

1502. Columbus, acquitted at the court of Spain with the promise of restitution and reward, required but few incentives to engage once more in discoveries. His ambition was, to arrive at the East Indies ; and thus to surround the globe. On this prospect, he was fitted out in May on his fourth and last voyage, under the royal patronage, with a fleet of four vessels, carrying one hundred and forty men and boys, among whom were his brother Bartholomew, and his son Ferdinand, the writer of his life.¹ In twenty one days after his departure from Cadiz he arrived at Dominica ; and in twenty six at Hispaniola. Soon after his arrival at this island, apprehending an approaching storm, he advised a fleet, then ready for sea, not to leave the port ; but his advice was disregarded. The fleet, consisting of eighteen sail, within forty hours after its departure was overtaken by a terrible tempest ; and of the whole number of vessels, three or four only were saved. Among those, that were lost, was the ship, in which was Bovadilla, the governor, who had sent Columbus, in a tyrannical and scandalous manner, to Spain.² Roldan and the greater part of the enemies of Columbus were swallowed up at the same time, with the immense wealth, which they had unjustly acquired. The fate of the Indian king of Magua, now also lost, was less horrible, than the outrage, that preceded it. He had offered to

Fourth and
last voyage
of Colum-
bus.

June 29.
Arrives at
Hispaniola.

¹ Life of Columbus, c. lxxxvii, lxxxviii. P. Martyr, 102, 206 ; but he says, there were 170 men. " cum hominibus centum septuaginta." Herrera, i. 252. Belknap Biog. i. 116, 117.

² Life of Columbus, c. lxxxviii. Europ. Settlements, i. chap. vii. Belknap Biog. i. 116. Herrera [i. 253.] says, the fleet consisted of 31 ships ; the Author of Europ. Settlements says, it consisted of 20, and that 16 perished. I have followed Ferdinand Columbus. On board the ship, in which Bovadilla perished, was a mass of gold, estimated at 3310 pesos, which was designed as a present to the Spanish king and queen. P. Martyr ascribes the loss of the ship partly to the weight of the gold : " præ nimio gentium et auri pondere, summersa interit." De Nov. Orb. 101. Purchas remarks, this is " a fit emblem for Christians, who, when they will lade themselves with this thick clay, drown the soule in destruction and perdition." Pilgrims, i. 723.

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