

Item #1

**Christopher Columbus, “Journal of the First Voyage,” in *Journal of Christopher Columbus (during his first voyage, 1492-93), and Documents Relating to the Voyages of John Cabot and Gaspar Corte Real*, edited and translated by Clements R. Markham (London: Hakluyt Society, 1893), 15-18, 26-29, 34-56, 72-76, 82-83, 86-87, 126-128, 132-148, 157-165, 174-180, 187-193.**



JOURNAL  
OF THE  
FIRST VOYAGE OF COLUMBUS.

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This is the first voyage and the routes  
and direction taken by the Admiral Don Cristobal  
Colon when he discovered the Indies, sum-  
marized ; except the prologue made for the  
Sovereigns, which is given word for  
word and commences in this  
manner.

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.



BECAUSE, O most Christian, and very  
high, very excellent, and puissant  
Princes, King and Queen of the  
Spains and of the islands of the  
Sea, our Lords, in this present year  
of 1492, after your Highnesses had  
given an end to the war with the  
Moors who reigned in Europe, and had finished it in the  
very great city of Granada, where in this present year,  
on the second day of the month of January, by force  
of arms, I saw the royal banners of your Highnesses  
placed on the towers of Alfambra, which is the fortress of  
that city, and I saw the Moorish King come forth from  
the gates of the city and kiss the royal hands of your  
Highnesses, and of the Prince my Lord, and presently in.

that same month, acting on the information that I had given to your Highnesses touching the lands of India, and respecting a Prince who is called *Gran Can*, which means in our language King of Kings, how he and his ancestors had sent to Rome many times to ask for learned men of our holy faith to teach him, and how the Holy Father had never complied, insomuch that many people believing in idolatries were lost by receiving doctrine of perdition: YOUR HIGHNESSES, as Catholic Christians and Princes who love the holy Christian faith, and the propagation of it, and who are enemies to the sect of Mahoma and to all idolatries and heresies, resolved to send me, Cristobal Colon, to the said parts of India to see the said princes, and the cities and lands, and their disposition, with a view that they might be converted to our holy faith; and ordered that I should not go by land to the eastward, as had been customary, but that I should go by way of the west, whither up to this day, we do not know for certain that any one has gone.

Thus, after having turned out all the Jews from all your kingdoms and lordships,<sup>1</sup> in the same month of January,

<sup>1</sup> The decree for the expulsion of the Jews was really dated March 20th, 1492. Dr. Don Fernando Belmonte, an officer employed in the archives of Seville, recently discovered a document which refers to the expulsion of the Jews from Palos while Columbus was equipping his expedition. It is a process taken before the Corregidor of Moguer in January 1552, and one Juan de Aragon, a native of Moguer, then aged 70, gave evidence. He said that 55 years before, more or less, he was a boy on board a vessel at Palos, and saw Cristobal de Colon ready to sail for the Indies with three ships. This was in August or September. He further deposed that, having returned from his voyage, after having left the Jews in the parts beyond, and in another year, coming by sea, he met the ship of Martin Alonso Pinzon returning from the discovery (*Asensio*, i, 264). This boy was, therefore, in the ship which conveyed some of the banished Jews from Palos to Africa, at the very time that Columbus was fitting out his expedition. January, in the text, is a misprint.

your Highnesses gave orders to me that with a sufficient fleet I should go to the said parts of India, and for this they made great concessions to me, and ennobled me, so that henceforward I should be called Don, and should be Chief Admiral of the Ocean Sea, perpetual Viceroy and Governor of all the islands and continents that I should discover and gain, and that I might hereafter discover and gain in the Ocean Sea, and that my eldest son should succeed, and so on from generation to generation for ever.

I left the city of Granada on the 12th day of May, in the same year of 1492, being Saturday, and came to the town of Palos, which is a seaport; where I equipped three vessels<sup>1</sup> well suited for such service; and departed from that port, well supplied with provisions and with many sailors, on the 3d day of August of the same year, being Friday, half an hour before sunrise, taking the route to the islands of Canaria, belonging to your Highnesses, which are in the said Ocean Sea, that I might thence take my departure for navigating until I should arrive at the Indies, and give the letters of your Highnesses to those princes, so as to comply with my orders. As part of my duty I thought it well to write an account of all the voyage very punctually, noting from day to day all that I should do and see, and that should happen, as will be seen further on. Also, Lords Princes, I resolved to describe each night what passed in the day, and to note each day how I navigated

<sup>1</sup> Columbus never mentions the name of the ship in which he sailed. It was owned by Juan de la Cosa of Santoña. Oviedo calls it the *Galleja*; Herrera, the *Santa Maria*. It was the largest, about 100 tons. The others were two caravels of Palos, called the *Pinta* and *Niña*. The *Pinta* was commanded by Martin Alonso Pinzon, and owned by two sailors who served on board. The *Niña*, named after its owners, the Niño family, was commanded by Vicente Yañez Pinzon, with three Niños on board, one as pilot, another as master, and a third as one of the seamen.

at night. I propose to construct a new chart for navigating, on which I shall delineate all the sea and lands of the Ocean in their proper positions under their bearings ; and further, I propose to prepare a book, and to put down all as it were in a picture, by latitude from the equator, and western longitude. Above all, I shall have accomplished much, for I shall forget sleep, and shall work at the business of navigation, that so the service may be performed ; all which will entail great labour.

*Friday, 3d of August.*

We departed on Friday, the 3d of August, in the year 1492, from the bar of Saltes,<sup>1</sup> at 8 o'clock, and proceeded with a strong sea breeze until sunset, towards the south, for 60 miles, equal to 15 leagues<sup>2</sup>; afterwards S.W. and W.S.W., which was the course for the Canaries.

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<sup>1</sup> Saltes is an island formed by two arms of the river Odiel, in front of the town of Huelva. It was inhabited certainly until the twelfth century, and as late as 1267 King Alonso the Wise fixed the boundary between the towns of Saltes and Huelva. It is unknown when it ceased to be inhabited, but even in the *Suma de Geografia* of Martin Fernandez de Enciso, printed in 1519, mention is made of that town of Saltes, yet it is certain that, at that time, only the church remained, attached to those of Huelva, which shows that there were no longer any inhabited houses. No length of time can have passed before the church itself fell into ruins, for, in order to preserve some memory of it, a hermitage was founded in Huelva with the title of "Our Lady of Saltes", in which a cross was kept, being a relic of the old church. Some traces of the church remain, and the district is divided into arable lands, pastures, and woods preserved for the chase ; being the property of the Marquis of Ayamonte, with the title of Count of Saltes. (*Huelva Ilustrada del Lic D. Juan de Mora*. Sevilla, 1762.)—N.

<sup>2</sup> Columbus used Italian miles, which are shorter than the Spanish ; four Italian being equivalent to three Spanish, or a league.—N.

[.....]

*Wednesday, 19th of September.*

The Admiral continued on his course, and during the day and night he made but 25 leagues because it was calm. He counted 22. This day, at 10 o'clock, a booby<sup>2</sup> came to the ship, and in the afternoon another arrived, these birds not generally going more than 20 leagues from the land. There was also some drizzling rain without wind, which is a sure sign of land. The Admiral did not wish to cause delay by beating to windward to ascertain whether land was near, but he considered it certain that there were islands both to the north and south of his position, (as indeed there were, and he was passing through the middle of them<sup>3</sup>). For his desire was to press onwards to the Indies, the weather being fine. For on his return, God willing, he could see all. These are his own words. Here the pilots found their positions. He of the *Niña* made the Canaries 440 leagues distant, the *Pinta* 420. The pilot of the Admiral's ship made the distance exactly 400 leagues.<sup>4</sup>

*Thursday, 20th of September.*

This day the course was W. b. N., and as her head was all round the compass owing to the calm that prevailed, the ships made only 7 or 8 leagues. Two boobies came to the ship, and afterwards another, a sign of the proximity of land. They saw much weed, although none was seen

<sup>1</sup> For eleven days they had not had to trim sails so much as a *palmo*, the wind always aft, the Admiral constantly noting everything, and proceeding carefully with astrolabe and sounding-lead. (Herrera, *Dec. I*, Lib. I, cap. ix.)

<sup>2</sup> Alcatraz.

<sup>3</sup> Interpolation by Las Casas.

<sup>4</sup> The distance of the Admiral's pilot is exact.—N.

on the previous day. They caught a bird with the hand, which was like a tern.<sup>1</sup> But it was a river-bird, not a sea-bird, the feet being like those of a gull. At dawn two or three land-birds came singing to the ship, and they disappeared before sunset. Afterwards a booby came from W.N.W., and flew to the S.W., which was a sign that it left land in the W.N.W.; for these birds sleep on shore, and go to sea in the mornings in search of food, not extending their flight more than 20 leagues from the land.

*Friday, 21st of September.*

Most of the day it was calm, and later there was a little wind. During the day and night they did not make good more than 13 leagues. At dawn they saw so much weed that the sea appeared to be covered with it, and it came from the west. A booby was seen. The sea was very smooth, like a river, and the air the best in the world. They saw a whale, which is a sign that they were near land, because they always keep near the shore.

*Saturday, 22nd of September.*

They shaped a course W.N.W. more or less, her head turning from one to the other point, and made 30 leagues. Scarcely any weed was seen. They saw some sandpipers and another bird. Here the Admiral says: "This contrary wind was very necessary for me, because my people were much excited at the thought that in these seas no wind ever blew in the direction of Spain." Part of the day there was no weed, and later it was very thick.

*Sunday, 23rd of September.*

They shaped a course N.W., and at times more northerly; occasionally they were on their course, which was west,

<sup>1</sup> Garjao.

and they made about 22 leagues. They saw a dove and a booby, another river-bird, and some white birds. There was a great deal of weed, and they found crabs in it. The sea being smooth and calm, the crew began to murmur, saying that here there was no great sea, and that the wind would never blow so that they could return to Spain. Afterwards the sea rose very much, without wind, which astonished them. The Admiral here says: "Thus the high sea was very necessary to me, such as had not appeared but in the time of the Jews when they went out of Egypt and murmured against Moses, who delivered them out of captivity."

*Monday, 24th of September.*

The Admiral went on his west course all day and night, making 14 leagues. He counted 12. A booby came to the ship, and many sandpipers.

*Tuesday, 25th of September.*

This day began with a calm, and afterwards there was wind. They were on their west course until night. The Admiral conversed with Martin Alonso Pinzon, captain of the other caravel *Pinta*, respecting a chart which he had sent to the caravel three days before, on which, as it would appear, the Admiral had certain islands depicted in that sea.<sup>1</sup> Martin Alonso said that the ships were in the posi-

<sup>1</sup> This chart, drawn for the Admiral, must have been that which Paulo Toscanelli, the celebrated Florentine astronomer, sent to Lisbon in 1474. It included from the north of Ireland to the end of Guinea, with all the islands situated on that route; and towards the west it showed the beginning of the Indies, and the islands and places whither they were proceeding. Colon saw this chart and read the accounts of travellers, especially Marco Polo, which confirmed him in the idea of finding India by the west, though it had hitherto always been approached by the east. The situations of coasts and islands fixed on

tion on which the islands were placed, and the Admiral replied that so it appeared to him: but it might be that they had not fallen in with them, owing to the currents which had always set the ships to the N.E., and that they had not made so much as the pilots reported. The Admiral then asked for the chart to be returned, and it was sent back on a line. The Admiral then began to plot the position on it, with the pilot and mariners. At sunset Martin Alonso went up on the poop of his ship, and with much joy called to the Admiral, claiming the reward as he had sighted land. When the Admiral heard this positively declared, he says that he gave thanks to the Lord on his knees, while Martin Alonso said the *Gloria in excelsis* with his people. The Admiral's crew did the same. Those of the *Niña* all went up on the mast and into the rigging, and declared that it was land. It so seemed to the Admiral, and that it was distant 25 leagues. They all continued to declare it was land until night. The Admiral ordered the course to be altered from W. to S.W., in which direction the land had appeared. That day they made 4 leagues on a west course, and 17 S.W. during the night, in all 21; but the people were told that 13 was the distance made good: for it was always feigned to them that the distances were less, so that the voyage might not appear so long. Thus two reckonings were kept on this voyage, the shorter being feigned, and the longer being the true one. The sea was very smooth, so that many sailors bathed alongside. They saw many *dorados* and other fish.

such vague information must have been very inaccurate, as they were on the globe of Martin Behaim, constructed in 1492.—N.

Mr. HARRISSE has translated the words *segun parece senia pintadas el Almirante ciertas islas*, "in which the Admiral seemed to have painted certain islands," and assumes that the Admiral had painted the islands himself. But I think the correct rendering of the passage is that the Admiral had a chart with certain islands depicted on it. (See *Discovery of North America*, p. 401.)

[.....]

*Monday, 8th of October.*

The course was W.S.W., and  $11\frac{1}{2}$  or 12 leagues were made good in the day and night; and at times it appears that they went at the rate of 15 miles an hour during the night (if the handwriting is not deceptive).<sup>1</sup> The sea was like the river at Seville. "Thanks be to God", says the Admiral, "the air is very soft like the April at Seville; and it is a pleasure to be here, so balmy are the breezes." The weed seemed to be very fresh. There were many land-birds, and they took one that was flying to the S.W. Terns, ducks, and a booby were also seen.

*Tuesday, 9th of October.*

The course was S.W., and they made 5 leagues. The wind then changed, and the Admiral steered W. by N. 4 leagues. Altogether, in day and night, they made 11 leagues by day and  $20\frac{1}{2}$  leagues by night; counted as 17 leagues altogether. Throughout the night birds were heard passing.

*Wednesday, 10th of October.*

The course was W.S.W., and they went at the rate of 10 miles an hour, occasionally 12 miles, and sometimes 7. During the day and night they made 59 leagues, counted as no more than 44. Here the people could endure no longer. They complained of the length of the voyage. But the Admiral cheered them up in the best way he could, giving them good hopes of the advantages they might gain from it. He added that, however much they might

<sup>1</sup> The parenthesis is by Las Casas. These miles were four to a league (see note 2, p. 18); so that fifteen miles would not really be quite ten geographical miles an hour.

complain, he had to go to the Indies, and that he would go on until he found them, with the help of our Lord.

*Thursday, 11th of October.*

The course was W.S.W., and there was more sea than there had been during the whole of the voyage. They saw sandpipers, and a green reed near the ship. Those of the *caravel Pinta* saw a cane and a pole, and they took up another small pole which appeared to have been worked with iron; also another bit of cane, a land-plant, and a small board. The crew of the *caravel Niña* also saw signs of land, and a small branch covered with berries. Everyone breathed afresh and rejoiced at these signs. The run until sunset was 26 leagues.

After sunset the Admiral returned to his original west course, and they went along at the rate of 12 miles an hour. Up to two hours after midnight they had gone 90 miles, equal to  $22\frac{1}{2}$  leagues. As the *caravel Pinta* was a better sailer, and went ahead of the Admiral, she found the land, and made the signals ordered by the Admiral. The land was first seen by a sailor named Rodrigo de Triana.<sup>1</sup> But the Admiral, at ten in the previous night, being on the castle of the poop, saw a light, though it was so uncertain that he could not affirm it was land. He called Pero Gutierrez, a gentleman of the King's bed-chamber, and said that there seemed to be a light, and that he should look at it. He did so, and saw it.<sup>2</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> It was full moon on October 5th. On the night of the 11th the moon rose at 11 P.M., and at 2 A.M. on the morning of the 12th it was  $39^\circ$  above the horizon. It would be shining brightly on the sandy shores of an island some miles ahead, being in its third quarter, and a little behind Rodrigo de Triana, when he sighted land at 2 A.M.

<sup>2</sup> Oviedo says that, after the Admiral and Gutierrez saw the light, a sailor from Lepe called out from the fore-castle that there was a light. He was told by Salcedo, the Admiral's servant, that it had already been seen. Oviedo adds that this man from Lepe was so disgusted

Admiral said the same to Rodrigo Sanchez of Segovia, whom the King and Queen had sent with the fleet as inspector, but he could see nothing, because he was not in a place whence anything could be seen. After the Admiral had spoken he saw the light once or twice, and it was like a wax candle rising and falling. It seemed to few to be an indication of land; but the Admiral made certain that land was close. When they said the *Salve*, which all the sailors were accustomed to sing in their way, the Admiral asked and admonished the men to keep a good look-out on the forecastle, and to watch well for land; and to him who should first cry out that he saw land, he would give a silk doublet, besides the other rewards promised by the Sovereigns, which were 10,000 maravedis to him who should first see it.<sup>1</sup> At two hours after midnight the land was sighted at a distance of two leagues. They shortened sail, and lay by under the mainsail without the bonnets. The vessels were hove to, waiting for daylight; and on Friday they arrived at a small island of the Lucayos, called, in the language of the Indians, *Guanahani*.<sup>2</sup> Presently

at not getting the reward, that he went to Africa and became a renegade. (*Oviedo*, Lib. II, cap. v.)

Oviedo derived his information from the gossip of Vicente Yañez Pinzon and Hernan Perez Matheos. The latter is not in any of the lists of those who served in the expedition. Oviedo knew him as a pilot at St. Domingo, and he certainly alleged that he was with the Admiral in his first voyage.

Fernando Columbus, in the *Vita del Ammiraglio*, described the light as like a candle that went up and down, as if people on shore were passing with it from one house to another (cap. xxi). See also Herrera (*Dec. I*, Lib. I, cap. xii).

<sup>1</sup> The pension of 10,000 maravedis was secured on the dues derived from the shambles at Seville. The Sovereigns awarded it to the Admiral, because the light seen first by him was believed to have been on land. (*Herrera*.)

<sup>2</sup> Watling Island, S.E. point in Lat. 23° 55' S., Long. 74° 28' W. It was named San Salvador by Columbus (See *Letter to Santangel*, Major's translation, p. 2.)

they saw naked people. The Admiral went on shore in the armed boat, and Martin Alonso Pinzon, and Vicente Yañez, his brother, who was captain of the *Niña*. The Admiral took the royal standard, and the captains went with two banners of the green cross, which the Admiral took in all the ships as a sign, with an F and a Y<sup>1</sup> and a crown over each letter, one on one side of the cross and the other on the other. Having landed, they saw trees very green, and much water, and fruits of diverse kinds. The Admiral called to the two captains, and to the others who leaped on shore, and to Rodrigo Escovedo, secretary of the whole fleet, and to Rodrigo Sanchez of Segovia,<sup>2</sup> and said that they should bear faithful testimony that he, in presence of all, had taken, as he now took, possession of the said island for the King and for the Queen, his Lords making the declarations that are required, as is more largely set forth in the testimonies which were then made in writing.

Presently many inhabitants of the island assembled. What follows is in the actual words of the Admiral in his book of the first navigation and discovery of the Indies. "I," he says, "that we might form great friendship, for I knew that they were a people who could be more easily freed and converted to our holy faith by love than by force, gave to some of them red caps, and glass beads to put round their necks, and many other things of little value, which gave them great pleasure, and made them so much our friends that it was a marvel to see. They afterwards came to the ship's boats where we were, swimming and bringing us parrots, cotton threads in skeins, darts, and many other things; and we exchanged them for other things that we gave them, such as glass beads and small bells. In fine, they took all, and gave what they had with good will. It appeared to me to be a race of people

<sup>1</sup> Fernando and Ysabel.

<sup>2</sup> The royal inspector.

very poor in everything. They go as naked as when their mothers bore them, and so do the women, although I did not see more than one young girl. All I saw were youths, none more than thirty years of age. They are very well made, with very handsome bodies, and very good countenances. Their hair is short and coarse, almost like the hairs of a horse's tail. They wear the hairs brought down to the eyebrows, except a few locks behind, which they wear long and never cut. They paint themselves black, and they are the colour of the Canarians, neither black nor white. Some paint themselves white, others red, and others of what colour they find. Some paint their faces, others the whole body, some only round the eyes, others only on the nose. They neither carry nor know anything of arms, for I showed them swords, and they took them by the blade and cut themselves through ignorance. They have no iron, their darts being wands without iron, some of them having a fish's tooth at the end, and others being pointed in various ways. They are all of fair stature and size, with good faces, and well made. I saw some with marks of wounds on their bodies, and I made signs to ask what it was, and they gave me to understand that people from other adjacent islands came with the intention of seizing them, and that they defended themselves. I believed, and still believe, that they come here from the mainland to take them prisoners. They should be good servants and intelligent, for I observed that they quickly took in what was said to them, and I believe that they would easily be made Christians, as it appeared to me that they had no religion. I, our Lord being pleased, will take hence, at the time of my departure, six natives for your Highnesses, that they may learn to speak. I saw no beast of any kind except parrots, on this island." The above is in the words of the Admiral.

*Saturday, 13th of October.*

"As soon as dawn broke many of these people came to the beach, all youths, as I have said, and all of good stature, a very handsome people. Their hair is not curly, but loose and coarse, like horse hair. In all the forehead is broad, more so than in any other people I have hitherto seen. Their eyes are very beautiful and not small, and themselves far from black, but the colour of the Canarians. Nor should anything else be expected, as this island is in a line east and west from the island of Hierro in the Canaries. Their legs are very straight, all in one line,<sup>1</sup> and no belly, but very well formed. They came to the ship in small canoes, made out of the trunk of a tree like a long boat, and all of one piece, and wonderfully worked, considering the country. They are large, some of them holding 40 to 45 men, others smaller, and some only large enough to hold one man. They are propelled with a paddle like a baker's shovel, and go at a marvellous rate. If the canoe capsizes they all promptly begin to swim, and to bale it out with calabashes that they take with them. They brought skeins of cotton thread, parrots, darts, and other small things which it would be tedious to recount, and they give all in exchange for anything that may be given to them. I was attentive, and took trouble to ascertain if there was gold. I saw that some of them had a small piece fastened in a hole they have in the nose, and by signs I was able to make out that to the south, or going from the island to the south, there was a king who had great cups full, and who possessed a great quantity. I tried to get them to go there, but afterwards I saw that they had no inclination. I resolved to wait until to-morrow in the afternoon and then to depart, shaping a course to the S.W.,

<sup>1</sup> "Todos a una mano,"

for, according to what many of them told me, there was land to the S., to the S.W., and N.W., and that the natives from the N.W. often came to attack them, and went on to the S.W. in search of gold and precious stones.

"This island is rather large and very flat, with bright green trees, much water, and a very large lake in the centre, without any mountain, and the whole land so green that it is a pleasure to look on it. The people are very docile, and for the longing to possess our things, and not having anything to give in return, they take what they can get, and presently swim away. Still, they give away all they have got, for whatever may be given to them, down to broken bits of crockery and glass. I saw one give 16 skeins of cotton for three *ceotis*<sup>1</sup> of Portugal, equal to one *blanca* of Spain, the skeins being as much as an *arroba* of cotton thread. I shall keep it, and shall allow no one to take it, preserving it all for your Highnesses, for it may be obtained in abundance. It is grown in this island, though the short time did not admit of my ascertaining this for a certainty. Here also is found the gold they wear fastened in their noses. But, in order not to lose time, I intend to go and see if I can find the island of Cipango.<sup>2</sup> Now, as it is night, all the natives have gone on shore with their canoes."

*Sunday, 14th of October.*

"At dawn I ordered the ship's boat and the boats of the caravels to be got ready, and I went along the coast of the

<sup>1</sup> For *ceuti*, a coin current at Ceuta, then belonging to Portugal.—N.

<sup>2</sup> Toscanelli said, in his letter, that Cipango was an island 225 leagues from Antilla, and that it so abounded in gems and gold that the temples and palaces were covered with golden plates. Marco Polo describes it (Book III, cap. ii), and also says that the quantity of gold is endless, that the palace is roofed with gold, and that pearls are abundant. *Chipangu* is derived from Zhi-pan, the Chinese form of Japan. (*Yule*, ii, p. 238.)

island to the N.N.E., to see the other side, which was on the other side to the east, and also to see the villages. Presently I saw two or three, and the people all came to the shore, calling out and giving thanks to God. Some of them brought us water, others came with food, and when they saw that I did not want to land, they got into the sea, and came swimming to us. We understood that they asked us if we had come from heaven. One old man came into the boat, and others cried out, in loud voices, to all the men and women, to come and see the men who had come from heaven, and to bring them to eat and drink. Many came, including women, each bringing something, giving thanks to God, throwing themselves on the ground and shouting to us to come on shore. But I was afraid to land, seeing an extensive reef of rocks which surrounded the island, with deep water between it and the shore forming a port large enough for as many ships as there are in Christendom, but with a very narrow entrance. It is true that within this reef there are some sunken rocks, but the sea has no more motion than the water in a well. In order to see all this I went this morning, that I might be able to give a full account to your Highnesses, and also where a fortress might be established. I saw a piece of land which appeared like an island, although it is not one, and on it there were six houses. It might be converted into an island in two days, though I do not see that it would be necessary, for these people are very simple as regards the use of arms, as your Highnesses will see from the seven that I caused to be taken, to bring home and learn our language and return; unless your Highnesses should order them all to be brought to Castille, or to be kept as captives on the same island; for with fifty men they can all be subjugated and made to do what is required of them. Close to the above peninsula there are gardens of the most beautiful trees I ever saw, and with leaves as

green as those of Castille in the month of April and May, and much water. I examined all that port, and afterwards I returned to the ship and made sail. I saw so many islands<sup>1</sup> that I hardly knew how to determine to which I should go first. Those natives I had with me said, by signs, that there were so many that they could not be numbered, and they gave the names of more than a hundred. At last I looked out for the largest, and resolved to shape a course for it, and so I did. It will be distant five leagues from this of *San Salvador*, and the others some more, some less. All are very flat, and all are inhabited. The natives make war on each other, although these are very simple-minded and handsomely-formed people."

*Monday, 15th of October.*

"I had laid by during the night, with the fear of reaching the land to anchor before daylight, not knowing whether the coast was clear of rocks, and at dawn I made sail. As the island was more than 5 leagues distant and nearer 7, and the tide checked my way, it was noon when we arrived at the said island. I found that side facing towards the island of San Salvador trended north and south with a length of 5 leagues,<sup>2</sup> and the other which I followed ran east and west for more than 10 leagues.<sup>3</sup> As from this island I saw another larger one to the west, I clued up the sails, after having run all that day until night, otherwise I could not have reached the western cape. I gave the name of *Santa Maria de la Concepcion*<sup>3</sup> to the island, and almost as the sun set I anchored near the said cape to ascertain if it contained gold. For the people I had

<sup>1</sup> Deceptive appearance of clouds on the horizon.

<sup>2</sup> A misprint for miles. This is a mistake which the transcriber has made in several other places.

<sup>3</sup> Island of Rum Cay. See *Letter to Santangel*, p. 2.

taken from the island of San Salvador told me that here they wore very large rings of gold on their arms and legs. I really believed that all they said was nonsense, invented that they might escape. My desire was not to pass any island without taking possession, so that, one having been taken, the same may be said of all. I anchored, and remained until to-day, Tuesday, when I went to the shore with the boats armed, and landed. The people, who were numerous, went naked, and were like those of the other island of San Salvador. They let us go over the island, and gave us what we required. As the wind changed to the S.E., I did not like to stay, and returned to the ship. A large canoe was alongside the *Niña*, and one of the men of the island of San Salvador, who was on board, jumped into the sea and got into the canoe. In the middle of the night before, another swam away behind the canoe, which fled,<sup>1</sup> for there never was boat that could have overtaken her, seeing that in speed they have a great advantage. So they reached the land and left the canoe. Some of my people went on shore in chase of them, but they all fled like fowls, and the canoe they had left was brought alongside the caravel *Niña*, whither, from another direction, another small canoe came, with a man who wished to barter with skeins of cotton. Some sailors jumped into the sea, because he would not come on board the caravel, and seized him. I was on the poop of my ship, and saw everything. So I sent for the man, gave him a red cap, some small beads of green glass, which I put on his arms, and small bells, which I put in his ears, and ordered his canoe, which was also on board, to be returned to him. I sent him on shore, and presently made sail to go to the other large island which was in sight to the westward. I also ordered the other large

<sup>1</sup> This is a doubtful sentence, with a word omitted.

canoe, which the caravel *Niña* was towing astern, to be cast adrift; and I soon saw that it reached the land at the same time as the man to whom I had given the above things. I had not wished to take the skein of cotton that he offered me. All the others came round him and seemed astonished, for it appeared clear to them that we were good people. The other man who had fled might do us some harm, because we had carried him off, and for that reason I ordered this man to be set free and gave him the above things, that he might think well of us, otherwise, when your Highnesses again send an expedition, they might not be friendly. All the presents I gave were not worth four maravedis. At 10 we departed with the wind S.W., and made for the south, to reach that other island, which is very large, and respecting which all the men that I bring from San Salvador make signs that there is much gold, and that they wear it as bracelets on the arms, on the legs, in the ears and nose, and round the neck. The distance of this island from that of Santa Maria is 9 leagues on a course east to west. All this part of the island trends N.W. and S.E., and it appeared that this coast must have a length of 28 leagues. It is very flat, without any mountain, like San Salvador and Santa Maria, all being beach without rocks, except that there are some sunken rocks near the land, whence it is necessary to keep a good lookout when it is desired to anchor, and not to come too very near the land; but the water is always very clear, and the bottom is visible. At a distance of two shots of a lombard, there is, off all these islands, such a depth that the bottom cannot be reached. These islands are very green and fertile, the climate very mild. They may contain many things of which I have no knowledge, for I do not wish to stop, in discovering and visiting many islands, to find gold. These people make signs that it is worn on the arms and legs; and it must be gold, for they point to some pieces

that I have. I cannot err, with the help of our Lord, in finding out where this gold has its origin. Being in the middle of the channel between these two islands, that is to say, that of Santa Maria and this large one, to which I give the name of *Fernandina*,<sup>1</sup> I came upon a man alone in a canoe going from Santa Maria to Fernandina. He had a little of their bread, about the size of a fist, a calabash of water, a piece of brown earth powdered and then kneaded, and some dried leaves, which must be a thing highly valued by them, for they bartered with it at San Salvador. He also had with him a native basket with a string of glass beads, and two *blancas*,<sup>2</sup> by which I knew that he had come from the island of San Salvador, and had been to Santa Maria, and thence to Fernandina. He came alongside the ship, and I made him come on board as he desired, also getting the canoe inboard, and taking care of all his property. I ordered him to be given to eat bread and treacle, and also to drink: and so I shall take him on to Fernandina, where I shall return everything to him, in order that he may give a good account of us, that, our Lord pleasing, when your Highnesses shall send here, those who come may receive honor, and that the natives may give them all they require."

*Tuesday, 16th of October.*

"I sailed from the island of Santa Maria de la Concepcion at about noon, to go to Fernandina island, which appeared very large to the westward, and I navigated all that day with light winds. I could not arrive in time to be able to see the bottom, so as to drop the anchor on a clear place, for it is necessary to be very careful not to lose the anchors. So I stood off and on all that night until day,

<sup>1</sup> Long Island. See *Letter to Santangel*, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> A small piece of money. See p. 40.

when I came to an inhabited place where I anchored, and whence that man had come that I found yesterday in the canoe in mid channel. He had given such a good report of us that there was no want of canoes alongside the ship all that night, which brought us water and what they had to offer. I ordered each one to be given something, such as a few beads, ten or twelve of those made of glass on a thread, some timbrels made of brass such as are worth a maravedi in Spain, and some straps, all which they looked upon as most excellent. I also ordered them to be given treacle to eat when they came on board. At three o'clock I sent the ship's boat on shore for water, and the natives with good will showed my people where the water was, and they themselves brought the full casks down to the boat, and did all they could to please us.

"This island is very large, and I have determined to sail round it, because, so far as I can understand, there is a mine in or near it. The island is eight leagues from Santa Maria, nearly east and west; and this point I had reached, as well as all the coast, trends N.N.W. and S.S.E. I saw at least 20 leagues of it, and then it had not ended. Now, as I am writing this, I made sail with the wind at the south, to sail round the island, and to navigate until I find *Samaot*, which is the island or city where there is gold, as all the natives say who are on board, and as those of San Salvador and Santa Maria told us. These people resemble those of the said islands, with the same language and customs, except that these appear to me a rather more domestic and tractable people, yet also more subtle. For I observed that those who brought cotton and other trifles to the ship, knew better than the others how to make a bargain.<sup>1</sup> In this island I saw cotton cloths made like

<sup>1</sup> "Refetar el pagamento." Las Casas has: "Regatear sobre los precios y paga (i, 307).

mantles. The people were better disposed, and the women wore in front of their bodies a small piece of cotton which scarcely covered them.

"It is a very green island, level and very fertile, and I have no doubt that they sow and gather corn all the year round, as well as other things. I saw many trees very unlike those of our country. Many of them have their branches growing in different ways and all from one trunk, and one twig is one form, and another in a different shape, and so unlike that it is the greatest wonder in the world to see the great diversity; thus one branch has leaves like those of a cane, and others like those of a mastick tree: and on a single tree there are five or six different kinds. Nor are these grafted, for it may be said that grafting is unknown, the trees being wild, and untended by these people. They do not know any religion, and I believe they could easily be converted to Christianity, for they are very intelligent. Here the fish are so unlike ours that it is wonderful. Some are the shape of dories,<sup>1</sup> and of the finest colours in the world, blue, yellow, red, and other tints, all painted in various ways, and the colours are so bright that there is not a man who would not be astonished, and would not take great delight in seeing them. There are also whales. I saw no beasts on the land of any kind, except parrots and lizards. A boy told me that he saw a large serpent. I saw neither sheep, nor goats, nor any other quadruped. It is true I have been here a short time, since noon, yet I could not have failed to see some if there had been any. I will write respecting the circuit of this island after I have been round it."

<sup>1</sup> Gallos.

*Wednesday, 17th of October.*

"At noon I departed from the village off which I was anchored, and where I took in water, to sail round this island of Fernandina. The wind was S.W. and South. My wish was to follow the coast of this island to the S.E., from where I was, the whole coast trending N.N.W. and S.S.E.; because all the Indians I bring with me, and others, made signs to this southern quarter, as the direction of the island they call Samoet, where the gold is. Martin Alonso Pinzon, captain of the caravel *Pinta*, on board of which I had three of the Indians, came to me and said that one of them had given him to understand very positively that the island might be sailed round much quicker by shaping a N.N.W. course. I saw that the wind would not help me to take the course I desired, and that it was fair for the other, so I made sail to the N.N.W. When I was two leagues from the cape of the island, I discovered a very wonderful harbour.<sup>1</sup> It has one mouth, or, rather, it may be said to have two, for there is an islet in the middle. Both are very narrow, and within it is wide enough for a hundred ships, if there was depth and a clean bottom, and the entrance was deep enough. It seemed desirable to explore it and take soundings, so I anchored outside, and went in with all the ship's boats, when we saw there was insufficient depth. As I thought, when I first saw it, that it was the mouth of some river, I ordered the water-casks to be brought. On shore I found eight or ten men, who presently came to us and showed us the village, whither I sent the people for water, some with arms, and others with the casks: and, as it was some little distance, I waited two hours for them.

<sup>1</sup> Port Clarence, in Long Island.

"During that time I walked among the trees, which was the most beautiful thing I had ever seen, beholding as much verdure as in the month of May in Andalusia. The trees are as unlike ours as night from day, as are the fruits, the herbs, the stones, and everything. It is true that some of the trees bore some resemblance to those in Castille, but most of them are very different, and some were so unlike that no one could compare them to anything in Castille. The people were all like those already mentioned: like them naked, and the same size. They give what they possess in exchange for anything that may be given to them. I here saw some of the ship's boys bartering broken bits of glass and crockery for darts. The men who went for water told me that they had been in the houses of the natives, and that they were very plain and clean inside. Their beds and bags for holding things<sup>1</sup> were like nets of cotton.<sup>2</sup> The houses are like booths, and

<sup>1</sup> "Paramentos de cosas." Las Casas has: "Paramentos de casa" (i, 310).

<sup>2</sup> Hammocks. In Española they were called *Hamacas*. Las Casas describes them as "made in loops, not woven like nets, the threads crossed, but the threads loose in their lengths, so that the fingers and hands can be put between them, and from *palm* to *palm* (8.3 in.), a little more or less, then fastened to other twisted threads, like the very well-worked nets which are made at Seville of *esparto* grass, for harness. These *hamacas* are the length of a man, and at the ends the same threads are formed into numerous loops. Into each loop they pass very fine cords of another material, stronger than cotton, such as rushes, and these are each a *braso* (6 ft.) long, and the ends are all united in a knot at each end; the *hamaca* being hung by these knots to the posts of the houses. Thus the *hamaca* remains slung in the air. The best are 3 or 4 yards in width, and they open them when they get in, as we open a sling that is very large. They lie across it, and are thus on the *hamaca*, with which they cover themselves, and as it is never in the least cold, this suffices" (i, p. 310). Herrera says that their beds consisted of a net fastened from one post to another which they call *Amacas*. (*Dec. I, Lib. I, cap. xiii.*)

very high, with good chimneys.<sup>1</sup> But, among many villages that I saw, there was none that consisted of more than from twelve to fifteen houses. Here they found that the married women wore clouts of cotton, but not the young girls, except a few who were over eighteen years of age. They had dogs,<sup>2</sup> mastiffs and hounds<sup>3</sup>; and here they found a man who had a piece of gold in his nose, the size of half a *castellano*, on which they saw letters. I quarrelled with these people because they would not exchange or give what was required; as I wished to see what and whose this money was; and they replied that they were not accustomed to barter.

"After the water was taken I returned to the ship, made sail, and shaped a course N.W., until I had discovered all the part of the coast of the island which trends east to west. Then all the Indians turned round and said that this island was smaller than Samoet, and that it would be well to return back so as to reach it sooner. The wind presently went down, and then sprang up from W.N.W., which was contrary for us to continue on the previous course. So I turned back, and navigated all that night to E.S.E., sometimes to east and to S.E. This course was steered to keep me clear of the land, for there were very heavy clouds and thick weather, which did not admit of my approaching the land to anchor. On that night it rained very heavily from midnight until nearly dawn, and even afterwards the clouds threatened rain. We found ourselves at the S.W. end of the island, where I hoped to

<sup>1</sup> These were ornamental points with which the roofs terminated. (*Las Casas*.)

<sup>2</sup> Columbus did not see these dogs, but only heard of them from his men. *Las Casas* tells us that they were a kind of dog that never barks (i, p. 311). *Herrera* says: "Vieronse tambien algunos perrillos mudos pequeños."

<sup>3</sup> *Brachetes*, in English *brach*. (*King Lear*, Act 1, Sc. 4.)

anchor until it cleared up, so as to see the other island whither I have to go. On all these days, since I arrived in these Indies, it has rained more or less. Your Highnesses may believe that this land is the best and most fertile, and with a good climate, level, and as good as there is in the world."

*Thursday, 18th of October.*

"After it had cleared up I went before the wind, approaching the island as near as I could, and anchored when it was no longer light enough to keep under sail. But I did not go on shore, and made sail at dawn. . . ."

*Friday, 19th of October.*

"I weighed the anchors at daylight, sending the caravel *Pinta* on an E.S.E. course, the caravel *Niña* S.S.E., while I shaped a S.E. course, giving orders that these courses were to be steered until noon, and that then the two caravels should alter course so as to join company with me. Before we had sailed for three hours we saw an island to the east, for which we steered, and all three vessels arrived at the north point before noon. Here there is an islet,<sup>1</sup> and a reef of rocks to seaward of it, besides one between the islet and the large island. The men of San Salvador, whom I bring with me, called it *Saomete*, and I gave it the name of *Isabella*.<sup>2</sup> The wind was north, and the said islet bore from the island of Fernandina, whence I had taken my departure, east and west. Afterwards we ran along the coast of the island, westward from the islet, and found its length to be 12 leagues as far as a cape, which I named *Cabo Hermoso*, at the western end. The island is beautiful, and the coast very deep, without sunken rocks off it. Outside the shore

<sup>1</sup> Bird Rock.

<sup>2</sup> Crooked Island. See *Letter to Santangel*, p. 2.

is rocky, but further in there is a sandy beach, and here I anchored on that Friday night until morning. This coast and the part of the island I saw is almost flat, and the island is very beautiful; for if the other islands are lovely, this is more so. It has many very green trees, which are very large. The land is higher than in the other islands, and in it there are some hills, which cannot be called mountains; and it appears that there is much water inland. From this point to the N.E. the coast makes a great angle, and there are many thick and extensive groves. I wanted to go and anchor there, so as to go on shore and see so much beauty; but the water was shallow, and we could only anchor at a distance from the land. The wind also was fair for going to this cape, where I am now anchored, to which I gave the name of *Cabo Hermoso*, because it is so. Thus it was that I do not anchor in that angle, but as I saw this cape so green and so beautiful, like all the other lands of these islands, I scarcely knew which to visit first; for I can never tire my eyes in looking at such lovely vegetation, so different from ours. I believe that there are many herbs and many trees that are worth much in Europe for dyes and for medicines; but I do not know, and this causes me great sorrow. Arriving at this cape, I found the smell of the trees and flowers so delicious that it seemed the pleasantest thing in the world. To-morrow, before I leave this place, I shall go on shore to see what there is at this cape. There are no people, but there are villages in the interior, where, the Indians I bring with me say, there is a king who has much gold. To-morrow I intend to go so far inland as to find the village, and see and have some speech with this king, who, according to the signs they make, rules over all the neighbouring islands, goes about clothed, and wears much gold on his person. I do not give much faith to what they say, as well because I do not understand them as because they

are so poor in gold that even a little that this king may have would appear much to them. This cape, to which I have given the name of *Cabo Fermoso*, is, I believe, on an island separated from Saometo, and there is another small islet between them. I did not try to examine them in detail, because it could not be done in 50 years. For my desire is to see and discover as much as I can before returning to your Highnesses, our Lord willing, in April. It is true that in the event of finding places where there is gold or spices in quantity I should stop until I had collected as much as I could. I, therefore, proceed in the hope of coming across such places."

*Saturday, 20th of October.*

"To-day, at sunrise, I weighed the anchors from where I was with the ship, and anchored off the S.W. point of the island of Saometo, to which I gave the name of *Cabo de la Laguna*, and to the island *Isabella*. My intention was to navigate to the north-east and east from the south-east and south, where, I understood from the Indians I brought with me, was the village of the king. I found the sea so shallow that I could not enter nor navigate in it, and I saw that to follow a route by the south-east would be a great round. So I determined to return by the route that I had taken from the N.N.E. to the western part, and to sail round this island to . . . .<sup>1</sup>

"I had so little wind that I never could sail along the coast, except during the night. As it was dangerous to anchor off these islands except in the day, when one can see where to let go the anchor: for the bottom is all in patches, some clear and some rocky: I lay to all this Sunday night. The caravels anchored because they found

<sup>1</sup> Word missing in the manuscript. Navarette suggests "reconocerla".—N.

themselves near the shore, and they thought that, owing to the signals that they were in the habit of making, I would come to anchor, but I did not wish to do so."

*Sunday, 21st of October.*

"At ten o'clock I arrived here, off this islet,<sup>1</sup> and anchored, as well as the caravels. After breakfast I went on shore, and found only one house, in which there was no one, and I supposed they had fled from fear, because all their property was left in the house. I would not allow anything to be touched, but set out with the captains and people to explore the island. If the others already seen are very beautiful, green, and fertile, this is much more so, with large trees and very green. Here there are large lagoons with wonderful vegetation on their banks. Throughout the island all is green, and the herbage like April in Andalusia. The songs of the birds were so pleasant that it seemed as if a man could never wish to leave the place. The flocks of parrots concealed the sun; and the birds were so numerous, and of so many different kinds, that it was wonderful. There are trees of a thousand sorts, and all have their several fruits; and I feel the most unhappy man in the world not to know them, for I am well assured that they are all valuable. I bring home specimens of them, and also of the land. Thus walking along round one of the lakes I saw a serpent,<sup>2</sup> which we killed, and I bring home the skin for your Highnesses. As soon as it saw us it went into the lagoon, and we followed, as the water was not very deep, until we killed it with lances. It is 7 *palmas* long, and I believe that there are many like it in these lagoons. Here I came upon some aloes, and I have determined to take ten quintals on board to-morrow,

<sup>1</sup> Bird Rock, where he was on the 19th.

<sup>2</sup> Iguana.

for they tell me that they are worth a good deal. Also, while in search of good water, we came to a village about half a league from our anchorage. The people, as soon as they heard us, all fled and left their houses, hiding their property in the wood. I would not allow a thing to be touched, even the value of a pin. Presently some men among them came to us, and one came quite close. I gave him some bells and glass beads, which made him very content and happy. That our friendship might be further increased, I resolved to ask him for something; I requested him to get some water. After I had gone on board, the natives came to the beach with calabashes full of water, and they delighted much in giving it to us. I ordered another string of glass beads to be presented to them, and they said they would come again to-morrow. I wished to fill up all the ships with water at this place, and, if there should be time, I intended to search the island until I had had speech with the king, and seen whether he had the gold of which I had heard. I shall then shape a course for another much larger island, which I believe to be Cipango, judging from the signs made by the Indians I bring with me. They call it *Cuba*, and they say that there are ships and many skilful sailors there. Beyond this island there is another called *Bosio*,<sup>1</sup> which they also say is very large, and others we shall see as we pass, lying between. According as I obtain tidings of gold or spices I shall settle what should be done. I am still resolved to go to the mainland and the city of Guisay,<sup>2</sup> and to deliver the letters of your Highnesses to the Gran Can, requesting a reply and returning with it."

<sup>1</sup> Bohio.—N.

<sup>2</sup> A flourishing port of China, mentioned in the letter of Toscanelli, and more fully described by Marco Polo, who calls it Kinsay (see p. 8).

*Monday, 22nd of October.*

"All last night and to-day I was here, waiting to see if the king or other person would bring gold or anything of value. Many of these people came, like those of the other islands, equally naked, and equally painted, some white, some red, some black, and others in many ways. They brought darts and skeins of cotton to barter, which they exchanged with the sailors for bits of glass, broken crockery, and pieces of earthenware. Some of them had pieces of gold fastened in their noses, which they willingly gave for a hawk's bell and glass beads. But there was so little that it counts for nothing. It is true that they looked upon any little thing that I gave them as a wonder, and they held our arrival to be a great marvel, believing that we came from heaven. We got water for the ships from a lagoon which is near the *Cabo del Isleo* (Cape of the Islet), as we named it. In the said lagoon Martin Alonso Pinzon, captain of the *Pinta*, killed another serpent 7 *palmas* long, like the one we got yesterday. I made them gather here as much of the aloe as they could find."

[.....]

[.....]

*Monday, 12th of November.*

The Admiral left the port and river of *Mares* before dawn to visit the island called *Babeque*,<sup>1</sup> so much talked of by the Indians on board, where, according to their signs, the people gather the gold on the beach at night with candles, and afterwards beat it into bars with hammers. To go thither it was necessary to shape a course E. b. S. After having made 8 leagues along the coast, a river was sighted, and another 4 leagues brought them to another river, which appeared to be of great volume, and larger than any they had yet seen. The Admiral did not wish to stop nor to enter any of these rivers, for two reasons: the first and principal one being that wind and weather

<sup>1</sup> The Indians called the "Tierra Firme", or coast of the mainland, *Babeque* or *Caritaba*.—N.

were favourable for going in search of the said island of *Babeque*; the other, that, if there was a populous and famous city near the sea, it would be visible, while, to go up the rivers, small vessels are necessary, which those of the expedition were not. Much time would thus be lost; moreover, the exploration of such rivers is a separate enterprise. All that coast was peopled near the river, to which the name of *Rio del Sol* was given.

The Admiral says that, on the previous Sunday, the 11th of November, it seemed good to take some persons from amongst those at *Rio de Mares*, to bring to the Sovereigns, that they might learn our language, so as to be able to tell us what there is in their lands. Returning, they would be the mouthpieces of the Christians, and would adopt our customs and the things of the faith. "I saw and knew" (says the Admiral) "that these people are without any religion, not idolaters, but very gentle, not knowing what is evil, nor the sins of murder and theft, being without arms, and so timid that a hundred would fly before one Spaniard, although they joke with them.<sup>1</sup> They, however, believe and know that there is a God in heaven, and say that we have come from heaven. At any prayer that we say, they repeat, and make the sign of the cross. Thus your Highnesses should resolve to make them Christians, for I believe that, if the work was begun, in a little time a multitude of nations would be converted to our faith, with the acquisition of great lordships, peoples, and riches for Spain. Without doubt, there is in these lands a vast quantity of gold, and the Indians I have on board do not speak without reason when they say that in these islands there are places where they dig out gold, and wear it on their necks, ears, arms, and legs, the rings being very large. There are also precious stones, pearls, and an

<sup>1</sup> "aunque burlen con ellos."

infinity of spices. In this river of Mares, whence we departed to-night, there is undoubtedly a great quantity of mastick, and much more could be raised, because the trees may be planted, and will yield abundantly. The leaf and fruit are like the mastick, but the tree and leaf are larger. As Pliny describes it, I have seen it on the island of Chios in the Archipelago. I ordered many of these trees to be tapped, to see if any of them would yield resin; but, as it rained all the time I was in that river, I could not get any, except a very little, which I am bringing to your Highnesses. It may not be the right season for tapping, which is, I believe, when the trees come forth after winter and begin to flower. But when I was there the fruit was nearly ripe. Here also there is a great quantity of cotton, and I believe it would have a good sale here without sending it to Spain, but to the great cities of the Gran Can, which will be discovered without doubt, and many others ruled over by other lords, who will be pleased to serve your Highnesses, and whither will be brought other commodities of Spain and of the Eastern lands; but these are to the west as regards us. There is also here a great yield of aloes, though this is not a commodity that will yield great profit. The mastick, however, is important, for it is only obtained from the said island of Chios, and I believe the harvest is worth 50,000 ducats, if I remember right.<sup>1</sup> There is here, in the mouth of the river, the best port I have seen up to this time, wide, deep, and clear of rocks. It is an excellent site for a town and fort, for any ship could come close up to the walls; the land is high, with a temperate climate, and very good water.

"Yesterday a canoe came alongside the ship, with six

<sup>1</sup> The ducat being 9s. 2d. In the seventeenth century the value of the mastick exported from Chios was 30,000 ducats. See also *Letter to Santangel*, p. 15. Chios belonged to Genoa from 1346 to 1566.

youths in it. Five came on board, and I ordered them to be detained. They are now here. I afterwards sent to a house on the western side of the river, and seized seven women, old and young, and three children. I did this because the men would behave better in Spain if they had women of their own land, than without them. For on many occasions the men of Guinea have been brought to learn the language in Portugal, and afterwards, when they returned, and it was expected that they would be useful in their land, owing to the good company they had enjoyed and the gifts they had received, they never appeared after arriving. Others may not act thus. But, having women, they have the wish to perform what they are required to do; besides, the women would teach our people their language, which is the same in all these islands, so that those who make voyages in their canoes are understood everywhere. On the other hand, there are a thousand different languages in Guinea, and one native does not understand another.

"The same night the husband of one of the women came alongside in a canoe, who was father of the three children—one boy and two girls. He asked me to let him come with them, and besought me much. They are now all consoled at being with one who is a relation of them all. He is a man of about 45 years of age."<sup>1</sup> All these are the words of the Admiral. He also says that he had felt

<sup>1</sup> Las Casas denounces this proceeding as a breach of the law of nations, which is not excused by the Admiral's good intentions; for it is never right to do evil that good may come of it. St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, teaches: "non sunt facienda mala ut bona eveniant" (Romans, iii, 8). "Certainly the Admiral acted on this occasion inconsiderately, though in other things he was prudent." But, on account of this act alone, Las Casas considers that he well merited all the sorrows and misfortunes which he suffered during the rest of his life. (Las Casas, i, pp. 334-38.)

some cold, and that it would not be wise to continue discoveries in a northerly direction in the winter. On this Monday, until sunset, he steered a course E. b. S., making 18 leagues, and reaching a cape, to which he gave the name of *Cabo de Cuba*.

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[.....]

*Wednesday, 21st of November.*

At sunrise the Admiral steered east, with a southerly wind, but made little progress, owing to a contrary sea. At vespers he had gone 24 miles. Afterwards the wind changed to east, and he steered S. b. E., at sunset having gone 12 miles. Here he found himself forty-two degrees<sup>1</sup> north of the equinoctial line, as in the port of *Mares*, but he says that he kept the result from the quadrant in suspense until he reached the shore, that it might be adjusted (as it would seem that he thought this distance was too great, and he had reason, it not being possible, as these islands are only in . . . .<sup>2</sup> degrees<sup>3</sup>).

This day Martin Alonso Pinzon parted company with the caravel *Pinta*, in disobedience to and against the wish of the Admiral, and out of avarice, thinking that an Indian who had been put on board his caravel could show him where there was much gold. So he parted company, not owing to bad weather, but because he chose. Here the Admiral says: "He had done and said many other things to me."

*Thursday, 22nd of November.*

On Wednesday night the Admiral steered S.S.E., with the wind east, but it was nearly calm. At 3 it began to blow from N.N.E.; and he continued to steer south to see the land he had seen in that quarter. When the sun rose he was as far off as the day before, owing to adverse currents, the land being 40 miles off. This night Martin Alonso shaped a course to the east, to go to the island

<sup>1</sup> An erroneous transcription. It should be 21°.

<sup>2</sup> A gap in the manuscript.

<sup>3</sup> Las Casas here interpolates some further remarks about the latitude, which are of no interest, as the figures on which he bases them are a blunder of his own in transcribing.

of Babeque, where the Indians say there is much gold. He did this in sight of the Admiral, from whom he was distant 16 miles. The Admiral stood towards the land all night. He shortened sail, and showed a lantern, because Pinzon would thus have an opportunity of joining him, the night being very clear, and the wind fair to come, if he had wished to do so.

*Friday, 23rd of November.*

The Admiral stood towards the land all day, always steering south with little wind, but the current would never let them reach it, being as far off at sunset as in the morning. The wind was E.N.E., and they could shape a southerly course, but there was little of it. Beyond this cape there stretched out another land or cape, also trending east, which the Indians on board called *Bohio*. They said that it was very large, and that there were people in it who had one eye in their foreheads, and others who were cannibals, and of whom they were much afraid. When they saw that this course was taken, they said that they could not talk to these people because they would be eaten, and that they were very well armed. The Admiral says that he well believes that there were such people, and that if they are armed they must have some ability. He thought that they may have captured some of the Indians, and because they did not return to their homes, the others believed that they had been eaten. They thought the same of the Christians and of the Admiral when some of them first saw the strangers.

[.....]

[.....]

*Monday, 26th of November.*

At sunrise the Admiral weighed the anchors in the haven of *Santa Catalina*, where he was behind the flat island, and steered along the coast in the direction of *Cabo del Pico*, which was S.E. He reached the cape late, because the wind failed, and then saw another cape, S.E. b. E. 60 miles, which, when 20 miles off, was named *Cabo de Campana*, but it could not be reached that day. They made good 32 miles during the day, which is 8 leagues. During this time the Admiral noted nine remarkable ports,<sup>1</sup> which all the sailors thought wonderfully good, and five large rivers; for they sailed close along the land, so as

<sup>1</sup> Among these were the Bay of Yamanique, and the ports of Jaragua, Taco, Cayaganueque, Nava, and Maravi.—N.

to see everything. All along the coast there are very high and beautiful mountains, not arid or rocky, but all accessible, and very lovely. The valleys, like the mountains, were full of tall and fine trees, so that it was a glory to look upon them, and there seemed to be many pines. Also, beyond the said *Cabo de Pico* to the S.E. there are two islets, each about two leagues round, and inside them three excellent havens and two large rivers. Along the whole coast no inhabited places were visible from the sea. There may have been some, and there were indications of them, for, when the men landed, they found signs of people and numerous remains of fires. The Admiral conjectured that the land he saw to-day S.E. of the *Cabo de Campana* was the island called by the Indians *Bohio*: it looked as if this cape was separated from the mainland. The Admiral says that all the people he has hitherto met with have very great fear of those of *Caniba* or *Canima*. They affirm that they live in the island of *Bohio*, which must be very large, according to all accounts. The Admiral understood that those of *Caniba* come to take people from their homes, they being very cowardly, and without knowledge of arms. For this cause it appears that these Indians do not settle on the sea-coast, owing to being near the land of *Caniba*. When the natives who were on board saw a course shaped for that land, they feared to speak, thinking they were going to be eaten; nor could they rid themselves of their fear. They declared that the *Canibas* had only one eye and dogs' faces. The Admiral thought they lied, and was inclined to believe that it was people from the dominions of the *Gran Can* who took them into captivity.

[.....]

[ . . . . . ]

*Saturday, 22nd of December.*

At dawn the Admiral made sail to shape a course in search of the islands which the Indians had told him contained much gold, some of them having more gold than earth. But the weather was not favourable, so he anchored again, and sent away the boat to fish with a net. The Lord of that land,<sup>1</sup> who had a place near there, sent a large canoe full of people, including one of his principal

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<sup>1</sup> This was Guacangari, Lord of Marien, afterwards the tried and steadfast friend of the Admiral.

attendants, to invite the Admiral to come with the ships to his land, where he would give him all he wanted. The Chief sent, by this servant, a girdle which, instead of a bag, had attached to it a mask with two large ears made of beaten gold, the tongue, and the nose. These people are very open-hearted, and whatever they are asked for they give most willingly; while, when they themselves ask for anything, they do so as if receiving a great favour. So says the Admiral. They brought the canoe alongside the boat, and gave the girdle to a boy; then they came on board with their mission. It took a good part of the day before they could be understood. Not even the Indians who were on board understood them well, because they have some differences of words for the names of things. At last their invitation was understood by signs. The Admiral determined to start to-morrow, although he did not usually sail on a Sunday, owing to a devout feeling, and not on account of any superstition whatever. But in the hope that these people would become Christians through the willingness they show, and that they will be subjects of the Sovereigns of Castille, and because he now holds them to be so, and that they may serve with love, he wished and endeavoured to please them. Before leaving, to-day, the Admiral sent six men to a large village three leagues to the westward, because the Chief had come the day before and said that he had some pieces of gold. When the Christians arrived, the Secretary of the Admiral, who was one of them, took the Chief by the hand. The Admiral had sent him, to prevent the others from imposing upon the Indians. As the Indians are so simple, and the Spaniards so avaricious and grasping, it does not suffice that the Indians should give them all they want in exchange for a bead or a bit of glass, but the Spaniards would take everything without any return at all. The Admiral always prohibits this, although, with the exception of gold, the things given by the Indians

are of little value. But the Admiral, seeing the simplicity of the Indians, and that they will give a piece of gold in exchange for six beads, gave the order that nothing should be received from them unless something had been given in exchange. Thus the Chief took the Secretary by the hand and led him to his house, followed by the whole village, which was very large. He made his guests eat, and the Indians brought them many cotton fabrics, and spun-cotton in skeins. In the afternoon the Chief gave them three very fat geese and some small pieces of gold. A great number of people went back with them, carrying all the things they had got by barter, and they also carried the Spaniards themselves across streams and muddy places. The Admiral ordered some things to be given to the Chief, and both he and his people were very well satisfied, truly believing that the Christians had come from heaven, so that they considered themselves fortunate in beholding them. On this day more than 120 canoes came to the ships, all full of people, and all bringing something, especially their bread and fish, and fresh water in earthen jars. They also brought seeds of good kinds, and there was a grain which they put into a porringer of water and drank it. The Indians who were on board said that this was very wholesome.

[.....]

[ . . . . . ]

*Tuesday, 25th of December. Christmas.*

Navigating yesterday, with little wind, from *Santo Tomé* to *Punta Santa*, and being a league from it, at about eleven o'clock at night the Admiral went down to get some sleep, for he had not had any rest for two days and a night. As it was calm, the sailor who steered the ship thought he would go to sleep, leaving the tiller in charge of a boy. The Admiral had forbidden this throughout the voyage, whether it was blowing or whether it was calm. The boys were never to be entrusted with the helm. The Admiral

<sup>1</sup> Entrance of the Bay of Açul.—N.

<sup>2</sup> Isla de Ratós.—N.

<sup>3</sup> Puerto Frances.—N.

had no anxiety respecting sand-banks and rocks, because, when he sent the boats to that king on Sunday, they had passed to the east of *Punta Santa* at least three leagues and a half, and the sailors had seen all the coast, and the rocks there are from *Punta Santa*, for a distance of three leagues to the E.S.E. They saw the course that should be taken, which had not been the case before, during this voyage. It pleased our Lord that, at twelve o'clock at night, when the Admiral had retired to rest, and when all had fallen asleep, seeing that it was a dead calm and the sea like glass, the tiller being in the hands of a boy, the current carried the ship on one of the sand-banks. If it had not been night the bank could have been seen, and the surf on it could be heard for a good league. But the ship ran upon it so gently that it could scarcely be felt. The boy, who felt the helm and heard the rush of the sea, cried out. The Admiral at once came up, and so quickly that no one had felt that the ship was aground. Presently the master of the ship,<sup>1</sup> whose watch it was, came on deck. The Admiral ordered him and others to launch the boat, which was on the poop, and lay out an anchor astern. The master, with several others, got into the boat, and the Admiral thought that they did so with the object of obeying his orders. But they did so in order to take refuge with the caravel, which was half a league to leeward. The caravel would not allow them to come on board, acting judiciously, and they therefore returned to the ship; but the caravel's boat arrived first. When the Admiral saw that his own people fled in this way, the water rising and the ship being across the sea, seeing no other course, he ordered the masts to be cut away and the ship to be

<sup>1</sup> The master, who was also the owner, of the Admiral's ship was Juan de la Cosa of Santoña, afterwards well known as a draughtsman and pilot

lightened as much as possible, to see if she would come off. But, as the water continued to rise, nothing more could be done. Her side fell over across the sea, but it was nearly calm. Then the timbers<sup>1</sup> opened, and the ship was lost. The Admiral went to the caravel to arrange about the reception of the ship's crew, and as a light breeze was blowing from the land, and continued during the greater part of the night, while it was unknown how far the bank extended, he hove her to until daylight. He then went back to the ship, inside the reef; first having sent a boat on shore with Diego de Arana of Cordova, Alguazil of the Fleet, and Pedro Gutierrez, Gentleman of the King's Bed-chamber, to inform the king, who had invited the ships to come on the previous Saturday. His town was about a league and a half from the sand-bank. They reported that he wept when he heard the news, and he sent all his people with large canoes to unload the ship. This was done, and they landed all there was between decks in a very short time. Such was the great promptitude and diligence shown by that king. He himself, with brothers and relations, were actively assisting as well in the ship as in the care of the property when it was landed, that all might be properly guarded. Now and then he sent one of his relations weeping to the Admiral, to console him, saying that he must not feel sorrow or annoyance, for he would supply all that was needed. The Admiral assured the Sovereigns that there could not have been such good watch kept in any part of Castille, for that there was not even a needle missing. He ordered that all the property should be placed by some houses which the king placed at his disposal, until they were emptied, when everything would be stowed and guarded in them. Armed men were

<sup>1</sup> *Conventos*, a word meaning the spaces filled with timber, between the ribs. See Herrera, *Dec. I*, Lib. 1, cap. 18.—N.

placed round the stores to watch all night. "The king and all his people wept. They are a loving people, without covetousness, and fit for anything; and I assure your Highnesses that there is no better land nor people. They love their neighbours as themselves, and their speech is the sweetest and gentlest in the world, and always with a smile. Men and women go as naked as when their mothers bore them. Your Highnesses should believe that they have very good customs among themselves. The king is a man of remarkable presence, and with a certain self-contained manner that is a pleasure to see. They have good memories, wish to see everything, and ask the use of what they see." All this is written by the Admiral.<sup>1</sup>

*Wednesday, 26th of December.*

To-day, at sunrise, the king of that land came to the caravel *Niña*, where the Admiral was, and said to him, almost weeping, that he need not be sorry, for that he would give him all he had; that he had placed two large houses at the disposal of the Christians who were on shore, and that he would give more if they were required, and as many canoes as could load from the ship and discharge on shore, with as many people as were wanted. This had all been done yesterday, without so much as a needle being missed. "So honest are they," says the Admiral, "without any covetousness for the goods of others, and so above all was that virtuous king." While the Admiral was talking to him, another canoe arrived from a different place, bringing some pieces of gold, which the people in the canoe wanted to exchange for a hawk's bell; for there was nothing they

<sup>1</sup> Fernando Columbus, in the *Historie* (cap. xxxii), copies this account of the shipwreck by his father, the Admiral. His version differs somewhat in the expressions, but is the same in substance as the text from the copy of Las Casas.—N.

desired more than these bells. They had scarcely come alongside when they called and held up the gold, saying *Chug chug* for the bells, for they are quite mad about them. After the king had seen this, and when the canoes which came from other places had departed, he called the Admiral and asked him to give orders that one of the bells was to be kept for another day, when he would bring four pieces of gold the size of a man's hand. The Admiral rejoiced to hear this, and afterwards a sailor, who came from the shore, told him that it was wonderful what pieces of gold the men on shore were getting in exchange for next to nothing. For a needle they got a piece of gold worth two *castellanos*, and that this was nothing to what it would be within a month. The king rejoiced much when he saw that the Admiral was pleased. He understood that his friend wanted much gold, and he said, by signs, that he knew where there was, in the vicinity, a very large quantity; so that he must be in good heart, for he should have as much as he wanted. He gave some account of it, especially saying that in *Cipango*, which they call *Cibao*, it is so abundant that it is of no value, and that they will bring it, although there is also much more in the island of *Espanola*, which they call *Bohio*, and in the province of *Caritaba*. The king dined on board the caravel with the Admiral and afterwards went on shore, where he received the Admiral with much honour. He gave him a collation consisting of three or four kinds of yams, with shellfish and game, and other viands they have, besides the bread they call *casavi*. He then took the Admiral to see some groves of trees near the houses, and they were accompanied by at least a thousand people, all naked. The Lord had on a shirt and a pair of gloves, given to him by the Admiral, and he was more delighted with the gloves than with anything else. In his manner of eating, both as regards the high-bred air and the peculiar cleanliness,

he clearly showed his nobility. After he had eaten, he remained some time at table, and they brought him certain herbs, with which he rubbed his hands. The Admiral thought that this was done to make them soft, and they also gave him water for his hands. After the meal he took the Admiral to the beach. The Admiral then sent for a Turkish bow and a quiver of arrows, and took a shot at a man of his company, who had been warned. The chief, who knew nothing about arms, as they neither have them nor use them, thought this a wonderful thing. He, however, began to talk of those of *Caniba*, whom they call *Caribes*. They come to capture the natives, and have bows and arrows without iron, of which there is no memory in any of these lands, nor of steel, nor any other metal except gold and copper. Of copper the Admiral had only seen very little. The Admiral said, by signs, that the Sovereigns of Castille would order the Caribs to be destroyed, and that all should be taken with their heads tied together. He ordered a lombard and a hand-gun to be fired off, and seeing the effect caused by its force and what the shots penetrated, the king was astonished. When his people heard the explosion they all fell on the ground. They brought the Admiral a large mask, which had pieces of gold for the eyes and ears and in other parts, and this they gave, with other trinkets of gold that the same king had put on the head and round the neck of the Admiral, and of other Christians, to whom they also gave many pieces. The Admiral received much pleasure and consolation from these things, which tempered the anxiety and sorrow he felt at the loss of the ship. He knew our Lord had caused the ship to stop here, that a settlement might be formed. "From this", he says, "originated so many things that, in truth, the disaster was really a piece of good fortune. For it is certain that, if I had not lost the ship, I should have gone on without anchoring in this

place, which is within a great bay, having two or three reefs of rock. I should not have left people in the country during this voyage, nor even, if I had desired to leave them, should I have been able to obtain so much information, nor such supplies and provisions for a fortress. And true it is that many people had asked me to give them leave to remain. Now I have given orders for a tower and a fort, both well built, and a large cellar, not because I believe that such defences will be necessary. I believe that with the force I have with me I could subjugate the whole island, which I believe to be larger than Portugal, and the population double. But they are naked and without arms, and hopelessly timid. Still, it is advisable to build this tower, being so far from your Highnesses. The people may thus know the skill of the subjects of your Highnesses, and what they can do; and will obey them with love and fear. So they make preparations to build the fortress, with provision of bread and wine for more than a year, with seeds for sowing, the ship's boat, a caulker and carpenter, a gunner and cooper. Many among these men have a great desire to serve your Highnesses and to please me, by finding out where the mine is whence the gold is brought. Thus everything is got in readiness to begin the work. Above all, it was so calm that there was scarcely wind nor wave when the ship ran aground." This is what the Admiral says; and he adds more to show that it was great good luck, and the settled design of God, that the ship should be lost in order that people might be left behind. If it had not been for the treachery of the master and his boat's crew, who were all or mostly his countrymen,<sup>1</sup> in neglecting to lay out the anchor so as to haul the ship off in obedience to the

<sup>1</sup> Juan de la Cosa, the master, was a native of Santoña, on the north coast of Spain. There were two other Santoña men on board, and several from the north coast.

Admiral's orders, she would have been saved. In that case, the same knowledge of the land as has been gained in these days would not have been secured, for the Admiral always proceeded with the object of discovering, and never intended to stop more than a day at any one place, unless he was detained by the wind. Still, the ship was very heavy and unsuited for discovery. It was the people of Palos who obliged him to take such a ship, by not complying "with what they had promised to the King and Queen, namely, to supply suitable vessels for this expedition. This they did not do. Of all that there was on board the ship, not a needle, nor a board, nor a nail was lost, for she remained as whole as when she sailed, except that it was necessary to cut away and level down in order to get out the jars and merchandise, which were landed and carefully guarded." He trusted in God that, when he returned from Spain, according to his intention, he would find a ton of gold collected by barter by those he was to leave behind, and that they would have found the mine, and spices in such quantities that the Sovereigns would, in three years, be able to undertake and fit out an expedition to go and conquer the Holy Sepulchre. "Thus", he says, "I protest to your Highnesses that all the profits of this my enterprise may be spent in the conquest of Jerusalem. Your Highnesses may laugh, and say that it is pleasing to you, and that, without this, you entertain that desire." These are the Admiral's words.

*Thursday, 27th of December.*

The king of that land came alongside the caravel at sunrise, and said that he had sent for gold, and that he would collect all he could before the Admiral departed; but he begged him not to go. The king and one of his

brothers, with another very intimate relation, dined with the Admiral, and the two latter said they wished to go to Castille with him. At this time the news came that the caravel *Pinta* was in a river at the end of this island. Presently the Cacique sent a canoe there, and the Admiral sent a sailor in it. For it was wonderful how devoted the Cacique was to the Admiral. The necessity was now evident of hurrying on preparations for the return to Castille.

*Friday, 28th of December.*

The Admiral went on shore to give orders and hurry on the work of building the fort, and to settle what men should remain behind. The king, it would seem, had watched him getting into the boat, and quickly went into his house, dissimulating, sending one of his brothers to receive the Admiral, and conduct him to one of the houses that had been set aside for the Spaniards, which was the largest and best in the town. In it there was a couch made of palm matting, where they sat down. Afterwards the brother sent an attendant to say that the Admiral was there, as if the king did not know that he had come. The Admiral, however, believed that this was a feint in order to do him more honour. The attendant gave the message, and the Cacique came in great haste, and put a large soft piece of gold he had in his hand round the Admiral's neck. They remained together until the evening, arranging what had to be done.

*Saturday, 29th of December.*

A very youthful nephew of the king came to the caravel at sunrise, who showed a good understanding and disposition. As the Admiral was always working to find out the origin of the gold, he asked everyone, for he could now understand somewhat by signs. This youth told him

that, at a distance of four days' journey, there was an island to the eastward called *Guarionex*, and others called *Macorix*, *Mayonic*, *Fuma*, *Cibao*, and *Coroay*,<sup>1</sup> in which there was plenty of gold. The Admiral wrote these names down, and now understood what had been said by a brother of the king, who was annoyed with him, as the Admiral understood. At other times the Admiral had suspected that the king had worked against his knowing where the gold had its origin and was collected, that he might not go away to barter in another part of the island. For there are such a number of places in this same island that it is wonderful. After nightfall the king sent a large mask of gold, and asked for a washhand basin and jug. The Admiral thought he wanted them for patterns to copy from, and therefore sent them.

*Sunday, 30th of December.*

The Admiral went on shore to dinner, and came at a time when five kings had arrived, all with their crowns, who were subject to this king, named *Guacanagari*. They represented a very good state of affairs, and the Admiral says to the Sovereigns that it would have given them pleasure to see the manner of their arrival. On landing, the Admiral was received by the king, who led him by the arms to the same house where he was yesterday, where there were chairs, and a couch on which the Admiral sat. Presently the king took the crown off his head and put it on the Admiral's head, and the Admiral took from his neck a collar of beautiful beads of several different colours, which looked very well in all its parts, and put it on the king. He also took off a cloak of fine material, in which he had dressed himself that day, and dressed the king in

<sup>1</sup> These were not islands, but provinces of Española. Guarionex was the chief of the "Vega Real".

it, and sent for some coloured boots, which he put on his feet, and he put a large silver ring on his finger, because he had heard that he had admired greatly a silver ornament worn by one of the sailors. The king was highly delighted and well satisfied, and two of those kings who were with him came with him to where the Admiral was, and each gave him a large piece of gold. At this time an Indian came and reported that it was two days since he left the caravel *Pinta* in a port to the eastward. The Admiral returned to the caravel, and Vicente Anes,<sup>1</sup> the captain, said that he had seen the rhubarb plant, and that they had it on the island *Amiga*, which is at the entrance of the sea of *Santo Tomé*, six leagues off, and that he had recognised the branches and roots. They say that rhubarb forms small branches above ground, and fruit like green mulberries, almost dry, and the stalk, near the root, is as yellow and delicate as the best colour for painting, and underground the root grows like a large pear.<sup>2</sup>

*Monday, 31st of December.*

To-day the Admiral was occupied in seeing that water and fuel were taken on board for the voyage to Spain, to give early notice to the Sovereigns, that they might despatch ships to complete the discoveries. For now the business appeared to be so great and important that the Admiral was astonished. He did not wish to go until he had examined all the land to the eastward, and explored the coast, so as to know the route to Castille, with a view to sending sheep and cattle. But as he had been left with only a single vessel, it did not appear prudent to encounter the dangers that are inevitable in making discoveries. He

<sup>1</sup> For Yañez. Vicente Yañez Pinzon.

<sup>2</sup> See *Letter to Santangel*, p. 15.

complained that all this inconvenience had been caused by the caravel *Pinta* having parted company.

*Tuesday, 1st of January 1493.*

At midnight the Admiral sent a boat to the island *Amiga* to bring the rhubarb. It returned at vespers with a bundle of it. They did not bring more because they had no spade to dig it up with; it was taken to be shown to the Sovereigns. The king of that land said that he had sent many canoes for gold. The canoe returned that had been sent for tidings of the *Pinta*, without having found her. The sailor who went in the canoe said that twenty leagues from there he had seen a king who wore two large plates of gold on his head, but when the Indians in the canoe spoke to him he took them off. He also saw much gold on other people. The Admiral considered that the King Guacanagari ought to have prohibited his people from selling gold to the Christians, in order that it might all pass through his hands. But the king knew the places, as before stated, where there was such a quantity that it was not valued. The spicery also is extensive, and is worth more than pepper or *manegueta*.<sup>1</sup> He left instructions to those who wished to remain that they were to collect as much as they could.

*Wednesday, 2nd of January.*

In the morning the Admiral went on shore to take leave of the King Guacanagari, and to depart from him in the name of the Lord. He gave him one of his shirts. In order to show him the force of the lombards, and what effect they had, he ordered one to be loaded and fired into the side of the ship that was on shore, for this was apposite to the conversation respecting the Caribs, with whom Guacanagari was at war. The king saw whence the lombard-shot

<sup>1</sup> See note at page 154.

came, and how it passed through the side of the ship and went far away over the sea. The Admiral also ordered a skirmish of the crews of the ships, fully armed, saying to the Cacique that he need have no fear of the Caribs even if they should come. All this was done that the king might look upon the men who were left behind as friends, and that he might also have a proper fear of them. The king took the Admiral to dinner at the house where he was established, and the others who came with him. The Admiral strongly recommended to his friendship Diego de Arana, Pedro Gutierrez, and Rodrigo Escovedo, whom he left jointly as his lieutenants over the people who remained behind, that all might be well regulated and governed for the service of their Highnesses. The Cacique showed much love for the Admiral, and great sorrow at his departure, especially when he saw him go on board. A relation of that king said to the Admiral that he had ordered a statue of pure gold to be made, as big as the Admiral, and that it would be brought within ten days. The Admiral embarked with the intention of sailing presently, but there was no wind.

He left on that island of Española, which the Indians called *Bohio*, 39 men<sup>1</sup> with the fortress,<sup>2</sup> and he says that

<sup>1</sup> The actual number was 44, according to the official list, namely:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Diego de Arana of Cordova<br>( <i>Alguazil Mayor</i> ).        | 7. Castillo of Seville ( <i>Assayer</i> ). |
| 2. Rodrigo de Escobedo ( <i>Secretary</i> ).                      | 8. Antonio of Jaen.                        |
| 3. Pedro Gutierrez ( <i>Gentleman of the King's Bedchamber</i> ). | 9. Alvaro Perez Osorio.                    |
| 4. Bachiller Bernardo de Tapia ( <i>Volunteer</i> ).              | 10. Cristoval de Alamo of Niebla.          |
| 5. Alonzo Velez of Seville.                                       | 11. Diego Garcia of Xeres.                 |
| 6. Alonzo Perez Osorio.   | 12. Diego de Tordoya of Cabeza de Vaca.    |
|   | 13. Diego de Capilla of Almeden.           |
|   | 14. Diego of Mambles.                      |
|   | 15. Diego de Mendoza.                      |

<sup>2</sup> To which he gave the name of "Villa de la Navidad", because the ship was lost on Christmas Day.

they were great friends of Guacanagari. The lieutenants placed over them were Diego de Arana of Cordova, Pedro Gutierrez, Gentleman of the King's Bedchamber, and Rodrigo de Escovedo, a native of Seogvia, nephew of Fray Rodrigo Perez, with all the powers he himself received from the Sovereigns. He left behind all the merchandise which had been provided for bartering, which was much, that they might trade for gold. He also left bread for a year's supply, wine, and much artillery. He also left the ship's boat, that they, most of them being sailors, might go, when the time seemed convenient, to discover the gold mine, in order that the Admiral, on his return, might find much gold. They were also to find a good site for a town, for this was not altogether a desirable port; especially as the gold the natives brought came from the east; also, the farther to the east the nearer to Spain. He also left seeds for sowing, and his officers, the Alguazil and Secretary, as well as a ship's carpenter, a caulker, a good gunner well

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| 16. Diego de Montalvan of Jaen.                    | 30. Juan del Barco of Avila.   |
| 17. Domingo de Bermeo.                             | 31. Pedro Carbacho of Caceres.                                       |
| 18. Francisco de Godoy of Seville.                 | 32. Pedro of Talavera.   |
| 19. Francisco de Vergara of Seville.               | 33. Sebastian of Majorca.  |
| 20. Francisco of Aranda.                           | 34. Tallarte ( <i>Alard</i> ?) of Lajes<br>( <i>an Englishman</i> ). |
| 21. Francisco Henao of Avila.                      | 35. Diego de Torpa.  |
| 22. Francisco Jimenes of Seville.                  | 36. Francisco Fernandez.   |
| 23. Gabriel Baraona of Belmonte.                   | 37. Hernando de Porcuna.   |
| 24. Gonzalo Fernandez of Segovia.                  | 38. Juan de Urminga.   |
| 25. Gonzalo Fernandez of Leon.                     | 39. Juan de Morcillo.  |
| 26. Guillelmo ( <i>Irish, native of Gateway</i> ). | 40. Juan de Villar.  |
| 27. Jorge Gonzales of Trigueros.                   | 41. Juan de Mendoza.   |
| 28. Juan de Cueva.                                 | 42. Martin de Logrosan.  |
| 29. Juan Patiño of La Sarena.                      | 43. Pedro de Foronda.  |
|  | 44. Tristan de San Jorge.  |

The names are given in a document printed by Navarrete; which is a notice to the next of kin to apply for wages due, dated Burgos, December 20th, 1507. Oviedo and Herrera say that a surgeon named Maestre Juan was also left behind

acquainted with artillery, a cooper, a physician, and a tailor, all being seamen as well.<sup>1</sup>

*Thursday, 3rd of January.*

The Admiral did not go to-day, because three of the Indians whom he had brought from the islands, and who had staid behind, arrived, and said that the others with their women would be there at sunrise.<sup>2</sup> The sea also was rather rough, so that they could not land from the boat. He determined to depart to-morrow, with the grace of God. The Admiral said that if he had the caravel *Pinta* with him he could make sure of shipping a ton of gold, because he could then follow the coasts of these islands, which he would not do alone, for fear some accident might impede his return to Castille, and prevent him from reporting all he had discovered to the Sovereigns. If it was certain that the caravel *Pinta* would arrive safely in Spain with Martin Alonso Pinzon, he would not hesitate to act as he desired; but as he had no certain tidings of him, and as he might return and tell lies to the Sovereigns, that he might not receive the punishment he deserved for having done so much harm in having parted company without permission, and impeded the good service that might have been done; the Admiral could only trust in our Lord that he would grant favourable weather, and remedy all things.

*Friday, 4th of January.*

At sunrise the Admiral weighed the anchor, with little wind, and turned her head N.W. to get clear of the reef, by another channel wider than the one by which he

<sup>1</sup> Herrera gives the farewell speech of the Admiral to those who were left behind at Navidad. (*Dec. I, Lib. I, cap. xx.*)

<sup>2</sup> Las Casas says that the Admiral brought ten or twelve Indians to Castille with him. (*Ibid.*, I, p. 419.)

entered, which, with others, is very good for coming in front of the *Villa de la Navidad*, in all which the least depth is from 3 to 9 fathoms. These two channels run N.W. and S.E., and the reefs are long, extending from the *Cabo Santo* to the *Cabo de Sierpe* for more than six leagues, and then a good three leagues out to sea. At a league outside *Cabo Santo* there are not more than 8 fathoms of depth, and inside that cape, on the east side, there are many sunken rocks, and channels to enter between them. All this coast trends N.W. and S.E., and it is all beach, with the land very level for about a quarter of a league inland. After that distance there are very high mountains, and the whole is peopled with a very good race, as they showed themselves to the Christians. Thus the Admiral navigated to the east, shaping a course for a very high mountain, which looked like an island, but is not one, being joined to the mainland by a very low neck. The mountain has the shape of a very beautiful tent.<sup>3</sup> He gave it the name of *Monte Cristi*. It is due east of *Cabo Santo*, at a distance of 18 leagues.<sup>4</sup> That day, owing to the light wind, they could not reach within six leagues of Monte Cristi. He discovered four very low and sandy islets,<sup>5</sup> with a reef extending N.W. and S.E. Inside, there is a large gulf,<sup>4</sup> which extends from this mountain to the S.E. at least twenty leagues,<sup>5</sup> which must all be shallow, with many sand-banks, and inside numerous rivers which are not navigable. At the same time the sailor who was sent in the canoe to get tidings of the *Pinta* reported that

<sup>1</sup> *Alfaneque*; which Las Casas explains as *Tienda de Campo*. Hazard (*Santo Domingo*, 1873, p. 352) says it is called the *Morro*, and *La Grange* (the barn), "name given by Columbus". *Alfaneque* means a booth or tent, not a barn.

<sup>2</sup> It is N. 80° E. 70 leagues.—N.

<sup>3</sup> Los siete Hermanos.—N.

<sup>4</sup> Bahía de Manzanillo.—N.

<sup>5</sup> Should be S.W. three leagues.

he saw a river<sup>1</sup> into which ships might enter. The Admiral anchored at a distance of six leagues<sup>2</sup> from *Monte Cristi*, in 19 fathoms, and so kept clear of many rocks and reefs. Here he remained for the night. The Admiral gives notice to those who would go to the *Villa de la Navidad* that, to make *Monte Cristi*, he should stand off the land two leagues, etc. (But as the coast is now known it is not given here.) The Admiral concluded that Cipango was in that island, and that it contained much gold, spices, mastick, and rhubarb.

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<sup>1</sup> Rio Tapion, in the Bahía de Manzanillo.—N.

<sup>2</sup> A mistake for three leagues.

[ . . . . . ]

Friday, 11th of January.

At midnight the Admiral left the *Rio de Gracia* with the land-breeze, and steered eastward until he came to a cape named *Belprado*, at a distance of four leagues. To the S.E. is the mountain to which he gave the name of *Monte de Plata*,<sup>1</sup> eight leagues distant. Thence from the cape *Belprado* to E.S.E. is the point named *Angel*, eighteen leagues distant; and from this point to the *Monte de Plata* there is a gulf, with the most beautiful lands in the world, all high and fine lands which extend far inland. Beyond there is a range of high mountains running east and west, very grand and beautiful. At the foot of this mountain there is a very good port,<sup>2</sup> with 14 fathoms in the entrance. The mountain is very high and beautiful, and all the country is well peopled. The Admiral believed there must be fine rivers and much gold. At a distance of 4 leagues E.S.E.

<sup>1</sup> So called because the summit is always covered with white or silver clouds. A monastery of Dominicans was afterwards built on Monte de Plata, in which Las Casas began to write his history of the Indies in the year 1527. (*Las Casas*, iv, p. 254.)

<sup>2</sup> Puerto de Plata, where a flourishing seaport town was afterwards established; founded by Ovanda in 1502. It had fallen to decay in 1606. In 1822 it was again a flourishing place, but was destroyed by the Spaniards in 1865.

of *Cabo del Angel* there is a cape named *Punta del Hierro*,<sup>1</sup> and on the same course, 4 more leagues, a point is reached named *Punta Seca*.<sup>2</sup> Thence, 6 leagues further on, is *Cabo Redondo*,<sup>3</sup> and further on *Cabo Frances*, where a large bay<sup>4</sup> is formed, but there did not appear to be anchorage in it. A league further on is *Cabo del Buen Tiempo*, and thence, a good league S.S.E., is *Cabo Tajado*.<sup>5</sup> Thence, to the south, another cape was sighted at a distance of about 15 leagues. To-day great progress was made, as wind and tide were favourable. The Admiral did not venture to anchor for fear of the rocks, so he was hove-to all night.

Saturday, 12th of January.

Towards dawn the Admiral filled and shaped a course to the east with a fresh wind, running 20 miles before daylight, and in two hours afterwards 24 miles. Thence he saw land to the south,<sup>6</sup> and steered towards it, distant 48 miles. During the night he must have run 28 miles N.N.E., to keep the vessels out of danger. When he saw the land, he named one cape that he saw *Cabo de Padre y Hijo*, because at the east point there are two rocks, one larger than the other.<sup>7</sup> Afterwards, at two leagues to the eastward, he saw a very fine bay between two grand mountains. He saw that it was a very large port with a very good approach; but, as it was very early in the morning, and as the greater part of the time it was blowing from the east, and then they had a N.N.W. breeze, he did not wish to delay any more.

<sup>1</sup> Punta Macuris. The distance is 3, not 4 leagues.—N.

<sup>2</sup> Punta Sesua. The distance is only one league.—N.

<sup>3</sup> Cabo de la Roca. It should be 5, not 6 leagues.—N.

<sup>4</sup> Bahía Escocesa.

<sup>5</sup> Las Casas says that none of these names were retained, even in his time.

<sup>6</sup> This was the Peninsula of Samana.

<sup>7</sup> Isla Yazual.—N.

He continued his course to the east as far as a very high and beautiful cape, all of scarpèd rock, to which he gave the name of *Cabo del Enamorado*,<sup>1</sup> which was 32 miles to the east of the port named *Puerto Sacro*.<sup>2</sup> On rounding the cape, another finer and loftier point came in sight,<sup>3</sup> like Cape St. Vincent in Portugal, 12 miles east of *Cabo del Enamorado*. As soon as he was abreast of the *Cabo del Enamorado*, the Admiral saw that there was a great bay<sup>4</sup> between this and the next point, three leagues across, and in the middle of it a small island.<sup>5</sup> The depth is great at the entrance close to the land. He anchored here in twelve fathoms, and sent the boat on shore for water, and to see if intercourse could be opened with the natives, but they all fled. He also anchored to ascertain whether this was all one land with the island of Española, and to make sure that this was a gulf, and not a channel, forming another island. He remained astonished at the great size of Española.

*Sunday, 13th of January.*

The Admiral did not leave the port, because there was no land-breeze with which to go out. He wished to shift to another better port, because this was rather exposed. He also wanted to wait, in that haven, the conjunction of the sun and moon, which would take place on the 17th of this month, and their opposition with Jupiter and conjunction with Mercury, the sun being in opposition to Jupiter,<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cabo Cabron, or Lover's Cape; the extreme N.E. point of the sland, rising nearly 2,000 feet above the sea.

<sup>2</sup> Puerto Yaqueron.

<sup>3</sup> Cabo Samana; called Cabo de San Theramo afterwards by Columbus.

<sup>4</sup> The Bay of Samana.

<sup>5</sup> Cayo de Levantados.

<sup>6</sup> Las Casas thinks that the text is here corrupt, owing to the mistakes of the transcriber from the book of the navigation of the

which is the cause of high winds. He sent the boat on shore to a beautiful beach to obtain yams for food. They found some men with bows and arrows, with whom they stopped to speak, buying two bows and many arrows from them. They asked one of them to come on board the caravel and see the Admiral; who says that he was very wanting in reverence, more so than any native he had yet seen. His face was all stained with charcoal, but in all parts there is the custom of painting the body different colours. He wore his hair very long, brought together and fastened behind, and put into a small net of parrots' feathers.<sup>1</sup> He was naked, like all the others. The Admiral supposed that he belonged to the Caribs,<sup>2</sup> who eat men, and that the gulf he had seen yesterday formed this part of the land into an island by itself. The Admiral asked about the Caribs, and he pointed to the east, near at hand, which means that he saw the Admiral yesterday before he entered the bay. The Indian said there was much gold to the east, pointing to the poop of the caravel, which was a good size, meaning that there were pieces as large. He called gold *tuob*, and did not understand *caona*,<sup>3</sup> as they call it in the first part of the island that was visited, nor *nozay*, the name in San Salvador and the other islands. Copper is called *tuob* in Española. He also spoke of

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Admiral (i, p. 433). Doubtless, stormy weather was predicted under the above conditions in the Old World, in some almanack on board, and Columbus prudently considered whether he would wait a few days to see if similar causes produced like effects in the New World. He, however, did not wait until the 17th.

<sup>1</sup> Las Casas says that the *Ciguayos* wore their hair in this way.

<sup>2</sup> According to Las Casas, these were not Caribs, for no Caribs were ever settled in Española.

<sup>3</sup> *Caona* is the name for gold in the greater part of Española, but there were two or three dialects.

the island of *Goanin*,<sup>1</sup> where there was much *tuob*. The Admiral says that he had received notices of these islands from many persons; that in the other islands the natives were in great fear of the *Caribs*, called by some of them *Caniba*, but in Española *Carib*. He thought they must be an audacious race, for they go to all these islands and eat the people they can capture. He understood a few words, and the Indians who were on board comprehended more, there being a difference in the languages owing to the great distance between the various islands. The Admiral ordered that the Indian should be fed, and given pieces of green and red cloth, and glass beads, which they like very much, and then sent on shore. He was told to bring gold if he had any, and it was believed that he had, from some small things he brought with him. When the boat reached the shore there were fifty-five men behind the trees, naked, and with very long hair,<sup>2</sup> as the women wear it in Castille. Behind the head they wore plumes of feathers of parrots and other birds, and each man carried a bow. The Indian landed, and signed to the others to put down their bows and arrows, and a piece of a staff, which is like . . . . .,<sup>3</sup> very heavy, carried instead of a sword.<sup>4</sup> As soon as they came to the boat the crew landed, and began to buy the bows and arrows and other arms, in accordance with an order of the Admiral. Having sold two bows, they did

<sup>1</sup> Las Casas says that *Goanin* was not the name of an island, but the word for base gold (*oro bajo* ?).

<sup>2</sup> These were the *Ciguayos*, according to Las Casas, who inhabited the mountains and coasts of the north of Española from nearly as far as *Puerto de Plata* to *Higüey*.

<sup>3</sup> A gap in the original manuscript.

<sup>4</sup> This is the *macana*, made of palm-wood, and very hard. Las Casas says that these wooden swords are very hard and heavy. They are not sharp, but two fingers thick on all sides, and with one blow they will cleave through a helmeted head to the brain (i p. 435).

not want to give more, but began to attack the Spaniards, and to take hold of them. They were running back to pick up their bows and arrows where they had laid them aside, and took cords in their hands to bind the boat's crew. Seeing them rushing down, and being prepared—for the Admiral always warned them to be on their guard—the Spaniards attacked the Indians, and gave one a stab with a knife in the buttocks, wounding another in the breast with an arrow. Seeing that they could gain little, although the Christians were only seven and they numbered over fifty, they fled, so that none were left, throwing bows and arrows away. The Christians would have killed many, if the pilot, who was in command, had not prevented them. The Spaniards presently returned to the caravel with the boat. The Admiral regretted the affair for one reason, and was pleased for another. They would have fear of the Christians, and they were no doubt an ill-conditioned people, probably Caribs, who eat men. But the Admiral felt alarm lest they should do some harm to the 39 men left in the fortress and town of *Navidad*, in the event of their coming here in their boat. Even if they are not Caribs, they are a neighbouring people, with similar habits, and fearless, unlike the other inhabitants of the island, who are timid, and without arms. The Admiral says all this, and adds that he would have liked to have captured some of them. He says that they lighted many smoke signals, as is the custom in this island of Española.

*Monday, 14th of January.*

This evening the Admiral wished to find the houses of the Indians and to capture some of them, believing them to be Caribs. For, owing to the strong east and north-east winds and the heavy sea, he had remained during the day. Many Indians were seen on shore. The Admiral, there-

fore, ordered the boat to be sent on shore, with the crew well armed. Presently the Indians came to the stern of the boat, including the man who had been on board the day before, and had received presents from the Admiral. With him there came a king, who had given to the said Indian some beads in token of safety and peace for the boat's crew. This king, with three of his followers, went on board the boat and came to the caravel. The Admiral ordered them to be given biscuit and treacle to eat, and gave the chief a red cap, some beads, and a piece of red cloth. The others were also given pieces of cloth. The chief said that next day he would bring a mask made of gold, affirming that there was much here, and in *Carib*<sup>1</sup> and *Matinino*.<sup>2</sup> They afterwards went on shore well satisfied.

The Admiral here says that the caravels were making much water, which entered by the keel; and he complains of the caulkers at Palos, who caulked the vessels very badly, and ran away when they saw that the Admiral had detected the badness of their work, and intended to oblige them to repair the defect. But, notwithstanding that the caravels were making much water, he trusted in the favour and mercy of our Lord, for his high Majesty well knew how much controversy there was before the expedition could be despatched from Castille, that no one was in the Admiral's favour save Him alone who knew his heart, and after God came your Highnesses, while all others were against him without any reason. He further says: "And this has been the cause that the royal crown of your Highnesses has not a hundred *cuentos* of revenue more than after I entered your service, which is seven years ago in this very month, the 20th of January."<sup>3</sup> The increase

<sup>1</sup> Puerto Rico.

<sup>2</sup> Probably Martinique or Guadaloupe.

<sup>3</sup> By this calculation the Admiral entered the service of the Catholic Sovereigns on January 20th, 1486.

will take place from now onwards. For the almighty God will remedy all things." These are his words.

*Tuesday, 15th of January.*

The Admiral now wished to depart, for there was nothing to be gained by further delay, after these occurrences and the tumult with the Indians. To-day he had heard that all the gold was in the district of the town of *Navidad*, belonging to their Highnesses; and that in the island of *Carib*<sup>1</sup> there was much copper, as well as in *Matinino*. The intercourse at *Carib* would, however, be difficult, because the natives are said to eat human flesh. Their island would be in sight from thence, and the Admiral determined to go there, as it was on the route, and thence to *Matinino*, which was said to be entirely peopled by women, without men. He would thus see both islands, and might take some of the natives. The Admiral sent the boat on shore, but the king of that district had not come, for his village was distant. He, however, sent his crown of gold, as he had promised; and many other natives came with cotton, and bread made from yams, all with their bows and arrows. After the bartering was finished, four youths came to the caravel. They appeared to the Admiral to give such a clear account of the islands to the eastward, on the same route as the Admiral would have to take, that he determined to take them to Castille with him. He says that they had no iron nor other metals; at least none was seen, but it was impossible to know much of the land in so short a time, owing to the difficulty with the language, which the Admiral could not understand except by guessing, nor could they know what was said to them, in such a few days. The bows of these people are as large as those of France or England. The arrows are similar to

<sup>1</sup> Puerto Rico.

the darts of the natives who have been met with previously, which are made of young canes, which grow very straight, and a *vara* and a half or two *varas* in length. They point them with a piece of sharp wood, a *palmo* and a half long, and at the end some of them fix a fish's tooth, but most of them anoint it with an herb. They do not shoot as in other parts, but in a certain way which cannot do much harm. Here they have a great deal of fine and long cotton, and plenty of mastick. The bows appeared to be of yew, and there is gold and copper. There is also plenty of *aji*,<sup>1</sup> which is their pepper, which is more valuable than pepper, and all the people eat nothing else, it being very wholesome. Fifty caravels might be annually loaded with it from Española. The Admiral says that he found a great deal of weed in this bay, the same as was met with at sea when he came on this discovery. He therefore supposed that there were islands to the eastward, in the direction of the position where he began to meet with it; for he considers it certain that this weed has its origin in shallow water near the land, and, if this is the case, these Indies must be very near the Canary Islands. For this reason he thought the distance must be less than 400 leagues.

*Wednesday, 16th of January.*

They got under weigh three hours before daylight, and left the gulf, which was named *Golfo de las Flechas*,<sup>2</sup> with the land-breeze. Afterwards there was a west wind, which was fair to go to the island of *Carib* on an E.N.E. course. This was where the people live of whom all the natives of the other islands are so frightened, because they roam over the sea in canoes without number, and eat the men

<sup>1</sup> Capsicum. In Quichua it is called *uchu*.

<sup>2</sup> Gulf of the Arrows. This was the Bay of *Samana*, into which the river *Yuna* flows.

they can capture. The Admiral steered the course indicated by one of the four Indians he took yesterday in the *Puerto de las Flechas*. After having sailed about 64 miles, the Indians made signs that the island was to the S.E.<sup>1</sup> The Admiral ordered the sails to be trimmed for that course, but, after having proceeded on it for two leagues, the wind freshened from a quarter which was very favourable for the voyage to Spain. The Admiral had noticed that the crew were downhearted when he deviated from the direct route home, reflecting that both caravels were leaking badly, and that there was no help but in God. He therefore gave up the course leading to the islands, and shaped a direct course for Spain E.N.E. He sailed on this course, making 48 miles, which is 12 leagues, by sunset. The Indians said that by that route they would fall in with the island of *Matinino*, peopled entirely by women without men, and the Admiral wanted very much to take five or six of them to the Sovereigns. But he doubted whether the Indians understood the route well, and he could not afford to delay, by reason of the leaky condition of the caravels. He, however, believed the story, and that, at certain seasons, men came to them from the island of *Carib*, distant ten or twelve leagues. If males were born, they were sent to the island of the men; and if females, they remained with their mothers. The Admiral says that these two islands cannot have been more than 15 or 20 leagues to the S.E. from where he altered course, the Indians not understanding how to point out the direction. After losing sight of the cape, which was named *San Theramo*,<sup>2</sup> which was left 16 leagues to the west, they went for 12 leagues E.N.E. The weather was very fine.

<sup>1</sup> Puerto Rico. It would have been distant about 30 leagues.

<sup>2</sup> Now called *Cabo del Engaño*, the extreme eastern point of Española. It had the same name when Las Casas wrote.

[.....]

*Wednesday, 13th of February.*

From sunset until daylight there was great trouble with the wind, and the high and tempestuous sea. There was lightning three times to the N.N.E.—a sign of a great storm coming either from that quarter or its opposite. They were lying-to most of the night, afterwards showing a little sail, and made 52 miles, which is 13 leagues. In the day the wind moderated a little, but it soon increased again. The sea was terrific, the waves crossing each other, and straining the vessels. They made 55 miles more, equal to 13½ leagues.

*Thursday, 14th of February.*

This night the wind increased, and the waves were terrible, rising against each other, and so shaking and straining the vessel that she could make no headway, and was in danger of being stove in. They carried the mainsail very closely reefed, so as just to give her steerage-way, and proceeded thus for three hours, making 20 miles. Meanwhile, the wind and sea increased, and, seeing the great danger, the Admiral began to run before it, there being nothing else to be done. The caravel *Pinta* began to run before the wind at the same time, and Martin Alonso ran her out of sight,<sup>1</sup> although the Admiral kept

<sup>1</sup> Martin Alonso Pinzon succeeded in bringing the caravel *Pinta*

showing lanterns all night, and the other answered. It would seem that she could do no more, owing to the force of the tempest, and she was taken far from the route of the Admiral. He steered that night E.N.E., and made 54 miles, equal to 13 leagues. At sunrise the wind blew still harder, and the cross sea was terrific. They continued to show the closely-reefed mainsail, to enable her to rise from between the waves, or she would otherwise have been swamped. An E.N.E. course was steered, and afterwards N.E. by E. for six hours, making 7½ leagues. The Admiral ordered that a pilgrimage should be made to Our Lady of Guadeloupe, carrying a candle of 6 lbs. of weight in wax, and that all the crew should take an oath that the pilgrimage should be made by the man on whom the lot fell. As many beans were got as there were persons on board, and on one a cross was cut with a knife. They were then put into a cap and shaken up. The first who put in his hand was the Admiral, and he drew out the bean with a cross, so the lot fell on him; and he was bound to go on the pilgrimage and fulfil the vow. Another lot was drawn, to go on pilgrimage to Our Lady of Loreto, which is in the march of Ancona, in the Papal territory, a house where Our Lady works many and great miracles. The lot fell on a sailor of the port of Santa Maria, named Pedro de Villa, and the Admiral promised to pay his travelling expenses. Another pilgrimage was agreed upon, to watch for one night in Santa Clara<sup>1</sup> at Moguer, and have a Mass said, for which they again used the beans, including the one with a cross. The lot again fell on the Admiral. After

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into port at Bayona in Galicia. He went thence to Palos, arriving in the evening of the same day as the *Niña* with the Admiral. Pinzon died very soon afterwards. Oviedo says: "Fuesse a Palos a su casa, é murió desde a pocas dias, porque yba muy doliente" (II, cap. vi).

<sup>1</sup> Las Casas says that this was a church much frequented by sailors (I, p. 446).

this the Admiral and all the crew made a vow that, on arriving at the first land, they would all go in procession, in their shirts, to say their prayers in a church dedicated to Our Lady.

Besides these general vows made in common, each sailor made a special vow; for no one expected to escape, holding themselves for lost, owing to the fearful weather from which they were suffering. The want of ballast increased the danger of the ship, which had become light, owing to the consumption of the provisions and water. On account of the favourable weather enjoyed among the islands, the Admiral had omitted to make provision for this need, thinking that ballast might be taken on board at the island inhabited by women, which he had intended to visit. The only thing to do was to fill the barrels that had contained wine or fresh water with water from the sea, and this supplied a remedy.

Here the Admiral writes of the causes which made him fear that he would perish, and of others that gave him hope that God would work his salvation, in order that such news as he was bringing to the Sovereigns might not be lost. It seemed to him that the strong desire he felt to bring such great news, and to show that all he had said and offered to discover had turned out true, suggested the fear that he would not be able to do so, and that each stinging insect would be able to thwart and impede the work. He attributes this fear to his little faith, and to his want of confidence in Divine Providence. He was comforted, on the other hand, by the mercies of God in having vouchsafed him such a victory, in the discoveries he had made, and in that God had complied with all his desires in Castille, after much adversity and many misfortunes. As he had before put all his trust in God, who had heard him and granted all he sought, he ought now to believe that God would permit the completion of what

had been begun, and ordain that he should be saved. Especially as he had freed him on the voyage out, when he had still greater reason to fear, from the trouble caused by the sailors and people of his company, who all with one voice declared their intention to return, and protested that they would rise against him. But the eternal God gave him force and valour to withstand them all, and in many other marvellous ways had God shown his will in this voyage besides those known to their Highnesses. Thus he ought not to fear the present tempest, though his weakness and anxiety prevent him from giving tranquillity to his mind. He says further that it gave him great sorrow to think of the two sons he had left at their studies in Cordova, who would be left orphans, without father or mother, in a strange land; while the Sovereigns would not know of the services he had performed in this voyage, nor would they receive the prosperous news which would move them to help the orphans. To remedy this, and that their Highnesses might know how our Lord had granted a victory in all that could be desired respecting the Indies, and that they might understand that there were no storms in those parts, which may be known by the herbs and trees which grow even within the sea<sup>1</sup>; also that the Sovereigns might still have information, even if he perished in the storm, he took a parchment and wrote on it as good an account as he could of all he had discovered, entreating anyone who might pick it up to deliver it to the Sovereigns. He rolled this parchment up in waxed cloth, fastened it very securely, ordered a large wooden barrel to

<sup>1</sup> The Admiral thought that there could be no great storms in the countries he had discovered, because trees (mangroves) actually grew with their roots in the sea. The herbage on the beach nearly reached the waves, which does not happen when the sea is rough. See *ante*, p. 60.

be brought, and put it inside, so that no one else knew what it was. They thought that it was some act of devotion, and so he ordered the barrel to be thrown into the sea.<sup>1</sup> Afterwards, in the showers and squalls, the wind veered to the west, and they went before it, only with the foresail, in a very confused sea, for five hours. They made  $2\frac{1}{2}$  leagues N.E. They had taken in the reefed mainsail, for fear some wave of the sea should carry all away.

*Friday, 15th of February.*

Last night, after sunset, the sky began to clear towards the west, showing that the wind was inclined to come from that quarter. The Admiral added the bonnet<sup>2</sup> to the mainsail. The sea was still very high, although it had gone down slightly. They steered E.N.E., and went four miles an hour, which made 13 leagues during the eleven hours of the night. After sunrise they sighted land. It appeared from the bows to bear E.N.E. Some said it was the island of Madeira, others that it was the rock of Cintra, in Portugal, near Lisbon. Presently the wind headed to E.N.E., and a heavy sea came from the west, the caravel being 5 leagues from the land. The Admiral found by his reckoning that he was close to the Azores, and believed

<sup>1</sup> It is stated, in the *Vita dell' Ammiraglio*, by his son Fernando Columbus, that the Admiral wrote a duplicate of this letter, and placed it in a second barrel, which was kept on board until the ship should sink (*Historie*, cap. xxxvi). Lamartine (*Christophe Colomb.*, N. XLVII) has a curious but unauthenticated story, that several casks with documents were thrown overboard, and that one was picked up three centuries afterwards. Lafuente (*Historia General de España*, vol. ix, p. 463) even gives the name of the vessel that picked up one of the documents of Columbus, and the date, 27 Aug. 1852. But the story is unworthy of credit.

<sup>2</sup> The bonnet was a small sail, usually cut to a third the size of the mizen, or a fourth of the mainsail. It was secured through eyelet-holes to the leech of the mainsail, in the manner of a studding sail.

that this was one of them. The pilots and sailors thought it was the land of Castille.<sup>1</sup>

*Saturday, 16th of February.*

All that night the Admiral was standing off and on to keep clear of the land, which they now knew to be an island, sometimes standing N.E., at others N.N.E., until sunrise, when they tacked to the south to reach the island, which was now concealed by a great mist. Another island was in sight from the poop, at a distance of eight leagues. Afterwards, from sunrise until dark, they were tacking to reach the land against a strong wind and head-sea. At the time of repeating the *Salve*, which is just before dark, some of the men saw a light to leeward, and it seemed that it must be on the island they first saw yesterday. All night they were beating to windward, and going as near as they could, so as to see some way to the island at sunrise. That night the Admiral got a little rest, for he had not slept nor been able to sleep since Wednesday, and his legs were very sore from long exposure to the

<sup>1</sup> On this day the Admiral dated the letter to Santangel, the Escribano de Racion; which was translated by Mr. Major for the Hakluyt Society (*Select Letters of Columbus*, 1870). A copy of this letter was made, a few days afterwards, to be sent to Gabriel Sanchez, the Treasurer of Aragon. These letters are very brief *compendia* of the Journal. The *Santangel Letter* was first printed at Barcelona in April 1493 (unique copy in possession of Mr. Quaritch, folio, two leaves). The next edition, also printed in April 1493, at Seville, is represented by a unique copy in the Ambrosian Library at Milan (quarto, four leaves). There is a manuscript copy at Simancas, which is a transcript made about 70 years ago, but it is not known from what original. A manuscript transcript of the *Sanchez Letter*, written about 1600, was bought by Varnhagen at Valencia, and printed there by him in 1858. A Latin translation of it, by Leander de Cosco, had been printed three times, in 1493, at Rome; and a fourth edition exists, probably printed at Naples.

wet and cold. At sunrise<sup>1</sup> he steered S.S.W., and reached the island at night, but could not make out what island it was, owing to the thick weather.

*Monday, 18th of February.*

Yesterday, after sunset, the Admiral was sailing round the island, to see where he could anchor and open communications. He let go one anchor, which he presently lost, and then stood off and on all night. After sunrise he again reached the north side of the island, where he anchored, and sent the boat on shore. They had speech with the people, and found that it was the island of Santa Maria, one of the Azores. They pointed out the port<sup>2</sup> to which the caravel should go. They said that they had never seen such stormy weather as there had been for the last fifteen days, and they wondered how the caravel could have escaped. They gave many thanks to God, and showed great joy at the news that the Admiral had discovered the Indies. The Admiral says that his navigation had been very certain, and that he had laid the discoveries down on the chart. Many thanks were due to our Lord, although there had been some delay. But he was sure that he was in the region of the Azores, and that this was one of them. He pretended to have gone over more ground, to mislead the pilots and mariners who pricked off the charts, in order that he might remain master of that route to the Indies, as, in fact, he did. For none of the others kept an accurate reckoning, so that no one but himself could be sure of the route to the Indies.

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<sup>1</sup> This was on Sunday, 17th of February.

<sup>2</sup> The port of San Lorenzo.

*Friday, 1st of March.*

To-night the course was E.N.E., and they made twelve leagues. During the day,  $23\frac{1}{2}$  leagues on the same course.

*Saturday, 2nd of March.*

The course was E.N.E., and distance made good 28 leagues during the night, and 20 in the day.

*Sunday, 3rd of March.*

After sunset the course was east; but a squall came down, split all the sails, and the vessel was in great danger; but God was pleased to deliver them. They drew lots for sending a pilgrim in a shirt to Santa Maria de la Cinta at Huelva, and the lot fell on the Admiral. The whole crew also made a vow to fast on bread and water during the first Saturday after their arrival in port. They had made 60 miles before the sails were split. Afterwards they ran under bare poles, owing to the force of the gale and the heavy sea. They saw signs of the neighbourhood of land, finding themselves near Lisbon.

*Monday, 4th of March.*

During the night they were exposed to a terrible storm, expecting to be overwhelmed by the cross-seas, while the wind seemed to raise the caravel into the air, and there was rain and lightning in several directions. The Admiral prayed to our Lord to preserve them, and in the first watch it pleased our Lord to show land, which was reported by the sailors. As it was advisable not to reach it before it was known whether there was any port to which he could run for shelter, the Admiral set the mainsail, as there was no other course but to proceed, though in great danger. Thus God preserved them until daylight, though all the time they were in infinite fear and trouble. When

it was light, the Admiral knew the land, which was the rock of Cintra, near the river of Lisbon, and he resolved to run in because there was nothing else to be done. So terrible was the storm, that in the village of Cascaes, at the mouth of the river, the people were praying for the little vessel all that morning. After they were inside, the people came off, looking upon their escape as a miracle. At the third hour they passed Rastelo, within the river of Lisbon, where they were told that such a winter, with so many storms, had never before been known, and that 25 ships had been lost in Flanders, while others had been wind-bound in the river for four months. Presently the Admiral wrote to the King of Portugal, who was then at a distance of nine leagues, to state that the Sovereigns of Castille had ordered him to enter the ports of his Highness, and ask for what he required for payment, and requesting that the King would give permission for the caravel to come to Lisbon, because some ruffians, hearing that he had much gold on board, might attempt a robbery in an unfrequented port, knowing that they did not come from Guinea, but from the Indies.<sup>1</sup>

*Tuesday, 5th of March.*

To-day the great ship of the King of Portugal was also at anchor off Rastelo, with the best provision of artillery and arms that the Admiral had ever seen. The master of her, named Bartolomé Diaz, of Lisbon, came in an armed boat to the caravel, and ordered the Admiral to get into the boat, to go and give an account of himself to the agents of the king and to the captain of that ship. The Admiral replied that he was the Admiral of the Sovereigns of Castille, and that he would not give an account to any such persons, nor would he leave the ship except by force,

as he had not the power to resist. The master replied that he must then send the master of the caravel. The Admiral answered that neither the master nor any other person should go except by force, for if he allowed anyone to go, it would be as if he went himself; and that such was the custom of the Admirals of the Sovereigns of Castille, rather to die than to submit, or to let any of their people submit. The master then moderated his tone, and told the Admiral that if that was his determination he might do as he pleased. He, however, requested that he might be shown the letters of the Kings of Castille, if they were on board. The Admiral readily showed them, and the master returned to the ship and reported what had happened to the captain, named Alvaro Dama. That officer, making great festival with trumpets and drums, came to the caravel to visit the Admiral, and offered to do all that he might require.

*Wednesday, 6th of March.*

As soon as it was known that the Admiral came from the Indies, it was wonderful how many people came from Lisbon to see him and the Indians, giving thanks to our Lord, and saying that the heavenly Majesty had given all this to the Sovereigns of Castille as a reward for their faith and their great desire to serve God.

*Thursday, 7th of March.*

To-day an immense number of people came to the caravel, including many knights, and amongst them the agents of the king, and all gave infinite thanks to our Lord for so wide an increase of Christianity granted by our Lord to the Sovereigns of Castille; and they said that they received it because their Highnesses had worked and laboured for the increase of the religion of Christ.

<sup>1</sup> On this day the Admiral dated the postscript to his letter to the Escribano de Racion, which was written at sea on February 15th.

*Friday, 8th of March.*

To-day the Admiral received a letter from the King of Portugal,<sup>1</sup> brought by Don Martin de Noroña, asking him to visit him where he was, as the weather was not suitable for the departure of the caravel. He complied, to prevent suspicion, although he did not wish to go, and went to pass the night at Sacanben. The king had given orders to his officers that all that the Admiral, his crew, and the caravel were in need of should be given without payment, and that all the Admiral wanted should be complied with.

*Saturday, 9th of March.*

To-day the Admiral left Sacanben, to go where the king was residing, which was at Valparaiso, nine leagues from Lisbon. Owing to the rain, he did not arrive until night. The king caused him to be received very honourably by the principal officers of his household; and the king himself received the Admiral with great favour, making him sit down, and talking very pleasantly.<sup>2</sup> He offered to give orders that everything should be done for the service of the Sovereigns of Castille, and said that the successful termination of the voyage had given him great pleasure. He said further that he understood that, in the capitulation between the Sovereigns and himself, that conquest belonged to him. The Admiral replied that he had not seen the capitulation, nor knew more than that the Sovereigns had ordered him not to go either to Lamina or to any other

<sup>1</sup> This was João II, son of Affonso V, who had the correspondence with Toscanelli. João II succeeded in 1481, and died in 1495, when he was succeeded by his cousin Manoel, Duke of Bejar.

<sup>2</sup> Las Casas, quoting from the Portuguese historian, Garcia de Resende, says that the courtiers proposed to pick a quarrel with Columbus, and to kill him; but that the King João II would not allow it (i, p. 465).

port of Guinea, and that this had been ordered to be proclaimed in all the ports of Andalusia before he sailed. The king graciously replied that he held it for certain that there would be no necessity for any arbitrators. The Admiral was assigned as a guest to the Prior of Crato, who was the principal person present, and from whom he received many favours and civilities.

*Sunday, 10th of March.*

To-day, after Mass, the king repeated that if the Admiral wanted anything he should have it. He conversed much with the Admiral respecting his voyage, always ordering him to sit down, and treating him with great favour.

*Monday, 11th of March.*

To-day the Admiral took leave of the king, who entrusted him with some messages to the Sovereigns, and always treating him with much friendliness. He departed after dinner, Don Martin de Noroña being sent with him, and all the knights set out with him, and went with him some distance, to do him honour. Afterwards he came to a monastery of San Antonio, near a place called Villafranca, where the Queen was residing.<sup>1</sup> The Admiral went to do her reverence and to kiss her hand, because she had sent to say that he was not to go without seeing her. The Duke<sup>2</sup> and the Marquis were with her, and the Admiral was received with much honour. He departed at night, and went to sleep at Llandra.

<sup>1</sup> The Queen of João II was his cousin Leonor, daughter of Don Fernando, Duke of Viseu, his uncle. The Queen's brother had been killed by her husband the King with his own hand, as a traitor. Her other brother, Manoel, succeeded her husband as king in 1495.

<sup>2</sup> This may have been her brother, the Duke of Bejar, afterwards King Manoel.

*Tuesday, 12th of March.*

To-day, as he was leaving Llandra to return to the caravel, an esquire of the king arrived, with an offer that if he desired to go to Castille by land, that he should be supplied with lodgings, and beasts, and all that was necessary. When the Admiral took leave of him, he ordered a mule to be supplied to him, and another for his pilot, who was with him, and he says that the pilot received a present of twenty *espadines*. He said this that the Sovereigns might know all that was done. He arrived on board the caravel that night.

*Wednesday, 13th of March.*

To-day, at 8 o'clock, with the flood tide, and the wind N.N.W., the Admiral got under weigh and made sail for Seville.

*Thursday, 14th of March.*

Yesterday, after sunset, a southerly course was steered, and before sunrise they were off Cape St. Vincent, which is in Portugal. Afterwards he shaped a course to the east for Saltes, and went on all day with little wind, "until now that the ship is off Furon".

*Friday, 15th of March.*

Yesterday, after sunset, she went on her course with little wind, and at sunrise she was off Saltes. At noon, with the tide rising, they crossed the bar of Saltes, and reached the port which they had left on the 3rd of August of the year before.<sup>1</sup> The Admiral says that so ends this journal, unless it becomes necessary to go to

<sup>1</sup> Having been absent 225 days.

Barcelona by sea, having received news that their Highnesses are in that city, to give an account of all his voyage which our Lord had permitted him to make, and saw fit to set forth in him. For, assuredly, he held with a firm and strong knowledge that his high Majesty made all things good, and that all is good except sin. Nor can he value or think of anything being done without His consent. "I know respecting this voyage", says the Admiral, "that he has miraculously shown his will, as may be seen from this journal, setting forth the numerous miracles that have been displayed in the voyage, and in me who was so long at the court of your Highnesses, working in opposition to and against the opinions of so many chief persons of your household, who were all against me, looking upon this enterprise as folly. But I hope, in our Lord, that it will be a great benefit to Christianity, for so it has ever appeared." These are the final words of the Admiral Don Cristoval Colon respecting his first voyage to the Indies and their discovery.

