

of attentions were showered upon him: he was permitted to quarter the royal arms with his own, which consisted of a group of golden islands amid azure billows; and received the substantial gratuity of 1,000 doblas of gold from the royal treasury, besides the premium promised to the person who first descried land. But that which pleased Columbus most were the preparations of the court for further discoveries, on a scale befitting their importance. The complement of the new fleet was originally fixed at 1,200 persons, but was eventually swollen to 1,500, and many who joined were persons of rank and distinction among the royal household. The squadron counted no less than seventeen vessels.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

DECISIVE VOYAGES IN HISTORY.—COLUMBUS. VASCO DA GAMA.

Columbus and his Enemies—Unsuitable Settlers—Outrageous Conduct of the Colonists—The Second Expedition of Columbus—Discovery of Jamaica—Dangerous Illness of Columbus—Return to Spain—The Excitement over—Difficulty of starting a New Expedition—Third Voyage—Columbus reaches the Mainland of America—Insurrection in Hispaniola—Machinations at Home—Columbus brought to Spain in Chains—Indignation in Spain—His Fourth Voyage—Ferdinand's Ingratitude—Death of the Great Navigator—Estimate of his Character—Vasco da Gama—First Voyage—The Cape reached—First Sight of India—At Callent—Friendship of the King of Cananore—Great Profits of the Expedition—Second Voyage—Vengeance on the Ruler of Callent—His Brutality—Subsequent History of Da Gama.

THE first accounts transmitted to Spain from this grand expedition were of the most sanguine description. But in less than two years from the commencement of this second voyage very different stories reached the home country. It was true that on the voyage Columbus had made further discoveries of a grand nature—the islands of Jamaica, Guadeloupe, and the Caribbee Islands. But rumours, and more than rumours, had reached the Court of the most alarming discontent and disaffection in the colony of Hispaniola, while the actual returns of a practical and commercial nature were as yet exceedingly small. The real secret was, however, that mutiny, jealousy, and distrust of Columbus as a foreigner, had sprung up among the Spanish adventurers, most, or at least many, of whom were little fitted for rough life in a new country. They were like the miscellaneous crowds who in our own day have gravitated towards the gold and diamond fields, a large number of whom expect to make gigantic fortunes without special effort, and in a very short space of time. The hidalgos and cavaliers, of whom there was a too large proportion on the expedition, could not bend themselves to obey Columbus, whom they deemed an upstart. Prescott, who has collated more carefully than any other writer the many authorities on the subject, shows that the Spaniards indulged in the most wanton licence in regard to the unoffending natives, who in the simplicity of their hearts had received the white men as messengers from heaven. A general resistance had, however, soon followed, which led to a war of extermination. In less than four years after the Spaniards had set foot on San Domingo, one-third of its native population, amounting, according to