

THE LAST HOURS OF COLUMBUS.

In the midst of illness and despondency, when both life and hope were expiring in the bosom of Columbus, a new gleam was awakened, and blazed up for the moment with characteristic fervour. He heard with joy of the arrival from Flanders of King Philip and Queen Juana, to take possession of their throne of Castile. In the daughter of Isabella, he trusted to find a patroness and a friend. King Ferdinand and all the court repaired to Toledo, to receive the youthful sovereigns. Columbus sent his brother, the Adelantado, to represent him, and wrote a letter to the King and Queen lamenting his being prevented by illness from coming in person to manifest his devotion. He expressed a hope that they should receive at their hands a restitution of his honours and estates; and assured them, that, though cruelly tortured by disease, he should yet be able to render them services the like of which had never been witnessed. Such was the last sally of his sanguine and unconquerable spirit; which, disregarding age and infirmities, and all past sorrows and disappointments, spoke from his dying death-bed with all the confidence of youthful hope, and talked of still greater enterprises, as if he had a long and vigorous life before him. The Adelantado took an affectionate leave of his brother, whom he was never to behold again, and set out on his mission to the sovereigns. He experienced the most gracious reception, and flattering hopes were given him that the claims of the Admiral would speedily be satisfied. In the meantime, the cares and troubles of Columbus were drawing to a close. The transient fire which had recently reanimated him, was soon quenched by accumulating infirmities. Immediately after the departure of the Adelantado, his illness increased in violence. Feeling his end was approaching, he arranged all his earthly affairs for the benefit of his successors . . . Having scrupulously attended to the claims of affection, loyalty, and justice, upon earth, he turned his thoughts to heaven, partaking of the holy Sacrament, and complying with the other ceremonies of a devout Catholic. Surrounded by devoted friends, he expired, with great resignation, on the 20th of May, 1506, being about 70 years of age. His last words were: "*In manus, Domine, commendo spiritum meum.*" Into thy hands, O Lord, commend my spirit.—*Irving.*

DON'T READ NOVELS.

Dr. Goldsmith, who had himself written the novel of the "Vicar of Wakefield," in writing to his brother, respecting the education of his son, used strong language: "Above all things, let your son never touch a novel or romance. How delusive, how destructive are these pictures of comparative bliss! They teach the youthful mind to sigh after beauty and happiness that never existed; to despise the little good that fortune has mixed in our cup, by expecting more than she ever gave; and, in general, to take the word of a man who has seen the world, and studied it more by experience than by precept; take my word for it, I say, that such novels teach us very little of the world."