, but took an egg between his fingers and addressing the whole company present asked them if they could make it stand upright; none could manage

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