

ensure his parents a decent competence for the remainder of their days. Then bidding the aged couple a tearful farewell, he tore himself away from them to continue the great mission with which he felt that God had charged him.

In after years when fortune and fame began to smile on him, he was never forgetful of the parents to whom he was so deeply indebted. He wrote to them, he shared with them the fruits of his success, he named after them some of the loveliest spots in the new world which he had discovered. He loved to speak of his father and mother, and of the humble home of his boyhood, even when in the midst of the proud Spanish grandees who thronged the magnificent court of Ferdinand and Isabella. He never allowed himself to be influenced by that miserable morbid vanity which makes some men wish to hide their antecedents and almost to disown their poor but upright parents who gave them birth and education. How often do we not meet in this great and glorious republic of ours, this land of liberty and equality, this land which has adopted as the corner stone of its political principles the axiom that all men, provided that they be virtuous, are each others peers—how often, I say, do we meet men suddenly grown rich or influential, who would scarcely dare to appear in public with the father or mother to whom, under God, they owe all that is good in themselves. Even in his old age, when he was broken down by his long and wearisome labors, and by the persecution of an ungrateful world, Columbus loved to dwell in imagination with parents to whom, during life, he had been so dutiful a son. Although they had for years been sleeping, side by side, beneath the green turf of a Genoese churchyard, his love for them seems to have been as tender as it was when he tore himself away from home for the first time—a weeping lad of fourteen years—to sail in the galley of his uncle.

The mutual love which existed between Columbus and his brothers was not less remarkable. It was almost womanly in its tenderness. Men marvelled at it—if we may believe the old chroniclers—and thought it worthy of admiration, even in that age of Christian chivalry, when, rough as the times were, brothers were not uncommonly as romantically devoted to brothers as sisters are to brothers now-a-days. Columbus once said, in exhorting his eldest son, Don Diego, to fraternal affection: “Ten brothers would not be too much for you. Never have I found better friends at my right hand or my left, than my brothers.”