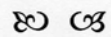
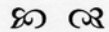


AMERICAN JOURNEYS COLLECTION



Narrative of the Third Voyage
of Columbus as Contained
in Las Casas's History

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INTRODUCTION

THE narrative given here of the third voyage of Columbus in which he discovered the mainland of South America is taken from the *Historia de las Indias* of Las Casas. In preparing his History Las Casas had the use of a larger body of Columbus's papers than has come down to us. Among these papers was a journal of this third voyage which was incorporated in a condensed form by Las Casas in his History, just as he did in the case of the journals of the first and second voyages. This narrative is found in the second volume of the *Historia de las Indias*, pp. 220–317. The translation is, as is mentioned in the preface to this volume, that given in John Boyd Thacher's *Christopher Columbus*.

In certain places the text differs slightly from that in the printed edition of Las Casas, as Mr. Thacher followed the critical text of Cesare de Lollis prepared for the *Raccolta Colombiana* by a collation of the manuscript in the Archives at Madrid with the recently discovered autograph manuscript of Las Casas. Mr. Thacher, following Lollis, omitted passages that were obviously comments on the text by Las Casas. These have been supplied either from Mr. Thacher's notes or translated by the editor from the printed text. The editor has gone over the whole translation and can testify to its exceptional accuracy. A few slight changes have been made in the wording for the sake of greater clearness or exactness.

Columbus described this voyage in a letter to Ferdinand and Isabella. This letter is included in Major's *Select Letters of Columbus* and in P. L. Ford's *Writings of Columbus*. This

letter is of great importance in the study of Columbus's geographical ideas. Other contemporary accounts of this voyage are contained in Ferdinand Columbus's *Historie*, the life of his father, where the journal abridged by Las Casas is still further condensed, in Peter Martyr's *De Rebus Oceanicis*, Dec. I., lib. VI., and in the letter of Simone Verde and the three letters of Angelo Trivigiano which will be found in HARRISSE, *Christophe Colomb*, II. 95-98 and 119-123.

E. G. B.

NARRATIVE OF THE THIRD VOYAGE OF
COLUMBUS AS CONTAINED IN LAS
CASAS'S HISTORY

May 30–August 31, 1498

HE started then (our First Admiral),¹ “in the name of the Most Holy Trinity” (as he says and as he was always accustomed to say) from the port of San Lucar de Barrameda, Wednesday, May 30, 1498, with the intention of discovering new land not yet discovered, with his six ships, “greatly fatigued,” he says, “with my voyage, since as I was hoping for some quietude, when I left the Indies, I experienced double hardships;” they being the result of the labors, new obstacles and difficulties with which he obtained the funds for his starting upon the expedition and the annoyances in connection therewith received from the royal officials and the hindrance and the evil reports the people around about the Sovereigns gave concerning the affairs in the Indies, wherefore it appeared to him that what he already had done was not sufficient but that he must renew his labors to gain new credit. And because war had then broken out with France,² he had news of a French fleet which was waiting for the Admiral beyond the Cape of St. Vincent, to capture him. On this

¹ *I.e.*, the first Admiral of the Ocean and the Indies where Las Casas was when he was writing.

² This clause is probably an explanatory remark by Las Casas. It is misleading. The war in Naples growing out of the invasion of Italy by Charles VIII. of France, in which Ferdinand had taken an active part against the French, had been brought to a close so far as concerned France and Spain by a truce in March, 1497. The treaty of peace was signed August 5, 1498.

account he decided to steal away as they say and make a detour, directing his course straight to the island of Madeira.

He arrived at the island of Puerto Sancto, Thursday, June 7, where he stopped to take wood, water and supplies and to hear mass, and he found all the island disturbed and all the farms, goods and flocks guarded, fearing that the new-comers might be French; and then that night he left for the island of Madeira and arrived there the following Sunday, June 10. He was very well received in the town¹ and with much rejoicing, because he was well known there, having been a citizen thereof during some time.² He remained there six days, providing himself fully with water and wood and the other necessities for his journey.

Saturday, June 16, he left the island of Madeira with his six ships and arrived at the island of Gomera³ the following Tuesday. At this island he found a French corsair with a French vessel and two large ships which the corsair had taken from the Castilians, and when the Frenchman saw the six vessels of the Admiral he left his anchors and one vessel and fled with the other vessel. The Admiral sent a ship after him and when the six Spaniards who were being carried away on the captured ship saw this ship coming to their aid, they attacked six Frenchmen who were guarding them and by force they placed them below decks and thus brought them back.

Here in the island of Gomera the Admiral determined to send three ships directly to the island of Española, so that, if he should be detained here, they might give news of him and cheer and console the Christians with the supplies: and principally that they might give joy to his brothers, the Adelan-

¹ Funchal.

² This positive assertion that Columbus had lived in Funchal, Madeira, has been overlooked by Vignaud and HARRISSE. Vignaud, *Études Critiques sur la Vie de Colomb avant ses Découvertes* (Paris, 1905), p. 443, note 9, rejects as unauthenticated the tradition that Columbus lived in Madeira, without adequate grounds it seems to me. Diego Columbus told Las Casas in 1519 that he was born in the neighboring island of Puerto Santo and that his father had lived there. Las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, I. 54. This passage is not noted by Vignaud.

³ One of the Canary Islands.

tado¹ and Don Diego, who were very desirous of hearing from him. He named Pedro de Arana, a native of Cordova, as captain of one ship, — a very honorable and prudent man, whom I knew very well, brother of the mother of Don Ferdinand Columbus,² the second son of the Admiral, and cousin of that Arana who remained in the fortress with the 38 men whom the Admiral on his return found dead. The other captain of the second ship was called Alonso Sanchez de Carvajal, governor of the city of Bagea, an honorable gentleman. The third captain for the remaining ship was Juan Antonio Columbo,³ a Genoese, a relation of the Admiral, a very capable and prudent man and one of authority, with whom I had frequent conversation.

He gave them suitable instructions, in which instructions he ordered that, one week one captain, and another week another, each by turns should be captain-general of all the ships, as regarded the navigation and the placing of the night lantern, which is a lighted lantern placed in the stern of the ship in order that the other ships may know and follow where the captain guides. He ordered them to go to the west, quarter south-west,⁴ for 850 leagues and told them that then they would arrive at the island of Dominica. From Dominica they should go west-north-west and they would then reach the island of Sant Juan,⁵ and it would be the southern part of it, because that was the direct way to go to the New Isabella,⁶

¹ The Adelantado was Bartholomew Columbus. The title Adelantado was given in Spain to the military and political governors of border provinces. In this use it was transplanted to America in the earlier days. Cf. Moses, *The Establishment of Spanish Rule in America*, pp. 68-69.

² Beatriz Enriquez.

³ This Juan Antonio Columbo seems to have been a first cousin of the admiral. Cf. Markham, *Christopher Columbus*, pp. 2 and 187. It is to be noted that he retained in Spain his family name and did not follow the discoverer in changing his name to Colon. On this change of name, see above, p. 77, note 2.

⁴ *I.e.*, west by south.

⁵ Porto Rico.

⁶ Founded in the summer of 1496 by Bartholomew Columbus in accordance with the directions of the Admiral to establish a new settlement on the south side of the island. Las Casas, II. 136.

which now is Santo Domingo. Having passed the island of Sant Juan, they should leave the island of Mona to the north and from there they should make for the point of this Española,¹ which he called Sant Raphael, which now is the Cabo del Engaño, from there to Saona, which he says makes a good harbor between it and this Española. Seven leagues farther there is another island, which is called Santa Catherina, and from there to the New Isabella, which is the port of Santo Domingo, the distance is 25 leagues. And he told the captains that wherever they should arrive and land they should purchase all that they needed by barter and that for the little they might give the Indians, although they might be the canibales,² who are said to eat human flesh, they would obtain what they wished and the Indians would give them all that they had; and if they should undertake to procure things by force, the Indians would conceal themselves and remain hostile. He says further in the instructions that he was going by the Cape Verde Islands (which he says were called in ancient times Gorgodes³ or according to others Hesperides) and that he was going in the name of the Holy Trinity with the intention of navigating to the south of these islands so as to arrive below the equinoctial line and to follow the course to the west until this island of Española should lie to the northwest, to see if there are islands or lands. "Our Lord," he says, "guides me and gives me things which may serve Him and the King and Queen, our Lords, and which may be for the honor of the Christians, for I believe that no

¹ "This Española," so frequently repeated, is one of the indications that Las Casas was writing in Española.

² *Canibales*, here used still as a tribal name equivalent to Caribbees.

³ The correct form of this name is Gargades. Columbus's knowledge of them was derived indirectly from Pliny's *Natural History*, book vi., ch. xxxvii., through Cardinal d'Ailly's *Imago Mundi*. Cf. Columbus's marginal note to ch. xxxxi. of that work: "*De situ Gorgodum insule nunc de Capite Viride vel Antonii dicitur.*" *Raccolta Colombiana*, parte I., vol. II., p. 395. According to Pliny's location of them they were probably the Canaries. Pliny's knowledge of the location of the Hesperides is naturally vague, but his text would support their identification with the Cape Verde Islands.

one has ever gone this way and that this sea is entirely unknown.”¹ And here the Admiral finished his instructions.

Having then taken water and wood and other provisions, especially cheese, of which there are many and good ones there, the Admiral made sail with his six ships on Thursday, June 21, towards the island of Hierro,² which is distant from Gomera about fifteen leagues, and of the seven Canaries is the one farthest to the west. Passing it, the Admiral took his course with one ship and two caravels for the islands of Cape Verde, and dismissed the other three ships in the name of the Holy Trinity; and he says that he entreated the Holy Trinity to care for him and for all of them; and at the setting of the sun they separated and the three ships took their course for this island. Here the Admiral makes mention to the Sovereigns of the agreement they had made with the King of Portugal that the Portuguese should not go to the westward of the Azores and Cape Verde Islands, and also mentions how the Sovereigns sent for him that he should be present at the meetings in regard to the partition,³ and that he could not go on account of the grave illness which he had incurred in the discovery of the mainland of the Indies, that is to say of Cuba, which he always regarded as the mainland even until the present time as he could not circumnavigate it. He adds further that then occurred the death of Don Juan, before he could carry out the matter.⁴

¹ In this Columbus was mistaken, although he had no means of knowing it in 1498. Vasco da Gama had sailed in that sea the preceding summer. Cf. Bourne, *Spain in America*, p. 72.

² Ferro.

³ August 16, 1494, the sovereigns included in the letter despatched to Columbus by Torres the essential articles of the Treaty of Tordesillas, signed June 7, 1494, and asked him if he could not co-operate in locating the Demarcation Line. Navarrete, *Coleccion de Viages*, II. 155; HARRISSE, *Diplomatic History of America*, pp. 80-81.

⁴ Columbus's illness began in September, 1494, and it was five months before he was fully recovered. Ferdinand Columbus, *Historie*, ed. 1867, p. 177. The death of Prince John took place October 4, 1497. No actual scientific conference to locate the line took place till that at Badajoz in 1524. See Bourne, *Essays in Historical Criticism*, pp. 205-211.

Then the Admiral continuing on his way arrived at the Cape Verde Islands, which according to what he says, have a false name, because he never saw anything green but all things dry and sterile. The first thing he saw was the island of La Sal, Wednesday, June 27: and it is a small island. From there he went to another which is called Buenavista and is very sterile, where he anchored in a bay, and near it is a very small island. To this island come all the lepers of Portugal to be cured and there are not more than six or seven houses on it. The Admiral ordered the boats to go to land to provide themselves with salt and flesh, because there are a great number of goats on the island. There came to the ships a steward¹ to whom that island belonged, named Roderigo Alonso, notary public of the exchequer² of the King of Portugal, who offered to the Admiral what there was on the island of which he might be in need. The Admiral thanked him and ordered that he should be given some supplies from Castile, which he enjoyed very much.

Here he relates how the lepers came there to be cured because of the great abundance of turtles on that island, which commonly are as large as shields. By eating the flesh and constantly bathing in the blood of these turtles, the lepers become cured.³ The turtles in infinite number come there three months in the year, June, July, and August, from the mainland, which is Ethiopia,⁴ to lay eggs in the sand and with the claws and legs they scratch places in the sand and spawn

¹ *Mayordomo*.

² *Escribano de la hacienda*. In 1497 Rodrigo Alfonso, a member of the king's council, was granted the northern of the two captaincies into which São Thiago was divided and also the wild cattle on the island of Boavista (Buenavista in Spanish). D'Avezac, *Iles de l'Afrique* (Paris, 1848), p. 218. The word *mayordomo*, translated "steward," here stands for the high Portuguese title of honor *Mordomo mór da Casa Real*, a title in its origin similar to the *majores domus* or mayors of the palace of the early French kings. *Escribano de la hacienda del Rey* means rather the king's treasurer.

³ This account of Boavista and its lepers is not noticed in the histories of the Cape Verde Islands so far as I know.

⁴ From Pliny's time through the Middle Ages the name Ethiopia embraced all tropical Africa. He calls the Atlantic in the tropics the "Ethiopian Sea." Pliny's *Natural History*, book vi., chs. xxxv. and xxxvi.

more than five hundred eggs, as large as those of a hen except that they have not a hard shell but a tender membrane which covers the yolk, like the membrane which covers the yolk of the hen's egg after taking off the hard shell. They cover the eggs in the sand as a person would do, and there the sun hatches them, and the little live turtles come out and then run in search of the sea as if they had come out of it alive. They take the turtles there in this manner: At night with lights which are torches of dry wood, they go searching for the track of the turtle which is easily traced, and find the turtle tired and sleeping. They come up quickly and turn it over with the belly up and leave it, sure that it cannot turn itself back, and go in search of another. And the Indians do the same in the sea; if they come upon one asleep and turn it over it remains safe for them to take it whenever they wish. The Indians, however, have another greater device for taking them on the sea, which will be explained God willing when we give a description of Cuba.¹

The healthy persons on that island of Buenavista who lead a laborious life were six or seven residents who have no water except brackish water from wells and whose employment is to kill the big goats and salt the skins and send them to Portugal in the caravels which come there for them, of which in one year they kill so many and send so many skins that they are worth 2000 ducats to the notary public, to whom the island belonged. Such a great multitude of goats, male and female, have been grown there, from only eight original head. Those who live there neither eat bread nor drink wine during four or five months, nor anything else except goat flesh or fish or turtles. All this they told to the Admiral.

He left there Saturday, June 30, at night for the island of Santiago, where he arrived on Sunday at the hour of vespers, because it is distant 28 leagues: and this is the principal one of the Cape Verde Islands. He wished to take from this island a herd of black cattle in order to carry them to Española as

¹ A remark by Las Casas, of which many are interspersed with the material from Columbus's Journal of this voyage.

the Sovereigns had ordered, and he was there eight days and could not get them; and because the island is very unhealthy since men are burned with heat there and his people commenced to fall ill, he decided to leave it. The Admiral says again that he wishes to go to the south, because he intends with the aid of the Most Holy Trinity, to find islands and lands, that God may be served and their Highnesses and Christianity may have pleasure, and that he wishes to see what was the idea of King Don Juan of Portugal, who said that there was mainland to the south: and because of this, he says that he had a contention with the Sovereigns of Castile, and finally the Admiral says that it was concluded that the King of Portugal should have 370 leagues to the west from the islands of the Azores¹ and Cape Verde, from north to south, from pole to pole. And the Admiral says further that the said King Don Juan was certain that within those limits famous lands and things must be found.² Certain principal inhabitants of the island of Santiago came to see them and they said that to the south-west of the island of Huego, which is one of the Cape Verde Islands distant 12 leagues from this, may be seen an island, and that the King Don Juan was greatly inclined to send to make discoveries to the south-west, and that canoes had been found which start from the coast of Guinea and navigate to the west with merchandise. Here the Admiral says again as if he was speaking with the Sovereigns, — “He that is Three and One guides me by His pity and mercy that I may serve Him and give great pleasure to your Highnesses and to all Christianity, as was done in the discovery of the Indies which resounded throughout all the world.”

¹ The Tordesillas line was 370 leagues west of the Cape Verde Islands alone.

² This reason for the desire of King John of Portugal to have the Demarcation Line moved further west has escaped all the writers on the subject. If Columbus reported the king's ideas correctly, we may have here a clue to one of the reasons why Cabral went so far to the southwest in 1500 that he discovered Brazil when on his voyage to India, and perhaps also one of the reasons why Vasco da Gama struck off so boldly into the South Atlantic. Cf. Bourne, *Spain in America*, pp. 72, 74.

Wednesday, July 4, he ordered sail made from that island in which he says that since he arrived there he never saw the sun or the stars, but that the heavens were covered with such a thick mist that it seemed they could cut it with a knife and the heat was so very intense that they were tormented, and he ordered the course laid to the way of the south-west, which is the route leading from these islands to the south, in the name, he says, of the Holy and Indivisible Trinity, because then he would be on a parallel with the land of the sierra of Loa¹ and cape of Sancta Ana in Guinea, which is below the equinoctial line, where he says that below that line of the world are found more gold and things of value; and that after, he would navigate, the Lord pleasing, to the west, and from there would go to this Española, in which route he would prove the theory of the King John aforesaid; and that he thought to investigate the report of the Indians of this Española who said that there had come to Española from the south and south-east, a black people who have the tops of their spears made of a metal which they call *guanin*, of which he had sent samples to the Sovereigns to have them assayed, when it was found that of 32 parts, 18 were of gold, 6 of silver and 8 of copper.

Following this course to the south-west he commenced to find grasses like those encountered in the direct way to these Indies; and the Admiral says here that after having gone 480 miles which make 120 leagues, that at nightfall he took the latitude and found that the North Star was in five degrees. Yet it seems to me that he must have gone more than 200 leagues, and that the text is in error because it is necessary to traverse more than 200 leagues on that course from the Cape Verde Islands and Santiago whence he started to put a ship within five degrees of the equator, as any sailor will observe who will judge it by the map and by the latitude. And he says that there, Friday, July 13, the wind deserted him and he entered into heat so great and so ardent that he feared the ships would take fire and the people perish. The ceasing

¹ Sierra Leone.

of the wind and coming of the excessive and consuming heat was so unexpected and sudden that there was no person who dared to descend below to care for the butts of wine and water, which swelled, breaking the hoops of the casks; the wheat burned like fire; the pork and salted meat roasted and putrefied. This ardent heat lasted eight days. The first day was clear with a sun which burned them. God sent them less suffering because the seven following days it rained and was clouded; however with all this, they could not find any hope of saving themselves from perishing and from being burned, and if the other seven days had been like the first, clear and with the sun, the Admiral says here that it would have been impossible for a man of them to have escaped alive. And thus they were divinely succored by the coming of some showers and by the days being cloudy. He determined from this, if God should give him wind in order to escape from this suffering, to run to the west some days, and then if he found himself in any moderation of temperature to return to the south, which was the way he desired to follow. "May our Lord," says he, "guide me and give me grace that I may serve Him, and bring pleasing news to your Highnesses." He says he remembered, being in this burning latitude, that when he came to the Indies in the past voyages, always when he reached 100 leagues toward the west from the Azores Islands he found a change in the temperature from north to south, and for this he wished to go to the west to reach the said place.

The Admiral must have been on that same parallel or rather meridian, on which Hanno the Carthaginian was with his fleet, who departing from Cadiz and going out into the Ocean to the left¹ of Lybia or Ethiopia after thirty days' voyaging toward the south, among other distresses that he suffered the heat and fire were so intense that it seemed as if they were roasting; they heard such thundering and lightning that their ears pained them and their eyes were blinded and it appeared no otherwise than as if flames of fire fell from heaven. Amianus

¹ As one faces north.

narrates this — a Greek historian, a follower of the truth, and very famous—in the *History of India* near the end, and Ludovico Celio quotes it in Book I., ch. xxii., of the *Lectiones Antiquas*.¹ Returning to these days of toil:—

Saturday, which they counted July 14, the Guards² being on the left hand, he says the *North* was in seven degrees: he saw black and white jays,³ which are birds that do not go far from land, and from this he considered it a sign of land. He was sick at this point of the journey, from gout and from not sleeping; but because of this he did not cease to watch and work with great care and diligence.

Sunday and Monday, they saw the same birds and more swallows, and some fish appeared which they called *botos*,⁴ which are little smaller than great calves, and which have the head very blunt. The Admiral says here incidentally that the Azores Islands which in ancient times were called Case-térides,⁵ were situated at the end of the fifth clime.⁶

Thursday, July 19, there was such intense and ardent heat that they thought the men and ships would burn, but as our Lord at sight of the afflictions which He gives is accustomed

¹ On Hanno's voyage see *Encyclopædia Britannica* under his name. There was no Greek historian Amianus; the name should be Arrianus, who wrote the history of Alexander the Great's expedition to India and a history of India. The reference is to the latter work, ch. XLIII., sects. 11, 12.

Ludovico Celio: Ludovico Ricchieri, born about 1450. He was for a time a professor in the Academy at Milan. He took the Latin name Rhodiginus from his birthplace Rovigo, and sometimes his name appears in full as Ludovicus Coelius Richerius Rhodiginus. His *Antiquarum Lectionum Libri XVI.* was published at Venice in 1516, at Paris in 1517, and in an extended form at Basel, 1542. It is a collection of passages from the classical authors relating to all branches of knowledge, with a critical commentary.

² The Guards, "the two brightest stars in Ursa Minor." (Tolhausen.)

³ *Grajos*. The meaning given in the dictionaries for *grajo* is "daw."

⁴ This word, as a name of a fish, is Portuguese. It means "blunted."

⁵ See Pliny, *Natural History*, book iv., ch. xxxvi. The Cassiterides are commonly identified with the Scilly Islands.

⁶ The fifth clime or climate is a term in Ptolemy's geographical system. The fifth climate was a strip 255 Roman miles in width lying between 41° and 45° north latitude. Cf. *Raccolta Columbiana*, Parte I., Tomo 2, p. 293. The latitude of the Azores is about 37°-40°.

by interfering to the contrary to alleviate them, He succored him by His mercy at the end of seven or eight days, giving him very good weather to get away from that fire; with which good weather he navigated towards the west 17 days, always intending to return to the south, and place himself, as above said, in such a region, that this Española should be to the north or *septentrion*, where he thought he must find land before or beyond the said place: and thus he intended to repair the ships which were already opening from the past heat, and the supplies, of which he had a large quantity, because of the necessity of taking them to this island and the great difficulty in getting them from Castile, and which were becoming worthless and damaged.

Sunday, July 22, in the afternoon, as they were going with good weather, they saw innumerable birds pass from the west-south-west to the north-east: he says that they were a great sign of land. They saw the same the Monday following and the days after, on one of which days a pelican came to the ship of the Admiral, and many others appeared another day, and there were other birds which are called "frigate pelicans."¹

On the seventeenth day of the good weather which they were experiencing, the Admiral was hoping to see land, because of the said signs of the birds, and as he did not see it Monday, or the next day, Tuesday, July 31, as they lacked water, he decided to change his route, and this was to the west, and to go to the right, and make for the island of Dominica, or some of the islands of the Canibales, which to-day are called the Caribes, and thus he ordered the course to the north, quarter north-east, and went that way until midday. "But as His Divine Majesty," he says, "has always used mercy with me, a sailor from Guelva,² my servant, who was called Alonso Pérez, by chance and conjecture ascended to the round top and saw land to the west, and he was 15 leagues from it, and that part which appeared were three rocks or

¹ The names are *alcatraz* and *rabihorcado*. See above, note to Journal of First Voyage, p. 98, note 1, and p. 103, note 1.

² Huelva, near Palos.

mountains." These are his words. He named this land "The Island of the Trinity,"¹ because he had determined that the first land he discovered should be named thus. "And it pleased our Lord," he says, "by His Exalted Majesty, that the first lands seen were three rocks all united at the base, I say three mountains, all at one time and in one glance." "His High Power by His pity guides me," he says, "in such a manner, that He may have much service, and your Highnesses much pleasure: as it is certain that the discovery of this land in this place was as great a miracle as the discovery of the first voyage." These are his words. He gave infinite thanks to God as was his custom, and all praised the divine goodness, and with great rejoicings and merriment the *Salve Regina*² was sung with other devout songs which contain praises of God and our Lady, according to the custom of sailors, at least our sailors of Spain, who in tribulations and rejoicings are accustomed to say them.

Here he makes a digression and recapitulation of the services he has rendered the Sovereigns, and of the will he always had keen to serve them, "not as false tongues," says he, "and as false witnesses from envy said."³ And surely, I believe that such as these God took for instruments to chasten him because he loved him since many without cause and without object maligned him and disturbed these efforts, and brought it about that the Sovereigns grew lukewarm and wearied of expense and of keeping up their attachment and expectation that these Indies were likely to be of profit, at least that it should be more than the expenses with increase that came to them. He repeats a mention of the heat he suffered, and how they were nevertheless now going by the same parallel, except they had drawn near to the land when he ordered the course directed to the west, because the land emits coolness from its

¹ Trinidad.

² *Salve Regina*, one of the great hymns to the Virgin in the Catholic service. "The antiphon said after Lauds and Compline from Trinity Sunday to Advent." Addis and Arnold, *Catholic Dictionary*.

³ *I.e.*, that his will was not to serve the sovereigns but to advance himself.

fountains and rivers, and by its waters causes moderation and softness; and because of this he says the Portuguese who go to Guinea which is below the equinoctial line are able to navigate because they go along the coast. He says further, that now he was in the same parallel from which the King of Portugal brought gold, from which he believed that whoever would search those seas would find things of value. He confesses here that there is no man in the world for whom God has shown so much grace, and entreats Him that He will furnish something from which their Highnesses and Christianity may receive great pleasure; and he says that, although he should not find any other thing of benefit except these beautiful lands, which are so green and full of groves and palms, that they are superior to the gardens of Valencia in May, they would deserve to be highly valued. And in this he speaks the truth and later on he will place a still higher value on it with much reason. He says that it is a miraculous thing that the Sovereigns of Castile should have lands so near the equinoctial as 6 degrees, Ysabela being distant from the said line 24 degrees.

Having seen the land then to the great consolation of all, he left the course which he desired to follow in search of some of the islands of the Canibales in order to provide himself with water, of which he was greatly in need, and made a short excursion towards the land which he had seen, towards a cape which appeared to be to the west, which he called "Cabo de la Galera,"¹ from a great rock which it had, which from a distance appeared like a galley sailing. They arrived there at the hour of compline.² They saw a good harbor but it was not deep, and the Admiral regretted that they could not enter it. He pursued his course to the point he had seen, which was seven leagues toward the south. He did not find a harbor. On all the coast he found that the groves reached to the sea, the most beautiful coast that eyes ever saw. He says that this island must be large; a canoe appeared at a distance

¹ Cape of the Galley. To-day, Cape Galeota.

² The last of the canonical hours of prayer, after sunset or early evening.

filled with people who must have been fishing, and made towards the land to some houses which appeared there. The land was very cultivated and high and beautiful.

Wednesday, August 1, he ran down the coast toward the west, five leagues, and arrived at a point, where he anchored with all three ships, and took water from fountains and streams. They found signs of people, instruments for fishing, signs of goats, but they were only of deer of which there are many in those lands. He says that they found aloes and great groves of palms, and very beautiful lands: "for which infinite thanks may be given to the Holy Trinity." These are his words. He saw much tilled land along the coast and many settlements. He saw from there towards the south, another island, which is distant more than 20 leagues. (And he might well say five hundred since this is the mainland which, as he saw a part of it, seemed to him to be an island); to this he gave the name of "Ysla Sancta." He says here that he would not take any Indians in order not to disturb the land. From the Cape of Galera to the point where he took the water, which I believed he named "Punta de la Playa," he says that having been a great way, and running east-west (he should say that he went from east to west) there was no port in all that way, but the land was well populated and tilled, and with many trees and thick groves, the most beautiful thing in the world, the trees reaching to the sea. Here it may be remarked that when the trees of the country grow down to the water's edge it indicates that such a coast is not exposed to high seas, because when the coast is so exposed trees do not grow down to the water, but there is an open sandy shore. The current, *surgente*, which is that which comes down, and the *montante*, which is that which ascends from below, he says appear to be great. The island which lies to the south he says is very large, because he was already going along with the mainland in sight although he did not think so, but that it was an island.

He says that he came to search for a harbor along the island of Trinidad, Thursday, August 2, and arrived at the cape of

the island of Trinidad, which is a point, to which he gave the name "Punta del Arenal,"¹ which is to the west: so that he had in a sense already entered in the gulf which he called "de la Ballena,"² where he underwent great danger of losing his ships, and he as yet did not know that he was becoming encircled by land as will be seen. This gulf is a wonderful thing and dangerous on account of the very great river that flows into it which is called the Yuyapari,³ the last syllable long. It comes from more than 300 and I believe more than 400 leagues, and it has been traversed for 300 leagues up stream partly with a ship, partly with brigantines and partly with large canoes. And since the force of the water is very great at all times and particularly so in this season of July and August in which the Admiral was there, which is the season of high water as in Castile in October and November, and since it wants naturally to get to the sea, and the sea with its great mass under the same natural impulse wants to break upon the land, and since this gulf is enclosed by the mainland on one side and on the other by the island of Trinidad, and since it is very narrow for such a violent force of contrary waters, it must needs be that when they meet a terrific struggle takes place and a conflict most perilous for those that find themselves in that place.

He says here that the island of Trinidad is large, because from the Cape of Galera to the Point of Arenal, where he was at the present time, he says it is 35 leagues. I say that it is more than 45, as he that desires may see by the charts, although now those names are not written on the charts as they have been forgotten, and to understand the matter they must consider the course the Admiral pursued until he arrived there, and at what point he first saw land, and from there where he went till he stopped, and in that way, one will find out what he called the Cape of Galera and what the Point

¹ Sandy Point.

² Of the whale.

³ One of the native names of the Orinoco, here referring to one of the northern branch mouths. A detailed map of the region is given in Winsor's *Columbus*, p. 353.

of Arenal. It is not a matter of surprise that the Admiral did not make an accurate estimate of the leagues of the island because he went along it piece by piece.

He ordered that his people should land on this Point of Arenal, the end of the island toward the west, to enjoy themselves and obtain recreation, because they had become wearied and fatigued; who found the land very much trampled by deer, although they believed they were goats. This Thursday, August 2, a large canoe came from towards the east, in which came twenty-five men, and having arrived at the distance of a lombard shot, they ceased to row, and cried out many words. The Admiral believed, and I also believe, that they were asking what people they were, as the others of the Indies were accustomed to do, to which they did not respond in words, but by showing them certain small boxes of brass and other shining things, in order that they should come to the ship, coaxing them with motions of the body and signs. They approached somewhat, and afterwards became terrified by the ship; and as they would not approach, the Admiral ordered a tambourine player to come up to the poop deck of the ship and that the young boys of the ship should dance, thinking to please them. But they did not understand it thus, but rather, as they saw dancing and playing, taking it for a signal of war, they distrusted them. They left all their oars and laid hold of their bows and arrows; and each one embracing his wooden shield, they commenced to shoot a great cloud of arrows. Having seen this, the Admiral ordered the playing and dancing to cease, and that some cross-bows should be drawn on deck and two of them shot off at them, nothing more than to frighten them. The Indians then, having shot the arrows, went to one of the two caravels, and suddenly, without fear, placed themselves below the poop, and the pilot of the caravel, also without any fear, glided down from the poop and entered with them in the canoe with some things which he gave them; and when he was with them he gave a smock frock and a bonnet to one of them who appeared to be the principal man. They took them and as if in gratitude

for what had been given them, by signs said to him that he should go to land with them, and there they would give him what they had. He accepted and they went away to land. The pilot entered the boat and went to beg permission of the Admiral on the ship, and when they saw that he did not go directly with him, they did not expect him longer, and so they went away and neither the Admiral nor any other ever saw them more. From the sudden change in their bearing because of the playing on the tambourine and the dancing, it appears that this must be considered among them a sign of hostility.

A servant of the Admiral, called Bernaldo de Ibarro, who was on this voyage with him, told me and gave it to me in writing and I have this writing in my possession to-day, that a cacique came to the ship of the Admiral and was wearing upon his head a diadem of gold; and he went to the Admiral who was wearing a scarlet cap and greeted him and kissed his own diadem, and with the other hand he removed the cap of the Admiral and placed upon him the diadem, and he himself put upon his own head the scarlet cap, appearing very content and pleased.

The Admiral says here that these were all youths and very well shaped and adorned, although I do not believe they wore much silk or brocade, with which, also, I believe the Spaniards and the Admiral might be more pleased; but they came armed with bows and arrows and wooden shields. They were not as short as others he had seen in the Indies and they were whiter, and of very good movements and handsome bodies, the hair long and smooth and cut in the manner of Castile. They had the head tied with a large handkerchief of cotton, symmetrically woven in colors, which the Admiral believed to be the *almaiçar*;¹ he says that others had this cloth around them, and they covered themselves with it in

¹ "A sort of veil, or head attire used by the Moorish women, made of thin silk, striped of several colors, and shagged at the ends, which hangs down on the back." John Stevens, *A New Dictionary, Spanish and English*, etc. (London, 1726.)

place of trousers. He says that they are not black although they are near the equinoctial,¹ but of an Indian color like all the others he has found. They are of very fine stature, go naked, are warlike, wear the hair very long like the women in Castile, carry bows and arrows with plumes, and at the end of the arrows a sharp bone with a point like a fish-hook, and they carry wooden shields, which he had not seen before; and according to the signs and gestures which they made, he says he could understand from them that they believed the Admiral came from the south, from which he judged that there must be great lands toward the south, and he said well since the mainland is so large that it occupies a large part of the south.

The temperature of this land, he says, is very high, and according to him this causes the color of the people, and the hair which is all flowing, and the very thick groves which abound everywhere. He says it must be believed that when once the boundary is passed, 100 leagues to the west of the Azores, that many times he has said that there is a change in the sky and the sea and the temperature, "and this," he says, "is manifest," because here where he was, so near to the equinoctial line, each morning, he says, it was cool and the sun was in Leo. What he says is very true, since I who write this have been there and required a robe nights and mornings especially at Navidad.²

The waters were running toward the west with a current stronger than the river of Seville; the water of the sea rose and fell 65 paces and more, as in Barrameda so that they are able to beach carracks;³ he says that the current flows very

¹ The exploration of the west coast of Africa, the only equatorial regions then known to Europeans, had led to the conclusion that black was the natural color of the inhabitants of the tropics.

² The Navidad referred to by Las Casas was near the Gulf of Paria. (Thacher.)

³ *Poner á monte carracas*. *Poner á monte* is not given in the Spanish dictionaries, and is apparently a sea phrase identical with the Portuguese "pôr um navio a monte," to beach or ground a vessel. The translator went entirely astray in this passage. See Thacher's *Columbus*, II. 388. The figure here given and the use of word *pasos*, normally, a land measure of

strongly going between these two islands, Trinidad and that one which he called Sancta, and the land which afterwards and farther on he called Isla de Gracia. And he calls the mainland an island, since he was already between the two which are two leagues apart which [*i.e.*, the channel] is like a river as it appears on the map. They found fruits¹ like those of this Española, and the trees and the soil, and the temperature of the sky. In this Española they found few fruits native to the soil. The temperature of that country is much higher than it is in this Española, except in the mines of Cibao and in some other districts, as has been said above.

They found *hostias* or oysters, very large, infinite fish, parrots as large as hens, he says. In this land and in all the mainland the parrots are larger than any of those in these islands and are green, the color being very light, but those of the islands are of a green somewhat darker. Those of the mainland have the yellow with spots and the upper part of the wings with reddish spots, and some are of yellow plumage; those of the islands have no yellow, the neck being red with spots. The parrots of Española have a little white over the back; those of Cuba have that part red and they are very pretty. Those of the island of San Juan I believe are similar to those of this island [Española] and I have not observed this feature in those of Jamaica. Finally it appears that those of each island are somewhat different. In this mainland where the Admiral is now, there is a species of parrots which I believe are found nowhere else, very large, not much

length, instead of *braza*, "fathom," would seem to indicate that the 65 paces refers to the extent of shore laid bare, and not to the height of the tide. The corresponding passage in the *Historie* reads: "so that it seemed a rapid river both day and night and at all hours, notwithstanding the fact that the water rose and fell along the shore (*per la spiaggia*) more than sixty paces between the waves (*alle marette*) as it is wont to do in San Lucar di Barrameda where the waters [of the river] are high since although the water rises and falls it never ceases to run toward the sea," *Historie* (London ed.), p. 229. In this passage *maree*, "tides," should be read instead of *marette*.

¹ Accepting the emendation of de Lollis which substitutes *fructas* for *fuentes*, "springs."

smaller than hens, reddish with blue and black feathers in the wings. These never speak nor are attractive except in appearance. They are called by the Indians *guacamayas*. It is marvellous how all the other kinds can speak except the smallest, which are called *xaxaues*.

Being at this Point of Arenal, which is the end of the island of Trinidad, they saw toward the north, quarter north-east,¹ a distance of 15 leagues, a cape or point of the same mainland, and this is that which is called Paria. The Admiral believing that it was another distinct island named it "Isla de Gracia": which island he says goes to the west [Oeste] which is the west [*poniente*], and that it is a very high land. And he says truly, for through all that land run great chains of very high mountains.

Saturday, August 4, he determined to go to the said island of Gracia and raised the anchors and made sail from the said Point of Arenal, where he was anchored; and because that strait by which he entered into the Gulf of Ballena was not more than two leagues wide between Trinidad on one side and the mainland on the other, the fresh water came out very swiftly. There came from the direction of the Arenal, on the island of Trinidad, such a great current from the south, like a mighty flood (and it was because of the great force of the river Yuyaparí which is toward the south and which he had not yet seen), with such great thundering and noise, that all were frightened and did not think to escape from it, and when the water of the sea withstood it, coming in opposition, the sea was raised making a great and very high swell² of water which raised the ship and placed it on top of the swell, a thing which was never heard of nor seen, and raised the anchors of the other ship which must have been already cast and forced it toward the sea, and the Admiral made sail to get away from the said slope. "It pleased God not to injure us," says the Admiral here, and when he wrote this thing to the Sovereigns he said, "even to-day I feel the fear in my body which I felt

¹ *I.e.*, north by east.

² *Loma*.

lest it should upset the ship when it came under her.”¹ For this great danger, he named the mouth “Boca de la Sierpe.”²

Having reached that land which he saw in that direction and believed was an island, he saw near that cape two small islands in the middle of another channel which is made by that cape which he called Cabo de Lapa and another cape of the Trinidad which he called Cabo Boto, because of being thick and blunt, — the one island he named El Caracol, the other El Delfin.³ It is only five leagues in this strait between the Point of Paria and Cape Boto of Trinidad, and the said islands are in the middle of the strait. The impetus of the great river Yuyaparí and the tempestuous waves of the sea make the entrance and exit by this strait greatly dangerous, and because the Admiral experienced this difficulty and also danger, he called that difficult entrance Boca del Drago⁴ and thus it is called to this day. He went along the coast of the mainland of Paria,⁵ which he believed to be an island, and named it Isla de Gracia, towards the west in search of a harbor. From the point of the Arenal, which is one cape of Trinidad as has been said, and is towards the south, as far as the other Cape Boto, which is of the same island and is towards the sea, the Admiral says it is 26 large leagues, and this part appears to be the width of the island, and these two said capes are north and south. There were great currents, the one against the other; there came many showers as it was the rainy season, as aforesaid. The Isla de Gracia is, as has been said, mainland. The Admiral says that it is a very high land and all full of trees which reach to the sea; this is because the gulf being surrounded by land, there is no surf and no waves which break on the land as where the shores are uncovered. He says that, being at the point or end of it, he saw an island of very high

¹ Las Casas here quotes Columbus's letter to Ferdinand and Isabella on this voyage. See Major, *Select Letters of Columbus*, p. 123.

² Serpent's mouth. The name is still retained.

³ *Lapa* means barnacle; *caracol*, periwinkle; and *delfin*, dolphin.

⁴ Dragon's mouth. The name is still retained.

⁵ *I.e.*, along the south shore of the peninsula of Paria in the Gulf of Paria.

land to the north-east, which might be 26 leagues from there. He named it "Belaforma," because it must have looked very well from a distance, yet all this is the mainland, which, as the ships changed their position from one side to the other within the gulf enclosed by land, some inlets appeared as if they separated lands which might be detached, and these the Admiral called islands; for such was his opinion.¹

He navigated Sunday, August 5, five leagues from the point of the Cape of Lapa, which is the eastern end of the island of Gracia. He saw very good harbors adjacent to each other, and almost all this sea he says is a harbor, because it is surrounded by islands and there are no waves. He called the parts of the mainland which disclosed themselves to him "islands," but there are only the island of Trinidad and the mainland, which inclose the gulf which he now calls the sea. He sent the boats to land and found fish and fire, and traces of people, and a great house visible to the view. From there he went eight leagues where he found good harbors. This part of this island of Gracia he says is very high land, and there are many valleys, and "all must be populated," says he, because he saw it all cultivated. There are many rivers because each valley has its own from league to league; they found many fruits, and grapes like [our] grapes and of good taste, and myrobolans² very good, and others like apples, and others, he says, like oranges, and the inside is like figs. They found numberless monkeys.³ The waters, he says, are the best that they saw. "This island," he says, "is all full of harbors, this sea is fresh, although not wholly so, but brackish like that of Carthage"; farther down he says that it is fresh like the river of Seville, and this was caused when it encountered some current of water from the sea, which made that of the river salty.

¹ The grammatical form of this sentence follows the original, which is irregular.

² See p. 311, note 2.

³ *Gatos paules* (Cat-Pauls). A species of African monkey was so called in Spain. The name occurs in Marco Polo. On its history and meaning, see Yule's *Marco Polo*, II. 372.

He sailed to a small port Monday, August 6, five leagues, from whence he went out and saw people, and then a canoe with four men came to the caravel which was nearest the land, and the pilot called the Indians as if he wished to go to land with them, and in drawing near and entering he submerged the canoe, and they commenced swimming; he caught them and brought them to the Admiral. He says that they are of the color of all the others of the Indies. They wear the hair (some of them) very long, others as with us; none of them have the hair cut as in Española and in the other lands. They are of very fine stature and all well grown; they have the genital member tied and covered, and the women all go naked as their mothers gave them birth. This is what the Admiral says, but I have been, as I said above, within 30 leagues of this land yet I never saw women that did not have their private parts, at least, covered.¹ The Admiral must have meant that they went as their mothers bore them as to the rest of the body.

“To these Indians,” says the Admiral, “as soon as they were here, I gave hawks’ bells and beads and sugar, and sent them to land, where there was a great battle among them, and after they knew the good treatment, all wished to come to the ships. Those who had canoes came and they were many, and to all we gave a good welcome and held friendly conversation with them, giving them the things which pleased them.” The Admiral asked them questions and they replied, but they did not understand each other. They brought them bread and water and some beverage like new wine; they are very much adorned with bows and arrows and wooden shields, and they almost all carry arrows poisoned.

Tuesday, August 7, there came an infinite number of Indians by land and by sea and all brought with them bread and maize and things to eat and pitchers of beverages, some white, like milk, tasting like wine, some green, and some of different colors; he believes that all are made from fruits. Most or

¹ Im Thurn, *Among the Indians of Guiana*, p. 193, says, “Indians after babyhood are never seen perfectly naked.”

all of it is made from maize but as the maize itself is white or violet and reddish, it causes the wine to be of different colors. I do not know of what the green wine is made. They all brought their bows and poisoned arrows, very pointed;¹ they gave nothing for beads, but would give as much as they had for hawks' bells, and asked nothing else. They gave a great deal for brass. It is certain that they hold this in high estimation and they gave in this Española for a little brass as much gold as any one would ask, and I believe that in the beginning it was always thus in all these Indies. They called it *turey* as if it came from Heaven because they called Heaven *hureyo*.² They find in it I do not know what odor, but one which is agreeable to them. Here the Admiral says whatever they gave them from Castile they smelled it as soon as it was given them. They brought parrots of two or three kinds, especially the very large ones like those in the island of Guadeloupe, he says, with the large tail. They brought handkerchiefs of cotton very symmetrically woven and worked in colors like those brought from Guinea, from the rivers of the Sierra Leona and of no difference, and he says that they cannot communicate with the latter, because from where he now is to Guinea the distance is more than 800 leagues; below he says that these handkerchiefs resemble *almayzars*.³ He desired, he says, to take a half-dozen Indians, in order to carry them with him, and says that he could not take them because they all went away from the ships before nightfall.

But Wednesday, August 8, a canoe came with 12 men to the caravel and they took them all, and brought them to the ship of the Admiral, and from them he chose six and sent the others to land. From this it appears that the Admiral did it

¹ *Flechas con hierba muy á punto*, literally, arrows with grass very sharp. Gaffarel, *Histoire de la Découverte de l'Amérique*, II. 196, interprets this to mean arrows feathered with grass; but *hierba* used in connection with arrows usually means poison. Cf. Oviedo, lib. ix., title of cap. xii., "*Del árbol ó mançanillo con cuya fructa los indios caribes flecheros hacen la hierba con que tiran é pélean.*"

² *Hureyos* is *Tureyos* in the printed edition of Las Casas, an obvious correction of the manuscript reading. On *turey*, see above, p. 310.

³ See above, p. 336, note 1.

without scruple as he did many other times in the first navigation, it not appearing to him that it was an injustice and an offence against God and his neighbor to take free men against their will, separating fathers from their sons and wives from their husbands and [not reflecting] that according to natural law they were married, and that other men could not take these women, or those men other women, without sin and perhaps a mortal sin of which the Admiral was the efficient cause — and there was the further circumstance that these people came to the ships under tacit security and promised confidence which should have been observed toward them; and beyond this, the scandal and the hatred of the Christians not only there, but in all the earth and among the peoples that should hear of this.

He made sail then towards a point which he calls “de l’Aguja,”¹ he does not say when he gave it this name, and from there he says that he discovered the most beautiful lands that have been seen and the most populated, and arriving at one place which for its beauty he called Jardines,² where there were an infinite number of houses and people, and those whom he had taken told him there were people who were clothed, for which reason he decided to anchor, and infinite canoes came to the ships. These are his words. Each one, he says, wore his cloth so woven in colors, that it appeared an *almayzar*, with one tied on the head and the other covering the rest, as has been already explained. Of these people who now came to the ships, some he says wore gold leaf³ on the breast, and one of the Indians he had taken told him there was much gold there, and that they made large mirrors of it, and they showed how they gathered it. He says mirrors, wherefore the Admiral must have given some mirrors and the Indian must have said by signs that of the gold they made those things, for they did not understand the language. He says that, as he was going hastily along there, because he was

¹ Needle. Alcatrazes, to-day. (Navarrete.) ² Gardens.

³ *Ojas de oro*. The translator took *ojas* (*hojas*) for *ojos* and rendered it “eyes of gold.” See Thacher, *Columbus*, II. 393.

losing the supplies which it had cost him so much labor to obtain, and this island Española is more than 300 leagues from there, he did not tarry, which he would have wished very much in order to discover much more land, and says that it is all full of very beautiful islands, much populated, and very high lands and valleys and plains, and all are very large. The people are much more politic than those of Española and warlike, and there are handsome houses. If the Admiral had seen the kingdom of Xaraguá as did his brother the Adelantado and the court of the King Behechio ¹ he would not have made so absolute a statement.

Arriving at the point of Aguja, he says that he saw another island to the south 15 leagues which ran south-east and north-west, very large, and very high land, and he called it Sabeta, and in the afternoon he saw another to the west, very high land. All these islands I understand to be pieces of the mainland which by reason of the inlets and valleys that separate them seem to be distinct islands notwithstanding that he went clear inside the gulf which he called Ballena enclosed as is said by land; and this seems clear since when one is, as he was, within the said gulf no land bears off to the south, except the mainland; next, the islands which he mentioned were not islands but pieces of the mainland which he judged to be islands.

He anchored at the place he had named the Jardines, and then there came an infinite number of canoes, large and small, full of people, according to what he says. Afterwards in the afternoon there came more from all the territory, many of whom wore at the neck pieces of gold of the size of horseshoes. It appeared that they had a great deal of it: but they gave it all for hawks' bells and he did not take it. And this is strange that a man as provident as the Admiral and desiring to make discoveries should not have seized this opportunity for trading, as he did on his first voyage. Yet he had some specimens from them and it was of very poor quality so that it appeared plated. They said, as well as he could understand by signs,

¹ *I.e.*, in Española.

that there were some islands there where there was much of that gold, but that the people were canibales, and the Admiral says here that this word "Canibales" every one there held as a cause for enmity, or perhaps they said so because they did not wish the Christians to go yonder, but that they should remain there all their life. The Christians saw one Indian with a grain of gold as large as an apple.

Another time there came an infinite number of canoes loaded with people, and all wore gold and necklaces, and beads of infinite kinds, and had handkerchiefs tied on their heads as they had hair well cut, and they appeared very well. It rained a great deal, and for this reason the people ceased to go and come. Some women came who wore on the arms strings of beads, and mingled with them were pearls or *aljojars*,¹ very fine, not like the colored ones which were found on the islands of Babueca; they traded for some of them, and he says that he would send them to their Highnesses.

I never knew of these pearls that were found in the islands of Babueca, which are near Puerto de Plata, in this Española; and these besides are low under the water and not islands, and they are very dangerous to ships that pass that way if they are not aware of them; and so they have the name Abre el Ojo.²

The Admiral asked the Indians where they found them or fished them, and they showed him some mother-of-pearl where they are formed; and they replied to him by very clear signs, that they grow and are gathered towards the west, behind that island, which was the Cape of Lapa, the Point of Paria and mainland, which he believed to be an island, but it was the mainland. He sent the boats to land to know if there was any new thing which he had not seen, and they found the people so tractable, says the Admiral, that, "although the sailors did not go intending to land, there came two principal persons with all the village, who induced them to descend and who took them to a large house, built near two streams

¹ Irregularly shaped pearls, seed pearls.

² "Keep your eyes open."

and not round, like a camp-tent, in the manner of the houses of the islands, where they received them very well and made them a feast and gave them a collation, bread and fruit of many kinds; and the drink was a white beverage which had a great value, which every one brought there, at this time, and some of it is tinted and better than the other, as the wine with us. The men were all together at one end of the house and the women at the other. Having taken the collation at the house of the older man, the younger conducted them to the other house, where they went through the same function. It appeared that one must be the cacique and lord, and the other must be his son. Afterwards the sailors returned to the boats and with them went back to the ships, very pleased with this people." These are all the words of the Admiral. He says further: "They are of very handsome stature, and all uniformly large," and whiter than any other he had seen in these Indies, and that yesterday he saw many as white as we are, and with better hair and well cut, and of very good speech. "No lands in the world can be more green and beautiful or more populated; moreover the temperature since I have been in this island," says he, "is, I say, cool enough each morning for a lined gown, although it is so near the equinoctial line; the sea is however fresh. They called the island Paria." All are the words of the Admiral. He called the mainland an island, however, because so he believed it to be.

Friday, August 10, he ordered sail to be made and went to the west of that which he thought to be an island, and travelled five leagues and anchored. For fear of not finding bottom, he went to search for an opening [mouth] by which to get out of that gulf, within which he was going, encircled by mainland and islands, although he did not believe it to be mainland, and he says it is certain that that was an island, because the Indians said thus, and thus it appears he did not understand them. From there he saw another island facing the south, which he called Ysabeta,¹ which extends from the south-east to north-west, afterwards another which he called

¹ Isabela in the printed text.

La Tramontana,¹ a high land and very beautiful, and it seemed that it ran from north to south. It appeared very large. This was the mainland. The Indians whom he had taken said — according to what he understood — that the people there were *Canibales* and that yonder was where the gold was found and that the pearls which they had given the Admiral they had sought and found on the northern part of Paria toward the west. The water of that sea he says was as fresh as that of the river of Seville and in the same manner muddy. He would have wished to go to those islands except for turning backward because of the haste he felt in order not to lose the supplies that he was taking for the Christians of Española, which with so much labor, difficulty and fatigue he had gathered for them; and as being a thing for the sake of which he had suffered much, he repeats this about the provisions or supplies many times. He says he believes that in those islands he had seen, there must be things of value because they are all large and high lands with valleys and plains and with many waters and very well cultivated and populated and the people of very good speech, as their gestures showed. These are the words of the Admiral.

He says also that if the pearls are born as Pliny² says from the dew which falls in the oysters while they are open, there is good reason for having them there because much dew falls in that place and there are an infinite number of oysters and very large ones and because there are no tempests there, but the sea is always calm, a sign of which is that the trees enter into the sea, which shows there is never a storm there, and every branch of the trees which were in the water (and there are also roots of certain trees in the sea, which according to the language of this Española are called *mangles*³), was full of an infinite number of oysters so that breaking a branch, it comes out full of oysters attached to it. They are white

¹ The north wind.

² Pliny, *Natural History*, book ix., ch. LIV.

³ The name is still used. It is the *Rhizopharia mangle*. See the description of it in Thompson's Alcedo's *Geographical and Historical Dictionary of America and the West Indies*, Appendix.

within, and their flesh also, and very savory, not salt but fresh and they require some salt, and he says that they do not know or spring from mother-of-pearl. Wherever the pearls are generated, he says, they are extremely fine and they pierce them as in Venice. As for this that the Admiral says that the branches were full of oysters there, we say that those oysters that he saw and that are on the branches above the water and a little under the water are not those that produce pearls, but another species; because those that bear pearls are more careful from their natural instinct to hide themselves as much further under water as they can than those he saw on the branches. . . .¹

Returning to where I dropped the thread of the history, at this place the Admiral mentions many points of land and islands and the names he had given them, but it does not appear when. In this and elsewhere the Admiral shows himself to be a native of another country and of another tongue, because he does not apprehend all the signification of the Castilian words nor the manner of using them. He gave names to the Punta Seca, the Ysla Ysabeta, the Ysla Tramontana, the Punta Llana, Punta Sara, assuming them to be known, although he has said nothing of them or of any of them. He says that all that sea is fresh, and he does not know from whence it proceeds, because it did not appear to have the flow from great rivers, and that, if it had them, he says it would not cease to be a marvel. But he was mistaken in thinking there were no rivers, since the river Yuyaparí furnished so great a flow of fresh water, as well as others which come from near there.

Desiring to get out of this Gulf of Ballena, where he was encircled by mainland and La Trinidad, as already said, in going to the west by that coast of the mainland, which he called "de Gracia" towards the point Seca, although he does not say where it was, he found two fathoms of water, no more. He sent the small caravel to see if there was an outlet to the

¹ Las Casas here inserts a long disquisition on pearls which is omitted. It covers pp. 246-252 of the printed edition, Vol. II.

north, because, in front of the mainland and of the other which he called Ysabeta, to the west, there appeared a very high and beautiful island. The caravel returned, and said that they found a great gulf, and in it four great openings which appeared small gulfs, and at the end of each one a river. This gulf he named Golpho de las Perlas, although I believe there are no pearls there. It appears that this was the inside corner of all this great gulf,¹ in which the Admiral was going enclosed by the mainland and the island of Trinidad; those four bays or openings, the Admiral believed were four islands, and that there did not appear to be a sign of a river, which would make all that gulf, of 40 leagues of sea, all fresh; but the sailors affirmed that those openings were mouths of rivers. And they say true, at least in regard to two of these openings, because by one comes the great river Yuyaparí and by the other comes another great river which to-day is called the river of Camarí.²

The Admiral would have liked very much to find out the truth of this secret, which was the cause of this great gulf being 40 leagues in length by 26 in width, containing fresh water, which was a thing, he says, for wonder, (and he was certainly right), and also to penetrate the secrets of those lands, where he did not believe it to be possible that there were not things of value, or that they were not in the Indies, especially from having found there traces of gold and pearls and the news of them, and discovered such lands, so many and such people in them; from which the things there and their riches might easily be known; but because the supplies he was carrying for the people who were in this Española, and which he carried that they who were in the mines gathering gold might have food, were being lost, which food and supplies he had gathered with great difficulty and fatigue, he did not allow himself to be detained, and he says that, if he had the

¹ *I.e.*, the western end of the Gulf of Paria.

² These mouths of the Orinoco supplied the fresh water, but they can hardly be the streams referred to by the sailors who explored the western end of the Gulf of Paria. Las Casas had no good map of this region.

hope of having more as quickly, he would postpone delivering them, in order to discover more lands and see the secrets of them; and finally he resolves to follow that which is most sure, and come to this island, and send from it moneys to Castile to bring supplies and people under hire, and at the earliest opportunity to send also his brother, the Adelantado, to prosecute his discovery and find great things, as he hoped they would be found, to serve our Lord and the Sovereigns.

Yet, just at the best time, the thread was cut, as will appear, of these his good desires, and he says thus: "Our Lord guides me by His pity and presents me things with which He may be served, and your Highnesses may have great pleasure, and certainly they ought to have pleasure, because here they have such a noble thing and so royal for great princes. And it is a great error to believe any one who speaks evil to them of this undertaking, but to abhor them, because there is not to be found a prince who has had so much grace from our Lord, and so much victory from a thing so signal and of so much honor to their high estate and realms, and by which God may receive endlessly more services and the people of Spain more refreshment and gains. Because it has been seen that there are infinite things of value, and although now this that I say may not be known, the time will come when it will be accounted of great excellence, and to the great reproach of those persons who oppose this project to your Highnesses; and although they may have expended something in this matter, it has been in a cause more noble and of greater account than any undertaking of any other prince until now, nor was it proper to withdraw from it hastily, but to proceed and give me aid and favor; because the Sovereigns of Portugal spent and had courage to spend in Guinea, for four or five years, money and people, before they received any benefit, and afterward God gave them advantages and gold. For certainly, if the people of the kingdom of Portugal be counted, and those of them who died in this undertaking of Guinea be enumerated, it would be found that they are more than half

of the kingdom;¹ and certainly, it would be the greatest thing to have in Spain a revenue which would come from this undertaking. Your Highnesses would leave nothing of greater memory; and they may examine, and discover that no prince of Castile may be found, and I have not found such by history or by tradition, — who has ever gained land outside of Spain. And your Highnesses will gain these lands, so very great, which are another world,² and where Christianity will have so great pleasure, and our faith in time so great an increase.³ All this I say with very honest intention, and because I desire that Your Highnesses may be the greatest Lords in the world,⁴ I say Lords of it all; and that it may all be with great service and contentment of the Holy Trinity, for which at the end of their days they may have the glory of Paradise, and not for that which concerns me myself, whose hope is in His High Majesty, that Your Highnesses will soon see the truth of it, and

¹ Columbus elaborated this point in his letter to Ferdinand and Isabella. Major, *Select Letters of Columbus*, p. 113. Columbus's estimate of the sacrifice of lives in the exploration of the west coast of Africa must be considered a most gross exaggeration. The contemporary narratives of those explorations give no such impression.

² Cf. Columbus's letter to the sovereigns, "Your Highnesses have here another world." Major, *Select Letters of Columbus*, p. 148, and the letter to the nurse of Prince John, p. 381, *post*. "I have placed under the dominion of the King and Queen our sovereigns another world." These passages clearly show that Columbus during and after this voyage realized that he accomplished something quite different from merely reaching Asia by a western route. He had found a hitherto unknown portion of the world, unknown to the ancients or to Marco Polo, but not for that reason necessarily physically detached from the known Asia. For a fuller discussion of the meaning of the phrase "another world," "New World," and of Columbus's ideas of what he had done, see Bourne, *Spain in America*, pp. 94-98, and the facsimile of the Bartholomew Columbus map, opposite p. 96.

³ A noteworthy prediction. In fact the discovery of the New World has effected a most momentous change in the relative strength and range of Christianity among the world-religions. During the Middle Ages Christianity lost more ground territorially than it gained. Since the discovery of America its gain has been steady.

⁴ Such in fact their Highnesses' grandson, Charles I. (V. as Emperor), was during his long reign, and such during a part of his reign if not the whole, was their great-grandson Philip II. See Oviedo's reflections upon Columbus's career. Bourne, *Spain in America*, p. 82.

this is my ardent desire." All these are the actual words of the Admiral. . . .¹

So, in order to get out of this gulf, within which he was surrounded by land on all parts, with the intention already told of saving the supplies which he carried, which were being lost, in coming to this island of Española, — Saturday, August 11, at the appearance of the moon, he raised the anchors, spread the sails, and navigated toward the east (*el leste*), that is towards the place where the sun rises,² because he was in the corner of the gulf where was the river Yuyaparí as was said above, in order to go out between the Point of Paria and the mainland, which he called the Punta or Cabo de Lapa, and the land he named Ysla de Gracia, and between the cape which he called Cabo Boto of the island of Trinidad.

He arrived at a very good harbor, which he called Puerto de Gatos,³ which is connected with the mouth where are the two little islands of the Caracol and Delfin, between the capes of Lapa and Cape Boto. And this occurred Sunday, August 12.

He anchored near the said harbor, in order to go out by the said mouth in the morning. He found another port near there, to examine which he sent a boat. It was very good. They found certain houses of fishermen, and much water and very fresh. He named it Puerto de las Cabañas.⁴ They found, he says, myrobolans on the land: near the sea, infinite oysters attached to the branches of the trees which enter into the sea, the mouths open to receive the dew which drops from the leaves and which engenders the pearls, as Pliny says and as is alleged in the vocabulary which is called *Catholicon*.⁵

¹ Las Casas here comments at some length on these remarks of Columbus and the great significance of his discoveries. The passage omitted takes up pp. 255 (line six from bottom) to 258.

² Las Casas explains *leste*, which would seem to have been either peculiar to sailors or at least not in common usage then for "east."

³ Probably *gatos* in the sense of *gatos paules*, monkeys, noted above, p. 341, as very plentiful.

⁴ Port of the Cabins.

⁵ The *Catholicon* was one of the earliest Latin lexicons of modern times and the first to be printed. It was compiled by Johannes de Janua (Giovanni Balbi of Genoa) toward the end of the thirteenth century and first printed at Mainz in 1460, and very frequently later.

Monday, August 13, at the rising of the moon, he weighed anchor from where he was, and came towards the Cape of Lapa, which is Paria, in order to go to the north by the mouth called Del Drago, for the following cause and danger in which he saw himself there; the Mouth of the Dragon, he says, is a strait which is between the Point of Lapa, the end of the island of Gracia, which is at the east end of the land of Paria and between Cape Boto which is the western end of the island of Trinidad. He says it is about a league and a half between the two capes. This must be after having passed four little islands which he says lie in the centre of the channel, although now we do not really see more than two, by which he could not go out, and there remained of the strait only a league and a half in the passage. From the Punta de la Lapa to the Cabo de Boto it is five leagues. Arriving at the said mouth at the hour of tierce,¹ he found a great struggle between the fresh water striving to go out to the sea and the salt water of the sea striving to enter into the gulf, and it was so strong and fearful, that it raised a great swell, like a very high hill, and with this, both waters made a noise and thundering, from east to west, very great and fearful, with currents of water, and after one came four great waves one after the other, which made contending currents; here they thought to perish, no less than in the other mouth of the Sierpe by the Cape of Arenal when they entered into the gulf. This danger was doubly more than the other, because the wind with which they hoped to get out died away, and they wished to anchor, because there was no remedy other than that, although it was not without danger from the fierceness of the waters, but they did not find bottom, because the sea was very deep there. They feared that the wind having calmed, the fresh or salt water might throw them on the rocks with their currents, when there would be no help. It is related that the Admiral here said, although I did not find it written with his own hand as I found the above, that if they escaped from that place they

¹ The third of the canonical hours of prayer, about nine o'clock in the morning.

could report that they escaped from the mouth of the dragon, and for this reason that name was given to it and with reason.

It pleased the goodness of God that from the same danger safety and deliverance came to them and the current of the fresh water overcame the current of the salt water and carried the ships safely out, and thus they were placed in security; because when God wills that one or many shall be kept alive, water is a remedy for them.¹ Thus they went out, Monday, August 13, from the said dangerous Gulf and Mouth of the Dragon. He says that there are 48 leagues from the first land of La Trinidad to the gulf which the sailors discovered whom he sent in the caravel, where they saw the rivers and he did not believe them, which gulf he called "de las Perlas," and this is the interior angle of all the large gulf, which he called "de la Ballena," where he travelled so many days encircled by land. I add that it is a good 50 leagues, as appears from the chart.

Having gone out of the gulf and the Boca del Drago and having passed his danger, he decides to go to the west by the coast below² of the mainland, believing yet that it was the island of Gracia, in order to get abreast, on the right, of the said Gulf of the Pearls, north and south, and to go around it,³ and see whence comes so great abundance of water, and to see if it proceeded from rivers, as the sailors affirmed and which he says he did not believe because he had not heard that either the Ganges, the Nile or the Euphrates⁴ carried so much fresh

¹ *El agua les es medicina, i.e., a means of curing the ill.*

² *Abajo.* Las Casas views the mainland as extending up from the sea. Columbus was going west along the north shore of the peninsula of Paria.

³ *I.e., to go west along the north shore of this supposed island until looking south he was to the right of it and abreast of the Gulf of Pearls.*

⁴ Three of the greatest known rivers, each of which drained a vast range of territory. This narrative reveals the gradual dawning upon Columbus of the fact that he had discovered a hitherto unknown continental mass. In his letter to the sovereigns his conviction is settled and his efforts to adjust it with previous knowledge and the geographical traditions of the ages are most interesting. See Major, *Select Letters of Columbus*, pp. 134 *et seqq.* "Ptolemy," he says, on p. 136, "and the others who have written upon the globe had no information respecting this part of the world, for it was most unknown."

water. The reason which moved him was because he did not see lands large enough to give birth to such great rivers, "unless indeed," he says, "that this is mainland." These are his words. So that he was already beginning to suspect that the land of Gracia which he believed to be an island is mainland, which it certainly was and is, and the sailors had been right, from which land there came such a quantity of water from the rivers, Yuyaparí and the other which flows out near it, which we now call Camarí, and others which must empty there, so that, going in search of that Gulf of the Pearls, where the said rivers empty, thinking to find it surrounded by land, considering it an island and to see if there was an entrance there, or an outlet to the south, and if he did not find it, he says he would affirm then that it was a river, and that both were a great wonder, — he went down the coast that Monday until the setting of the sun.

He saw that the coast was filled with good harbors and a very high land; by that lower coast he saw many islands toward the north and many capes on the mainland, to all of which he gave names: to one, Cabo de Conchas; to another, Cabo Luengo; to another, Cabo de Sabor; to another, Cabo Rico. A high and very beautiful land. He says that on that way there are many harbors and very large gulfs which must be populated, and the farther he went to the west he saw the land more level and more beautiful. On going out of the mouth, he saw an island to the north, which might be 26 leagues from the north, and named it La Isla de la Asuncion; he saw another island and named it La Concepcion, and three other small islands together he called Los Testigos.¹ They are called this to-day. Another near them he called El Romero, and three other little small islands he called Las Guardias. Afterwards he arrived near the Isla Margarita, and called it Margarita, and another near it he named El Martinet.

This Margarita is an island 15 leagues long, and 5 or 6 wide, and is very green and beautiful on the coast and is very good within, for which reason it is inhabited; it has near it

¹ The Witnesses.

extending lengthwise east and west, three small islands, and two behind them extending north and south. The Admiral did not see more than the three, as he was going along the southern part of Margarita. It is six or seven leagues from the mainland, and this makes a small gulf between it and the mainland, and in the middle of the gulf are two small islands, east and west, beside each other: the one is called Coche, which means deer, and the other Cubagua, which is the one we have described in chapter 136, and said that there are an infinite quantity of pearls gathered there. So that the Admiral, although he did not know that the pearls were formed in this gulf, appears to have divined that fact in naming it Margarita; he was very near it, although he does not express it, because he says he was nine leagues from the island of Martinet, which he says was near Margarita, on the northern part, and he says near it, because as he was going along the southern part of Margarita, it appeared to be near, although it was eight or nine leagues away; and this is the small island to the north, near Margarita, which is now called Blanca, and is distant eight or nine leagues from Margarita as I said. For here it seems that the Admiral must have been close to or near Margarita and I believe that he anchored because the wind failed him. Finally of all the names that he gave to the islands and capes of the mainland which he took for the island of Gracia none have lasted or are used to-day except Trinidad, Boca del Drago, Los Testigos, and Margarita.

There the eyes of the Admiral became very bad from not sleeping. Because always, as he was in so many dangers sailing among islands, it was his custom himself to watch on deck, and whoever takes ships with cargo should for the most part do that very thing, like the pilots, and he says that he found himself more fatigued here than when he discovered the other mainland, which is the island of Cuba, (which he regarded as mainland even until now), because his eyes were bloodshot; and thus his labors on the sea were incomparable. For this reason he was in bed this night, and therefore he found himself farther out in the sea than he would have

been if he had himself watched, from which he did not trust himself to the sailors, nor should any one who is a diligent and perfect pilot trust to anybody, because dependent on him and on his head are all those who go in the ship, and that which is most necessary and proper to his office is to watch and not sleep all the time while he navigates.

The Admiral appears to have gone down the coast after he came out of the Mouth of the Dragon, yesterday Monday and to-day Tuesday, 30 or 40 leagues at least, although he does not say so, as he complains that he did not write all that he had to write, as he could not on account of his being so ill here. And as he saw that the land was becoming very extended below to the west, and appeared more level and more beautiful, and the Gulf of the Pearls which was in the back part of the gulf, or fresh-water sea, whence the river of Yuyaparí flowed, in the search of which he was going, had no outlet, which he hoped to see, believing that this mainland was an island, he now became conscious that a land so great was not an island, but mainland, and as if speaking with the Sovereigns, he says here: "I believe that this is mainland, very great, which until to-day has not been known. And reason aids me greatly because of this being such a great river and because of this sea which is fresh, and next the saying of Esdras aids me, in the 4th book, chapter 6th, which says that the six parts of the world are of dry land and the one of water.¹ Which book St. Ambrose approves in his Examenon² and St. Augustine on the passage, 'Moriatur filius meus Christus,'

¹ The reference is to *II. Esdras*, vi. 42, in the Apocrypha of the English Bible. The Apocryphal books of I. and II. Esdras were known as III. and IV. Esdras in the Middle Ages, and the canonical books in the Vulgate called I. and II. Esdras are called Ezra and Nehemiah in the English Bible. II. Esdras is an apocalyptic work and dates from the close of the first century A.D. The passage to which Columbus referred reads as follows: "Upon the third day thou didst command that the waters should be gathered in the seventh part of the earth; six parts hast thou dried up, and kept them, to the intent that of these some being planted of God and tilled might serve thee."

² The reference is wrong, as Las Casas points out two or three pages further on (II. 266); it should be to the treatise *De Bono Mortis*, cap. 10.

as Francisco de Mayrones alleges.¹ And further, I am supported by the sayings of many Canibales Indians, whom I took at other times, who said that to the south of them was mainland, and at that time I was on the island of Guadeloupe, and also I heard it from others of the island of Sancta Cruz and of Sant Juan, and they said that in it there was much gold, and, as your Highnesses know, a very short time ago, there was no other land known than that which Ptolemy wrote of, and there was not in my time any one who would believe that one could navigate from Spain to the Indies; about which matter I was seven years in your Court, and there were few who understood it; and finally the very great courage of your Highnesses caused it to be tried, against the opinion of those who contradicted it. And now the truth appears, and it will appear before long, much greater; and if this is mainland, it is a thing of wonder, and it will be so among all the learned, since so great a river flows out that it makes a fresh-water sea of 48 leagues." These are his words. . . .²

Having finished this digression let us return then to our history and to what the Admiral resolved to do in the place where he was, and that is, going as fast as possible, he wished to come to this Española, for some reasons which impelled him greatly: one, because he was going with great anxiety

¹ Francis de Mayrones was an eminent Scotist philosopher. He died in 1327. Columbus here quotes from his *Theologicae Veritates* (Venice, 1493). See *Raccolta Colombiana*, Parte I., tomo II., p. 377. Las Casas (II. 266) was unable to verify the citation from St. Augustine.

² The passage omitted, Las Casas, II. 265-307, consists first, pp. 265-267, of his comments on these words of Columbus, and second, pp. 268-274, of a criticism of Vespucci's claim to have made a voyage in 1497 to this region of Paria, and of his narratives and the naming of America from him. This criticism is translated with Las Casas's other trenchant criticisms of Vespucci's work and claims by Sir Clements R. Markham in his *Letters of Amerigo Vespucci* (London, 1894), pp. 68 *et seq.* These passages are very interesting as perhaps the earliest piece of detailed critical work relating to the discoveries, and they still constitute the cornerstone of the case against Vespucci. The third portion of the omitted passage, pp. 275-306, is a long essay on the location of the earthly paradise which Columbus placed in this new mainland he had just discovered. *Cf.* Columbus's letter on the Third Voyage. Major, *Select Letters of Columbus*, pp. 140-146.

and affliction, as he had not had news of the condition of this island for so many days; and it would seem that he had some premonition of the disorder and the losses and the travail which with the rising of Francisco Roldan¹ all this land and his brothers were suffering; the other in order to despatch immediately the Adelantado, his brother, with three ships, to continue his discovery of the mainland which he had already begun to explore; and it is certain that if Francisco Roldan with his rebellion and shamelessness had not prevented him, the Admiral or his brother for him would have discovered the mainland as far as New Spain; but, according to the decree of Divine Providence, the hour of its discovery had not come, nor was the permission recalled² by which many were being enabled to distinguish themselves in unjust works under color of making discoveries.

The third cause which hastened him in coming to this island, was from seeing that the supplies were spoiling and being lost, of which he had such great need for the relief of those who were here, which made him weep again, considering that he had obtained them with great difficulties and fatigues, and he says that, if they are lost, he has no hope of getting others, from the great opposition he always encountered from those who counselled the Sovereigns, "who," he says here, "are not friends nor desire the honor of the high condition of their Highnesses, the persons who have spoken evil to them of such a noble undertaking. Nor was the cost so great that it should not be expended, although benefits might not be had quickly to recompense it, since the service was very great which was rendered our Lord in spreading His Holy Name through un-

¹ On the Roldan revolt, see Irving, *Christopher Columbus*, II. 199 *et seqq.*

² April 10, 1495, the sovereigns authorized independent exploring expeditions. Columbus protested that such expeditions infringed upon his rights, and so, June 2, 1497, the sovereigns modified their ordinance and prohibited any infringements. Apparently Las Casas is in error in saying the permission had not been recalled in 1498, but the independent voyages of Hojeda and Pinzon, who first explored the northern coast of South America (Paria) in 1499-1500, may have led him to conclude that the authorization had not been recalled.

known lands. And besides this, it would be a much greater memorial than any Prince had left, spiritual and temporal." And the Admiral says further, "And for this the revenue of a good bishopric or archbishopric would be well secured, and I say," says he, "as good as the best in Spain, since there are here so many resources and as yet no priesthood. They may have heard that here there are infinite peoples, which may have determined the sending here of learned and intelligent persons and friends of Christ to try and make them Christians and commence the work; the establishment of which bishopric I am very sure will be made, please our Lord, and the revenues will soon come from here and be carried there." These are his words. How much truth he spoke and how clear a case there was of inattention and remissness and lukewarmness of charity in the men of that day, spiritual or ecclesiastical and temporal, who held the power and resources, not to make provision for the healing and conversion of these peoples, so disposed and ready to receive the faith, the day of universal judgment will reveal.

The fourth cause for coming to this island and not stopping to discover more, which he would have very much wished, as he says, was because the seamen did not come prepared to make discoveries, since he says that he did not dare to say in Castile that he came with intention to make discoveries, because they would have placed some impediments in his way, or would have demanded more money of him than he had, and he says that the people were becoming very tired. The fifth cause, was because the ships he had were large for making discoveries, as the one was of more than 100 tons and the other more than 70, and only smaller ones are needed to make discoveries; and because of the ship which he took on his first voyage being large, he lost it in the harbor of Navidad, kingdom of the King Guacanagarí.¹ Also the sixth reason which very much constrained him to leave the discoveries and come to this island, was because of having his eyes almost lost from not sleeping, from the long and continued

¹ See Journal of First Voyage, December 25.

watches or vigils he had had; and in this place he says thus: "May it please our Lord to free me from this malady," he says. "He well knows that I did not suffer these fatigues in order to find treasures for myself, since surely I recognize that all is vanity which is done in this age, save that which is for the honor and service of God, which is not to amass pomps or riches, nor the many other things we use in this world, in which we are more inclined than to the things which can save us." These are his words.

Truly this man had a good Christian purpose and was very contented with his own estate and desired in a moderate degree to maintain himself in it, and to rest from such sore travail, which he fully merited; yet the result of his sweat and toil was to impose a greater burden on the Sovereigns, and I do not know what greater was necessary than had already fallen to them, and even he had imposed obligations on them, except that he kept seeing that little importance was made of his distinguished services that he had performed, and that all at once the estimation of these Indies which was held at first was declining and coming to naught, through those that had the ears of the Sovereigns, so that he feared each day greater disfavours and that the Sovereigns might give up the whole business and thus his sweat and travail be entirely lost.

Having determined, then, to come as quickly as he could to this island, Wednesday, August 15, which was the day of the Assumption of Our Lady, after the rising of the sun, he ordered the anchors weighed from where he was anchored, which must have been within the small gulf which Margarita and the other islands make with the mainland (and he must have been near Margarita as we said above, ch. 139), and sailed on the way to this island; and, pursuing his way, he saw very clearly Margarita and the little islands which were there, and also, the farther away he went, he discovered more high land of the continent. And he went that day from sunrise to sunset 63 leagues, because of the great currents which supplemented the wind. . . .¹

¹ The passage omitted, II. 309-313, of the printed edition, gives an

Let us return to the voyage of the Admiral, whom we left started from the neighborhood of the island of Margarita, and he went that day, Wednesday, 63 leagues from sun to sun, as they say. The next day, Thursday, August 16, he navigated to the north-west, quarter of the north,¹ 26 leagues, with the sea calm, "thanks be to God," as he always said. He tells here a wonderful thing, that when he left the Canaries for this Española, having gone 300 leagues to the west, then the needles declined to the north-west² one quarter, and the North Star did not rise but 5 degrees, and now in this voyage it has not declined to the north-west² until last night, when it declined more than a quarter and a half, and some needles declined a half wind which are two quarters;³ and this happened suddenly last night. And he says each night he was marvelling at such a change in the heavens, and of the temperature there, so near the equinoctial line, which he experienced in all this voyage, after having found land; especially the sun being in Leo, where, as has been told, in the mornings a loose gown was worn, and where the people of that place — Gracia — were actually whiter than the people who have been seen in the Indies. He also found in the place where he now came, that the North Star was in 14 degrees when the Guardians⁴ had passed from the head after two hours and a half. Here he again exhorted the Sovereigns to esteem this affair highly, since he had shown them that there was in this land gold, and he had seen in it minerals without number, which will have to be extracted with intelligence, industry and labor, since even the iron, as much as there is, cannot be taken out without these sacrifices; and he has taken them a nugget of account of the voyage and arrival of the vessels which came to Española directly from the Canaries.

¹ Northwest by north.

² Northeast in the printed text.

³ The circle of the horizon, represented by the compass card, was conceived of as divided into eight winds and each wind into halves and quarters, the quarters corresponding to the modern points of the compass, which are thirty-two in number. The declination observed was two points of the compass, or 22° 30'.

⁴ See above, p. 329, note 2.

20 ounces and many others, and where this is, it must be believed there is plenty, and he took their Highnesses a lump of copper originally of six *arrobas*,¹ lapis-lazuli, gum-lac, amber, cotton, pepper, cinnamon, a great quantity of Brazil-wood, aromatic gum,² white and yellow sandalwood, flax, aloes, ginger, incense, myrobolans of all kinds, very fine pearls and pearls of a reddish color, which Marco Polo says are worth more than the white ones,³ and that may well be so in some parts just as it is the case with the shells that are gathered in Canaria and are sold for so great a price in the Mine of Portugal. "There are infinite kinds of spices which have been seen of which I do not care to speak for fear of prolixity." All these are his words.

As to what he says of cinnamon, and aloes and ginger, incense, myrobolans, sandal woods, I never saw them in this island, at least I did not recognize them; what he says of flax must mean *cabuya*⁴ which are leaves like the *cavila* from which thread is made and cloth or linen can be made from it, but it is more like hemp cloth than linen. There are two sorts of it, *cabuya* and *nequen*; *cabuya* is coarse and rough and *nequen* is soft and delicate. Both are words of this island Española. Storax gum I never smelled except in the island of Cuba, but I did not see it, and this is certain that in Cuba there must be trees of it, or of a gum that smells like it, because we never smelled it except in the fires that the Indians make of wood that they burn in their houses. It is a most perfect perfume, certainly. I never knew of incense being found in these islands.

Returning to the journey, Friday, August 17, he went 37 leagues, the sea being smooth, "to God our Lord," he says, "may infinite thanks be given." He says that not finding islands now, assures him that that land from whence he came is a vast mainland, or where the Earthly Paradise is, "be-

¹ An arroba was twenty-five pounds.

² *Estoraque*, officinal storax, a gum used for incense.

³ Cf. Marco Polo, bk. III., ch. II.

⁴ Pita, the fibre of the American agave.

cause all say that it is at the end of the east, and this is the Earthly Paradise,"¹ says he.

Saturday, between day and night, he went 39 leagues.

Sunday, August 19, he went in the day and the night 33 leagues, and reached land; and this was a very small island which he called Madama Beata, and which is now commonly so called. This is a small island of a matter of a league and a half close by this island of Española, and distant from this port of Sancto Domingo about 50 leagues and distant 15 leagues from the port of Yaquino, which is more to the west. There is next to it another smaller one which has a small but somewhat high mountain, which from a distance looks like a sail, and he named it Alto Velo.² He believed that the Beata was a small island which he called Sancta Catherina when he came by this southern coast, from the discovery of the island of Cuba, and distant from this port of Sancto Domingo 25 leagues, and is next to this island. It weighed upon him to have fallen off in his course so much, and he says it should not be counted strange, since during the nights he was from caution beating about to windward, for fear of running against some islands or shoals; there was therefore reason for this error, and thus in not following a straight course, the currents, which are very strong here, and which flow down towards the mainland and the west, must have carried the ships, without realizing it, so low. They run so violently there toward La Beata that it has happened that a ship has been eight months in those waters without being able to reach this port and that much of delay in coming from there here, has happened many times.

Therefore he anchored now between the Beata and this island, between which there are two leagues of sea, Monday, August 20. He then sent the boats to land to call Indians,

¹ Cf. the letter on the Third Voyage, Major, *Select Letters of Columbus*, p. 140, for Columbus's reasoning and beliefs about the Earthly Paradise or Garden of Eden; for Las Casas's discussion of the question, see *Historia de las Indias*, II. 275-306.

² High sail.

as there were villages there, in order to write of his arrival to the Adelantado; having come at midday, he despatched them. Twice there came to the ship six Indians, and one of them carried a crossbow with its cord, and nut and rack,¹ which caused him no small surprise, and he said, "May it please God that no one is dead." And because from Sancto Domingo the three ships must have been seen to pass downward, and concluding that it certainly was the Admiral as he was expecting him each day, the Adelantado started then in a caravel and overtook the Admiral here. They both were very much pleased to see each other. The Admiral having asked him about the condition of the country, the Adelantado recounted to him how Francisco Roldan had arisen with 80 men, with all the rest of the occurrences which had passed in this island, since he left it. What he felt on hearing such news, there is small need to recite.

He left there, Wednesday, August 22, and finally with some difficulty because of the many currents and the north-east breezes which are continuous and contrary there he arrived at this port of Sancto Domingo, Friday, the last day of August of the said year 1498, having set out from Isabela for Castile, Thursday the tenth day of March, 1496, so that he delayed in returning to this island two years and a half less nine days.

¹ The rack was used to bend the crossbow.