

son should have the first rudiments of Literature and kept him for some time at school, where those ideas which afterwards led him to conceive the existence of a new world and to go himself to find it out, began to unfold, Navigation was the principle object of his mind, and therefore, even at an early age, he inclined to it. He must have left Gênoa about the year 1471, for it is said in a paper of 1481, that he had already been absent from that city about ten years. Bartholomew his brother accompanied him; and it is worthy of notice what Senarega and Gallo two Genoese writers relate, that Bartholomew having gone to Lisbon, applied himself to draw geographical maps for the use of navigators; in which he marked, in proportioned distances, the seas, harbours, bays, shores, and all the islands; that therefore he often entertained himself in conversing with those who had returned from the navigations undertaken by the Portuguese to the East Indies; and that communicating the accounts which they gave him to his brother Christopher, he who had much greater knowledge in nautical affairs, began to reflect, that if any one, quitting the coast of Africa, would turn to the right towards the west, he would certainly find a very extensive continent. In the mean while Christopher had taken to cruise the seas, and moreover joined, as Ferdinand writes in the life of his father, a famous pirate called Columbus, junior, his kinsman, with whom happening to engage a Venetian ship, that in which Christopher was took fire; and he, with great difficulty, supporting himself on an oar, at last reached the land, and went to Lisbon. And, indeed, the Venetian historians give us an account of the engagement of four of their gallies against seven of the pirate Columbus, junior, about 1486; but instead of the misfortune of the enemies ships, as related by Ferdinand, they tell us, that the Venetians had the worst, that three hundred were killed, and all the rest raken prisoners. They afterwards mention, however, the above-said pirate; but of Christopher, and the relationship, they say not a word. Hence Salinerius suspects, and perhaps with good reason, that Ferdinand may have given Christopher as a companion and relation to the other Columbus, whoever he was, on account that a relationship with a man who, though by profession a pirate, must have been, nevertheless, powerful and rich, might have exalted the lowliness of his birth. More certain is that which he afterwards adds; which is, that Christopher had the good fortune to charm a young lady in Lisbon, daughter of Petre Mugniz Perestrello, who married him. By her he had Diego, his eldest son; she dying in a few years, he married Beatrice Enriquez, from whom issued Ferdinand, the writer of his life. He, in the mean while, from observations on the geographical maps of his brother, and by the accounts of the voyages of the Portuguese, revolved in his mind the grand project of discovering the new world. Some carved pieces of wood, and some plants not well known, which by westerly winds were oftentimes driven on the Coast of Africa, and the Azores Islands; the opinion of some of the inhabitants of the Island of Madeira, who seemed to perceive, very far off, towards the west, some lands; the doubts of some ancient geographers on the existence of another world; these and other similar reflections, well weighed, with long examination, by Christopher, persuaded him, at last, that there must be such lands; and it appeared to him, that he could ascertain by what means they might be found out. To confirm him in his project, the letters of Paul Toscanelli, a Florentine, were of no small use to him; who, after