

of only fifty tons, returning two months before Ojeda, with a large number of the finest pearls and some gold. The amount of pearls paid into the royal treasury was so large that it drew suspicion instead of favour upon Nino and one of his associates, and the first was actually thrown into prison on the accusation of having kept the larger part of the spoil. But nothing could be proved against him, and he was eventually set free.

The year 1499 was also marked by a most important discovery, that of the great kingdom of Brazil. It was reserved for Vicente Yanez Pinzon, in an otherwise disastrous voyage, to first cross the equinoctial line, and on the 28th of January, 1500, to sight the Cape, now known as that of St. Augustine, which he, however, first named *Santa Maria de la Consolacion*, because its appearance relieved him from much doubt and anxiety. Soon after he had taken formal possession of the territory in the name of Spain, an affray with the Indians occurred. In a general assault the latter killed eight or ten Spaniards, and the crews retreated to their boats, disputing every inch of ground. The Indians pursued them into the water, surrounded the boats, and seized the oars. In spite of a desperate defence they succeeded in overpowering the crew of one of the boats, and carried it off. "With this," says Irving, "they retired from the combat, and the Spaniards returned defeated and disheartened to their ships, having met with the roughest reception that the Europeans had yet experienced in the New World." Pinzon revenged himself, not on these savages, but on a quiet and hospitable tribe found on some beautiful islands off the mouth of the great Amazon River. Thirty-six of the poor natives were carried off, to be sold afterwards as slaves.

Off the Bahamas Pinzon's little squadron of four vessels encountered a terrific hurricane, and two of them went down with all hands in sight of the remaining two, the crews of which were powerless to help. The third was driven out to sea, and the fourth was so battered by the furious waves that her crew abandoned her in their boats. A few inoffensive Indians were found ashore, and fearing that they might spread the tidings that a mere handful of shipwrecked Spaniards were on the island, it was seriously proposed to put them to death, when fortunately the vessel which had been driven away returned, and it was later found that the other had ridden out the storm uninjured. They speedily made sail for Spain, and arrived at Palos in safety. Pinzon had as much as he could do to prevent the merchants who had supplied goods for the voyage—at an advance of a hundred per cent. or so—from seizing and selling the vessels and cargoes. But a royal edict prevented this, and he was able to satisfy them in the end, after incurring much loss to himself.

The Pinzon family were subsequently ennobled by the Emperor Charles V. When Washington Irving visited Palos he found numerous branches of the descendants enjoying excellent circumstances, and living in an almost patriarchal manner.

In the year 1500, Rodrigo de Bastides, a wealthy Sevillean notary, inflamed with the hopes of rapid wealth, fitted out two caravels, and associated with him the veteran pilot, Juan de la Cosa, already mentioned. The first honourably distinguished himself by his constant humanity to the natives, and the voyage was successful, commercially speaking, for on the South American coasts and islands they collected a very large amount of gold and pearls, but an unforeseen misfortune arrived. They found their vessels leaking most