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Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Göttingen  
Georg-August-Universität Göttingen  
Platz der Göttinger Sieben 1  
37073 Göttingen  
Germany  
Email: [gdz@sub.uni-goettingen.de](mailto:gdz@sub.uni-goettingen.de)

VI. *Mountains, Hills,*  
&c. need no description.

VI. *Rivers.]* A river is a considerable stream of water, issuing from one or more springs, and gliding into the sea. A small stream is called a rivulet or brook.

*Maps.]* A map is a plain figure representing the surface of the earth, or a part of it, according to the laws of perspective. On the map of any tract of country, are delineated its mountains, rivers, lakes, towns, &c. in their proper magnitudes and situations. The top of a map is always north, the bottom south, the right side east, and the left side west. From the top to the bottom are drawn meridians, or lines of longitude; and from side to side the parallels of latitude.

## DISCOVERY of AMERICA.

**I**T is believed by many, and not without some reason, that America was known to the ancients. Of this, however, history affords no certain evidence. Whatever discoveries may have been made in this western world, by Madoc Gwyneth, the Carthaginians and others, are lost to mankind. The eastern continent was the only theatre of history from the creation of the world to the year of our Lord 1492.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS, a native of Genoa, has deservedly the honour of having first discovered America. From a long and close application to the study of geography and navigation, to which his genius was naturally inclined, Columbus had obtained a knowledge of the true figure of the earth, much superior to the general notions of the age in which he lived. In order that the terraqueous globe might be properly balanced, and the lands and seas proportioned to each other, he was led to conceive that another continent was necessary. Other reasons induced him to believe that this continent was connected with the East-Indies.

As early as the year 1474, he communicated his ingenious

ingenious theory to Paul, a physician of Florence, eminent for his knowledge of cosmography. He warmly approved it, suggested several facts in confirmation of it, and encouraged Columbus in an undertaking so laudable, and which promised so much benefit to the world.

Having fully satisfied himself with respect to the truth of his system, he became impatient to reduce it to practice. The first step towards this, was to secure the patronage of some of the European powers. Accordingly he laid his scheme before the senate of Genoa, making his native country the first tender of his services. They rejected his proposal, as the dream of a chimerical projector. He next applied to John II. king of Portugal, a monarch of an enterprising genius, and no incompetent judge of naval affairs. The king listened to him in the most gracious manner, and referred the consideration of his plan to a number of eminent cosmographers, whom he was accustomed to consult in matters of this kind. These men, from mean and interested views, started innumerable objections, and asked many captious questions, on purpose to betray Columbus into a full explanation of his system. Having done this, they advised the king to dispatch a vessel, secretly, in order to attempt the proposed discovery, by following exactly the course which Columbus had pointed out. John, forgetting on this occasion the sentiments becoming a monarch, meanly adopted their perfidious counsel.

Upon discovering this dishonourable transaction, Columbus, with an indignation natural to a noble and ingenuous mind, quitted the kingdom, and landed in Spain in 1484.

Here he presented his scheme, in person, to Ferdinand and Isabella, who at that time governed the united kingdoms of Castile and Arragon. They injudiciously submitted it to the examination of unskilful judges, who, ignorant of the principles on which Columbus founded his theory, rejected it as absurd, upon the credit of a maxim under which the unenterprising, in

every

every age, shelter themselves, "That it is presumptuous in any person, to suppose that he alone possesses knowledge superiour to all the rest of mankind united." They maintained, likewise, that if there were really any such countries as Columbus pretended, they would not have remained so long concealed; nor would the wisdom and sagacity of former ages have left the glory of this discovery to an obscure Genoese pilot.

Meanwhile, Columbus, who had experienced the uncertain issue of applications to kings, had taken the precaution of sending into England his brother Bartholomew, to whom he had fully communicated his ideas, to negotiate the matter with Henry VII. On his voyage to England, he fell into the hands of pirates, who stripped him of every thing, and detained him a prisoner several years. At length he made his escape, and arrived at London in extreme indigence, where he employed himself some time in selling maps. With his gains he purchased a decent dress; and in person presented to the king the proposals which his brother had entrusted to his management. Notwithstanding Henry's excessive caution and parsimony, he received the proposals of Columbus with more approbation than any monarch to whom they had been presented.

After several unsuccessful applications to other European powers of less note, he was induced, by the intreaty and interposition of Percez, a man of considerable learning, and of some credit with queen Isabella, to apply again to the court of Spain. This application, after much warm debate and several mortifying repulses, proved successful; not, however, without the most vigorous and persevering exertions of Quintanilla and Santangel, two vigilant and discerning patrons of Columbus, whose meritorious zeal in promoting this grand design, entitles their names to an honourable place in history. It was, however, to queen Isabella, the munificent patroness of his noble and generous designs, that Columbus ultimately owed his success.

Having

Having thus obtained the assistance of the court, a squadron of three small vessels was fitted out, victualled for twelve months, and furnished with ninety men. The whole expense did not exceed £.4000. Of this squadron Columbus was appointed admiral.

On the 3d of August, 1492, he left Spain in the presence of a crowd of spectators, who united their supplications to Heaven for his success. He steered directly for the Canary Islands, where he arrived and refitted, as well as he could, his crazy and ill-appointed fleet. Hence he sailed, September 6th, a due western course into an unknown ocean.

Columbus now found a thousand unforeseen hardships to encounter, which demanded all his judgment, fortitude and address to surmount. Besides the difficulties, unavoidable from the nature of his undertaking, he had to struggle with those which arose from the ignorance and timidity of the people under his command. On the 14th of September he was astonished to find that the magnetick needle in their compass, did not point exactly to the polar star, but varied toward the west; and as they proceeded, this variation increased. This new phenomenon filled the companions of Columbus with terror. Nature itself seemed to have sustained a change; and the only guide they had left, to point them to a safe retreat from an unbounded and trackless ocean, was about to fail them. Columbus, with no less quickness than ingenuity, assigned a reason for this appearance, which, though it did not satisfy himself, seemed so plausible to them, that it dispelled their fears, or silenced their murmurs.

The sailors, always discontented, and alarmed at their distance from land, several times mutinied, threatened once to throw their admiral overboard, and repeatedly insisted on his returning. Columbus, on these trying occasions, displayed all that cool deliberation, prudence, soothing address and firmness, which were necessary for a person engaged in a discovery, the most interesting to the world of any ever undertaken by man.

It was on the 11th of October, 1492, at ten o'clock

in the evening, that Columbus, from the fore-castle, descried a light. At two o'clock next morning, Roderick Triana discovered land. The joyful tidings were quickly communicated to the other ships. The morning light confirmed the report ; and the several crews immediately began *Te Deum*, as a hymn of thanksgiving to God, and mingled their praises with tears of joy, and transports of congratulation. Columbus, richly dressed, with a drawn sword in his hand, was the first European who set foot in the *New World* which he had discovered. The island on which he thus first landed, he called St. Salvador. It is one of that large cluster of islands known by the name of the Lucaya or Bahama isles. He afterwards touched at several of the islands in the same cluster, inquiring every where for gold, which he thought was the only object of commerce worth his attention. In steering southward he discovered the islands of Cuba and Hispaniola, abounding in all the necessaries of life, and inhabited by a humane and hospitable people.

On his return he was overtaken with a storm, which had nearly proved fatal to his ships and their crews. At a crisis when all was given up for lost, Columbus had presence of mind enough to retire into his cabin, and to write upon parchment a short account of his voyage. This he wrapped in an oiled cloth, which he inclosed in a cake of wax, put it into a tight cask, and threw it into the sea, in hopes that some fortunate accident might preserve a deposit of so much importance to the world. He arrived at Palos in Spain, whence he had sailed the year before, on the 15th of March, 1493. He was welcomed with all the acclamations which the populace are ever ready to bestow on great and glorious characters ; and the court received him with marks of the greatest respect.

In September of this year, (1493) Columbus sailed upon his second voyage to America ; during the performance of which, he discovered the islands of Dominica, Marigalante, Gaudaloupe, Montserrat, Antigua, Porto-Rico and Jamaica ; and returned to Spain 1496.

In 1498 he sailed a third time for America; and on the 1st of August discovered the CONTINENT. He then coasted along westward, making other discoveries for 200 leagues, to Cape Vela, from which he crossed over to Hispaniola, where he was seized by a new Spanish Governour, and sent home in chains.

In 1502 Columbus made his fourth voyage to Hispaniola; thence he went over to the continent—discovered the bay of Honduras; thence sailed along the main shore easterly 200 leagues, to Cape Gracias a Dios, Veragua, Porto Bello and the Gulf of Darien.

The jealous and avaricious Spaniards, not immediately receiving those golden advantages which they had promised, and lost to the feelings of humanity and gratitude, suffered their esteem and admiration of Columbus to degenerate into ignoble envy.

The latter part of his life was made wretched by the cruel persecutions of his enemies. Queen Isabella, his friend and patroness, was no longer alive to afford him relief. He sought redress from Ferdinand, but in vain. Disgusted with the ingratitude of a monarch, whom he had served with so much fidelity and success, exhausted with hardships, and broken with the infirmities which these brought upon him, Columbus ended his active and useful life at Valladolid, on the 20th of May, 1506, in the 59th year of his age. He died with a composure of mind suited to the magnanimity which distinguished his character, and with sentiments of piety becoming that supreme respect for religion which he manifested in every occurrence of his life. He was grave, though courteous in his deportment, circumspect in his words and actions, irreproachable in his morals, and exemplary in all the duties of his religion. The Court of Spain were so just to his memory, notwithstanding their ingratitude towards him during his life, that they buried him magnificently in the Cathedral of Seville, and erected a tomb over him with this inscription,

COLUMBUS has given a NEW WORLD  
To the KINGDOMS of CASTILE and LEON.

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