

been born—that the world had hardened its heart, that the combustibles were all gathered and arranged for the work, and that any bold, self-possessed incendiary, by applying the match, could have accomplished the schism and its consequences.

The 15th century was eminently commercial. It opened splendidly with the discovery of Madeira, in 1412, and closed magnificently with the discovery of America, and the African discoveries of the Portuguese. A new way was found to Asia, and a new world in the Western waters. The historic wealth of India, and the anticipated wealth of America, were the exclusive thoughts of men: all was discovered by Europeans, and all promised the world's wealth to Europe. The rush from every shore into every sea, was unparalleled in our era: merchants became princes and princes merchants; chivalry advanced its banner into the wide sea field, and cavaliers, despising the ancient avenues to glory, forsook the crusade and gave the crescent peace, to seek through savage seas, new outlets to immortality.

I honor the first oceanic adventurers of that period—the world never saw braver or better men. It was not their fault, if every sordid passion, reared its evil head, and rushed upon the discoveries they had consecrated in the name of Christendom and the Cross. But such was the sad result: this sudden influx of Phœnician fortune, raised commercial over Christian objects—weakened by abrupt expansion the ancient bonds of Christian unity—created a desire for a true, trading religion, whose easy morality might be left to the private interpretation of the merchant, and the practice of sea-captains. In all cases we find the great trading cities, the schools, or the strongholds of this new sixteenth century religion.

About the middle of the century I speak of, it was plain that the princes and statesmen discovered a new world of policy, hitherto unknown to Christendom. Crusades were no longer possible, the Council of Florence appealed to the chivalry of the West, in vain, and a few years later Constantinople fell, without a latin lance broken in its defense. When, in 1545, Pope Nicholas V. made the Christian alliance at Lodi, for another Crusade, Venice, nine days after, made a secret compact with Mahomet, and the King forbade the Crusade to be preached in France. Ten years later the immortal Pope, Pius II. could not find a single Prince ready for the Holy war. He was obliged to be his own captain, or to let Italy share the fate of Constantinople and of Rhodes: carried