

himself to doubt, ere rushing into every avenue of his heart, wave after wave of love encircled and buoyed up his spirit.

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The little fleet proceeded directly from Palos to the Canary Islands, from whence Columbus intended to sail westward. There they remained while one of their vessels was repairing; luxuriating in all the delightful accompaniments of that soft climate, and lingering with peculiar tenderness at those out-posts of life and society, on the borders of an unknown wilderness of waters. The repairs were soon completed, and laying in a supply of fruits and fresh water, they steered away. As the Peak of Teneriffe and the lofty heights of Ferro faded from their view, they were overwhelmed with their desolate situation, and gave themselves up to mournful forebodings, from which Columbus, with all his tact and versatility in devising expedients, could scarcely rouse them.

Days succeeded nights, and nights followed days, for weeks, and still the vessels held on their westward route, wafted by the propitious Trade winds, which blow in a direct line from the Canaries. The sailors were kept in constant excitement by the novelties they encountered. The curious variation of the magnetic needle filled them with astonishment. Columbus looked with wonder upon this phenomenon, and passed many an hour in meditating upon the probable reason.

The mild breeze that gently urged them on, alarmed the sailors from its unvarying sameness; they fancied that they could never return in the face of a breeze that blew ever towards the west. Flocks of birds alighted on the ships, sure indications, as they thought, of land, and then every eye was strained to catch the first indications of the wished-for shore. Now a floating piece of carved wood reassured them, or distant piles of vapor, mirage-like, deceived them into the hope that a magnificent city was near. In the latitude of the tropics, the air is so clear, that objects can be discerned at a great distance, and this beautiful serenity and freshness of the atmosphere kept them in happy expectation. These expectations were destined to be fully met. The grand repose of primeval forests was about to be invaded; the voice of civilization was soon to disturb the fainter sounds of savage life. The curtain was about to be rolled back and disclose