

Ma'eties. The Indians, ignorant of his intention, made no opposition, being amused with the novelty and glitter of divers toys and trinkets which Columbus ordered to be distributed among them. These people were entirely naked, of the middle stature, and an olive complexion. Their features were regular, excepting their foreheads, which were rather out of proportion. Their hair, which, as well as their eyes, was black, was mostly cropped about their ears. Some painted their whole bodies, others only their faces, with a kind of faintish red. Many of them had ornaments pendant from the nose over the upper lip. They followed the strangers to their ships, some swimming, and others in canoes. The articles of exchange they brought on board were parrots and cotton yarn. They expressed the highest satisfaction with the European commodities; but gazed with peculiar delight at their swords and shining arms, being at that time ignorant of the use of iron.

Having taken a survey of this and several other islands adjacent, and being convinced, from the poverty of the inhabitants, that these could not be the Indies he was in quest of, Columbus steered to the southward, and discovered the island called by him Hispaniola, abounding in all the necessaries of life, inhabited by a humane and hospitable people, and, what was of still greater consequence, promising, from some samples he had received, considerable quantities of gold and precious stones. This island, therefore, he proposed to make the center of his future discoveries; and having erected a fort, and placed in it a small garrison, he sailed for Spain, to procure necessary reinforcements for establishing his infant colony, and completing his discoveries.

The Spanish court was then at Barcelona, which he had entered amidst the acclamations of the people, attended by some of the Americans, arrayed in the gold, the arms, and ornaments, of the New World just discovered. He had the honour of presenting to the king and queen, in the presence of the whole court, a particular account of his discoveries, and received the universal applause of the public.

But regardless of honours, the prosecution of his main design engrossed the attention of Columbus; and as his late successes had obviated former prejudices, a fleet of 17 sail was immediately equipped, with all necessaries for conquest or discovery, and 1500 men embarked, among whom were some of the best families in Spain. Thus prepared, he set sail a second time, in September 1493, with an ample commission, as governor of all the countries he should discover.

On his arrival at Hispaniola, he found the fort he had erected demolished, and most of the Spaniards murdered. It appeared upon examination, that they had violated the laws of decency and justice in their behaviour towards the natives, to whose resentment they had therefore fallen victims. Columbus, however, found means to conciliate the minds of the Indians, which being effected, he chose a more commodious station for his colony, erected stronger fortifications than the former, encouraged agriculture, and exerted every effort for the establishment of the colony.

In his first voyage he had touched at Cuba; but whether it was an island, or part of some extensive continent, could not then be ascertained; therefore, to determine this was now his grand object. In coasting along the southern shore of Cuba, he found a multitude of small islands, most of them pleasant, and well inhabited. This archipelago he called Jardin de la Reyna, the Queen's Garden, in gratitude to his benefactress Queen Isabella. In this voyage he discovered the Island of Jamaica; and, after a series of the greatest dangers and distress, put into Hispaniola, without accomplishing his grand design respecting Cuba.

But as there is no difficulty in finding specious grounds for accusation against such as are employed in the execution of extensive and complicated plans, thro' the base insinuation of his enemies, an officer was dispatched from Spain, whose presence demonstrated to

Columbus the necessity of returning to Europe, to obviate the calumnies of his enemies.

Having surmounted these obstacles, he set out, in 1498, on a third expedition, still more important than the former. In this navigation, after being long buried in a thick fog, and suffering numberless hardships from the excessive heats and rains between the tropics, he discovered the continent of America. The first land he made was the Island of Trinidad, on the coast of Guiana. After passing this island, and two others lying at the mouth of the river Oroonoko, the admiral was surprized at finding his ship agitated by a dreadful conflict of waves, occasioned between the tide of the sea, and the rapid current of that immense river. Intrepidly pursuing his course, he soon perceived that they were in fresh water; and judging rightly, that no island could supply so vast a river, he began to suspect he had discovered the continent; but when he left the river, and found that the land continued on to the westward for a great way, he was convinced of it. Satisfied, in some measure, with this discovery, he yielded to the cries of his distressed crew, and bore away for Hispaniola. In the course of the passage he landed at several places, and traded with the inhabitants for gold and pearl.

In a subsequent voyage, being the fourth, Columbus discovered all the coast of Terra Firma to the Isthmus of Darien, where he hoped to have found a passage into the South Sea. In this he was disappointed; but he was not so in the other part of his project; for every where, as he advanced, he became more sensible of the value of his discoveries on the continent. He found a people more civilized, and more abounding in gold, than the Islanders with whom he had been acquainted.

The success of Columbus roused a spirit of discovery; and adventurers in divers parts of Europe, stimulated by a thirst for gold, equipped ships at their own expense. The most remarkable of these was Americus Vesputio, a merchant of Florence, who sailed to the southern continent of America, and being a man of address, found means to acquire the honour of giving his name to half the globe. But no one is now imposed on by the name, for the glory of the discovery is awarded by the whole world to Columbus.

Such, however, were the machinations of malice and envy, and such the effect of the calumny of his enemies at the court of Spain, in depreciating the merits of this great man, that he was sent for to Europe ignominiously loaded with fetters. The court of Spain, however, on his arrival, ordered him to be set at liberty, and disavowed the proceeding. Columbus retired in disgust to Valladolid, where he died in 1506, after having rendered such important services to mankind, as will transmit his name with honour to the latest posterity.

Succeeding adventurers pursued no form or plan in their undertakings, gold being their object, to obtain which they followed fortune wherever she led them. They contributed, however, to augment the power and riches of the Spanish monarchy, though at the expense of the blood of millions. Thus the kings of Spain, without any exertion of policy, or the least public charge, were, by private adventurers among their subjects, put in possession of a greater, and more wealthy territory, than ever the most renowned heroes had obtained by their valour or their wisdom. This conquest is the more extraordinary for the shortness of the time in which it was effected; for, from the departure of Columbus in 1492, to the entire reduction of Chili, which happened in 1541, several considerable kingdoms were brought to submit to the Spanish yoke. We shall point out by whom, and the manner in which these exploits were performed, under the heads of each respective country, and after having treated of America in general, begin with the discoveries, descriptions, &c. of our British Columbus, *Captain Cook*.

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