

• Massey's Illustrated •

(PUBLISHED MONTHLY.)

A Journal of News and Literature for Royal Homes

New Series.]

TORONTO, CANADA, NOVEMBER, 1892.

[Vol. 4, No. 11.]

Famed Santa Maria.

COLUMBUS' FLAGSHIP COMPARED WITH MODERN SAILING VESSELS.

SPAIN is now in the midst of a series of fêtes in commemoration of the discovery of America which will last till late in the fall. On the 3rd of August, date of the sailing of Columbus from Palos, the jubilation began, and of all the sights the exact reproduction of the flagship of Columbus, the Santa Maria, excited most amazement. Among the sailors in the vast gathering there was a loud chorus of astonishment and unbelief. Almost unanimously they declared that such a ship had not done the thing—it was impossible.

It is indeed hard to believe that the little caravel of 240 tons at the outside could have made such a voyage, and when one compares it with the large sailing vessels of to-day he may well be incredulous. With the achievements of steam and practical science we are tolerably familiar, but the fact then (though sailing vessels antedate written history, the progress therein since 1492 is as great as in anything else) comes to one as a great surprise. Compare the little Santa Maria with, for instance, the magnificent Shenandoah, the American four-masted bark and queen of all sailing vessels, which a few months ago went from San Francisco to Liverpool with 5,002 tons of wheat on board.

Consider first the big sailer. The Shenandoah, commanded by Captain Murphy, was one of the five which left the Bay of San Francisco last year on the famous race around the Horn. They sailed at high tide, of necessity, as they drew twenty-seven feet of water. The weight of wheat aboard, 5,002 tons, was the greatest cargo of the kind ever placed in a vessel and equivalent to 166,733 bushels, or the crop of an average agricultural county. An adequate description of the Shenandoah would fill a column. Sailer as she is, she "makes sail by steam," as sailors say—that is, the sails are pulled into place by a little donkey engine, and of all glorious sights to the seaman's eye there is none more glorious than to see her swell from bare poles to full rig of snowy sails in less than five minutes.

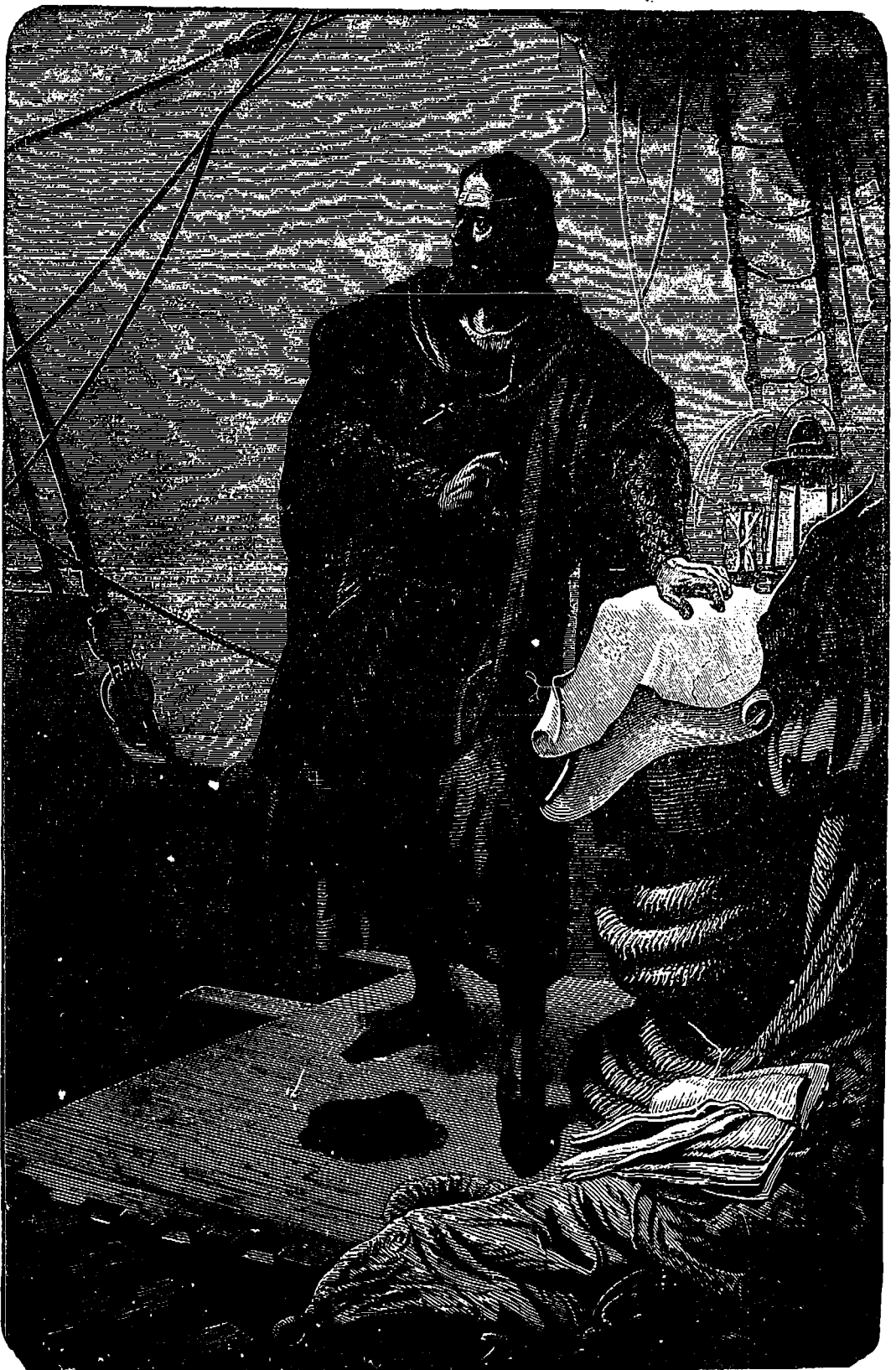
The Santa Maria might have been placed on the deck of the Shenandoah without adding perceptibly to her weight of cargo. She was a decked vessel, and while the Spanish historians do not deal in exact measurements they are so minute in details of her capacity that her size is known. Captain Gustavus W. Fox, after a very careful calculation, declares that her length was "63 feet over all and 57 feet along her keel," with 20 feet beam and 10½ feet in depth. Her crew consisted of fifty seamen, and in the list are found the names of one Englishman and one Irishman. It is really a pity that this list is not certainly authentic; it would be interesting to know the name of the first Irish emigrant to America. This historic vessel was wrecked on Christmas eve, 1492, on the coast of Hispaniola, a

calamity due to the gross carelessness of the sailing master.

Small as she was, her consorts, the Pinta and the Nina, were considerably smaller, being mere barks, called caravels, without decks, unless the high prow and stern may be so called. In the center such a vessel was absolutely open and in no respect superior to the fishing craft and other light coasting

vessels of to-day. That men should have been willing to dare the passage of the stormy Atlantic in such craft gives us a high idea of their courage, and as a matter of fact only Columbus, Las Casas, the Pinzons and two or three other mad enthusiasts were willing.

Our astonishment is but slightly mitigated when we read that Columbus did not ask for large vessels,



COLUMBUS' FIRST SIGHT OF AMERICA.