

MY AMERICA STORY BOOK

Book One: Exploration & Discovery

Compiled by Marlene Peterson

MY AMERICA STORY BOOK

Exploration & Discovery

A Compilation of Historical
Biographies for the Young Reader

Compiled by Marlene Peterson

Libraries of Hope

My America Story Book
Book One: Exploration & Discovery

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Chapter 1

Marco Polo

1254-1324 Italy



Mosaic of Marco Polo, Salviati

His Life

In the beginning of the thirteenth century Genghis Khan, the leader of a Mongul or Tartar tribe in northern Asia, conquered with his enormous army of horsemen the larger part of Asia and some lands in Russia.

Thousands of cities and millions of lives were sacrificed to him, and his rule was so powerful that there was a saying, "In Asia and Europe scarcely a dog might bark without Mongul leave."

Kubla Khan, the grandson of Genghis Khan, was a much more gentle man than his grandfather. He ruled over China or Cathay as it was then called.

His magnificent capital or city of the khan was Cambaluc, now Peking.

During his reign two gentlemen from Venice belonging to the ancient Polo family visited the East. They were merchants, but they were adventurous explorers too. We cannot trace their long and difficult routes. Sometimes they turned aside to avoid a mountain or a desert or a river, or because they did not wish to pass through a country where war was raging.

In due time, however, they arrived at the court of Kubla Khan, the "Lord of the Earth."

The khan had never before seen any Europeans and he welcomed them cordially, asking them many questions about their country. He gave them tablets of gold, such as were often presented to messengers, and sent them back to Rome to the Pope.

He wished the Pope to send him one hundred missionaries, and some of the oil burning in the lamp which hangs over the Holy Sepulcher at Jerusalem. Besides these, he wished the Polos to

instruct him in the seven arts, which in those days formed a perfect education. These were arithmetic, astronomy, grammar, music, geometry, rhetoric, and logic.

The Polos could find but two missionaries; they obtained the oil, but we are not sure about the seven arts.

When the Polos were preparing to return to Cathay, Marco, the son of one of these nobles, now fifteen years old, begged that he might go with them. They all started, but it was not long before the two priests were so frightened by the perils of the way that they returned home. After surmounting many dangers the Polos finally reached Cathay, and the khan was delighted to welcome them. He was pleased to receive the holy oil, but disappointed about the missionaries, for he was eager to introduce a new religion into his country.

Young Marco Polo was a bright and observing lad. He learned the language, and he told a story well. Kubla Khan became very fond of him, and constantly employed him on missions to every part of his dominions. When Marco returned, he had always such a pleasant way of describing the curious cities and countries which he had seen that the khan listened to him with the greatest interest. He liked him far better than his other messengers, for on their return they could talk only of the business on which they had been sent.

Many years passed—full of wondrous sights and marvelous adventures for Marco Polo.

The khan was growing old, and the Polos were anxious to go home to see their friends and to carry their treasures. But they all were useful to the khan, and he wished them to remain. Finally an opportunity offered, and the khan reluctantly gave his consent for them to depart.

Our story now shifts to the beautiful Venice of that romantic and adventurous age.

One day, in the year 1295, three sunburned men, in shabby Tartar dress, appeared in the streets of the city. The Venetians gazed on them with curiosity, and laughed them to scorn when the travelers told who they were. How could the people believe them to be the same Polos who had gone so many years before into the land of darkness in the far East?

The three men made their way through the city to the gates of the handsome residence of the Polos, but we are not told how they succeeded in quickly gaining admittance.

Shortly afterwards the Venetian nobles were summoned to a splendid feast in their grand palace.

The guests were received by the three travelers arrayed in rich robes of crimson satin. At the beginning of the feast their robes were exchanged for crimson damask ones, and when they were taken off, they were cut up and divided among the servants.

Later in the feast the damask robes were exchanged for those of crimson velvet, and the damask ones were divided. At the close of the feast the velvet robes were taken off and divided like the others, and now the three men appeared dressed like the rest of the company.

After the meal, the servants having gone out, Marco Polo brought in the three shabby dresses. The guests recognized them as the ones in which the curious strangers had arrived. And now for the greatest surprise of all!

Sharp knives were taken, the coats were ripped open, and out rolled quantities of jewels of the greatest value—diamonds, emeralds, rubies, and sapphires.

These had been carefully stitched between the linings that no one might suspect what the travelers carried. Then the Polos told their guests about their adventures in the far East, and how Kubla Khan had given them treasures in gold and stuffs which they could not carry. They had

exchanged all for precious gems. What a fascinating and bewildering entertainment!

The guests now recognized that their hosts were the Polos, and ever afterwards they treated them with the greatest honor.

Two or three years later there was a war between Venice and Genoa. Marco Polo fought, and was taken prisoner by the Genoese and put into prison. His fellow-prisoner was Rusticiano of Pisa, who, besides being a war-captain, was a clever writer. Marco Polo told Rusticiano about his wonderful adventures and the strange things which he had seen and heard, and Rusticiano wrote them on parchment and made a book which others copied. For many years copies of the book were very precious, even until printing was invented.

In this book of travels Marco Polo describes wonderful things, among them a bird in Madagascar so large that it can carry an elephant in its talons, and fine Persian horses able to travel one hundred and ten miles a day. He tells, too, of jugglers who can make dishes and cups of gold fly through the air; and of a sorcerer in the vale of Cashmere who had magic power over the weather and was able to bring rain and snow.

In the book we learn that Marco Polo had been told that Noah's ark was still on Mount Ararat in Armenia, but that the mountain was so covered with snow that no one could ever ascend to see it.

He had seen the circular houses of the Tartars made of wands covered with felt. When the Tartars traveled, they filled their houses with women and children and drew them along with oxen and camels.

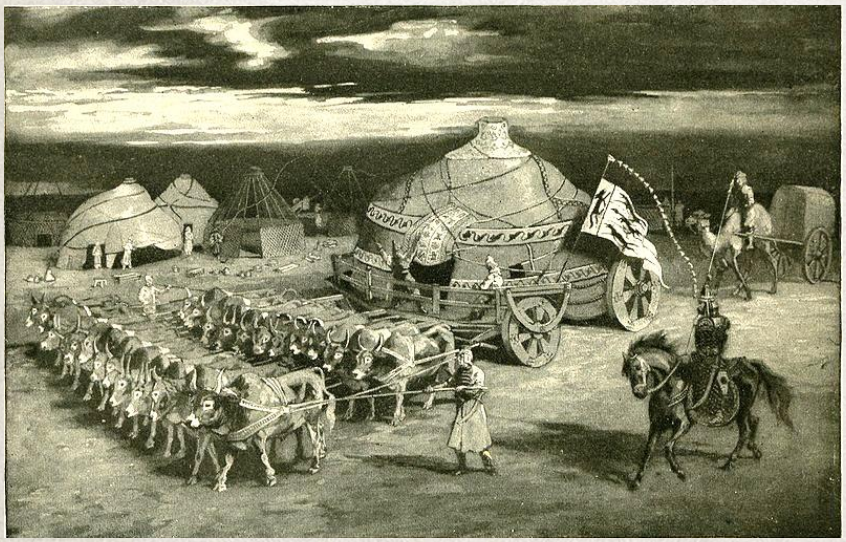


Illustration from *The Story of Marco Polo*, by Marco Polo and Noah Brooks

Many pages of the book are devoted to the magnificence of the court of Kubla Khan. Those who waited upon this lord had their mouths covered with napkins of silk and gold so that their breath might not taint the contents of a dish or goblet presented to the king. The khan's most famous feast was on New Year's Day. On this occasion he appeared in robes of beaten gold. Before the feast all the officials passed in review before the khan, bowing their faces four times to the floor. The palaces of Kubla Khan were most magnificent. In one of them six thousand people could dine.

In the parks were trees of all kinds brought by elephants from all parts of the khan's dominions. Rows of trees were constantly being planted, for in Cathay there was an old saying, "He who plants trees lives long."

The whole book of Marco Polo is full of entertainment and amusement. It describes absurd

things and true things, and gives us a curious glimpse into the early geography and customs of the people of Asia. It is one of the most important books of the Middle Ages. Difficult as it was to procure it then, we may find it now in every public library.

Shortly after Marco Polo had told his tales to Rusticiano, and Rusticiano had preserved it for the world, peace was made between Genoa and Venice.

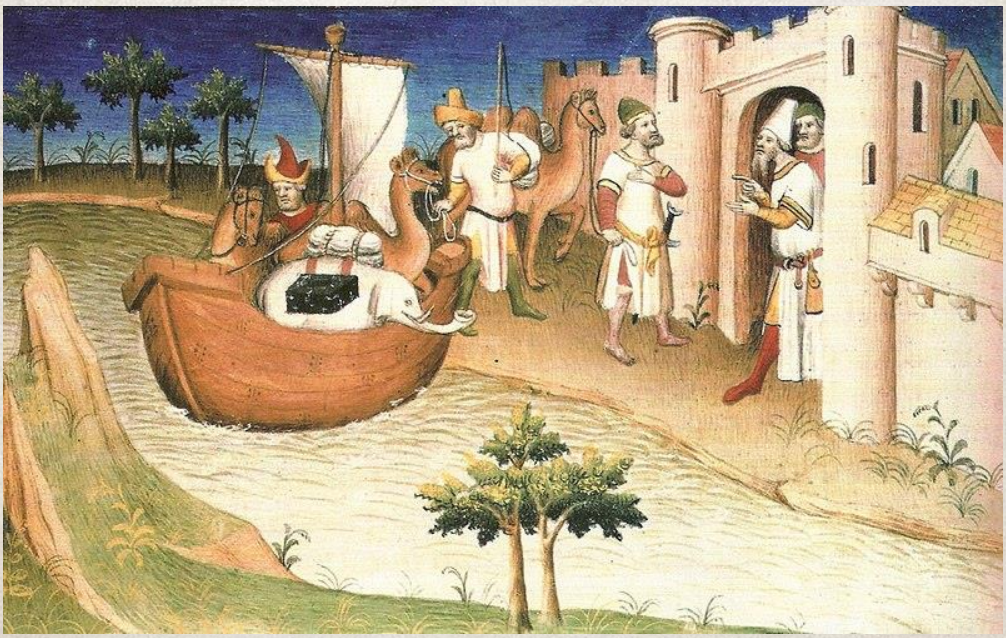
Marco Polo went home and married and had three daughters. What interesting stories he must have told his children!

He lived to be an old man. Before his death he was asked to take back some of the strange things which he had reported, but he refused, saying: —

"I have told the truth!"

His Story

Very wonderful stories were told of the countries in the East—of Cathay, and Mangi, and Cipango—which had been visited by the great traveller, Marco Polo, and the man who could find the shortest way thither, would, of all men, receive the highest honor from the King of Spain. And so every one who sailed from Spain looked first toward America and then beyond it to the East. And no wonder, for these countries were richer than Mexico and Peru, more fertile than Florida, and more beautiful than Fairyland itself. There was nothing in the world that one might want that could not be found within the borders of these lands. For ages and ages this kingdom had been ruled by the great race of Kubla Khan, and these monarchs had no other thought than to make their kingdom the most beautiful and glorious of the whole earth. They had built great cities, and strong forts, and extensive highways; it was said that within the Province of Mangi alone were twelve



Marco Polo Traveling
Miniature from *The Travels of Marco Polo.* author unknown

thousand cities, all within a short distance of one another. Chief of these cities was Quinsai, which covered a hundred miles of ground. On one side of it was a river, and on another side a lake, and through it flowed clear, winding streams spanned by twelve thousand beautiful bridges, which were so lofty that ships passed under them with ease. The streets were wide and bordered with palm trees, and fragrant flowers bloomed all the year round in the gardens and parks. All the dwellings were of marble, and the temples and palaces were ornamented with precious stones. Warehouses of stone stood in different parts of the city, filled with costly merchandise, silks and velvets, and cloth of gold, and all manner of rare articles made of gold and silver and mother-of-pearl, curiously and beautifully beaten and engraved. And crystal fountains kept the air pure and fresh, and great birds with gold and silver wings flew lazily from tree to tree, and one could not tell whether the city was more beautiful by day, when the sun shone down upon it and brightened the marble roofs and charming gardens, or by night, when the moon and stars were reflected in the lakes and rivers, and when the fountains glistened white in the moonlight, and the great squares and lofty palaces were illumined with a million crystal lamps.

Most beautiful of all the palaces was that of the king, which stood in the centre of the city on a hill overlooking all the country round. It was so large that it covered ten acres, and its wide, lofty corridors, beautified with groups of magnolia and palm, seemed like magnificent avenues stretching from one palace to another.

Within the enclosure were groves of pine and oak and many rare trees, and gardens filled with choicest flowers, and lakes on which swans floated, and in whose waters rainbow-hued fishes darted hither and thither. The palace itself was of the purest white marble, its roof was wrought in gold and supported by hundreds of pillars of pure gold, wonderfully adorned in azure arabesque, and having the capitals studded with precious stones; and all the air was sweet with perfumed fountains, and everywhere it was continual summer from the abundance of flowers and the songs of birds.

And the king and all his people enjoyed their beautiful city as much as possible, for they were so rich they had to work very little, and spent the greater part of every day in pleasant amusements. At any hour one might see pleasure parties on the lakes and rivers, which were always covered with gilded boats, and barges with silken awnings, under which tables were prepared for banquets. And everywhere through the city were scattered inviting bowers, where the people sat when tired with walking, and watched the long procession of elegant chariots, luxuriously fitted up with cushions of silks and velvet and drawn by richly caparisoned horses. And besides these everyday amusements there were a great many days held sacred to the gods, when there were great feasts lasting ten or twelve days, and when ten thousand guests were entertained at a time.

And the health and comfort of the people were provided for as well as their amusement, for there were elegant marble baths, and a number of fine hospitals for the care of the sick, and a wonderful system of lighting the houses and palaces, so that the night seemed almost turned into day again, and a well-trained fire-department, always ready to act at any moment, and in fact, everything that could be done to make the people healthy and happy, and to protect their lives and property, was done. And all the children went to school in the public parks and gardens, for in that beautiful climate it never rained or was cold, and so there was no need of school-houses, and the boys and girls studied botany, and geology, and astronomy out of doors, and no doubt found it very pleasant.

And Marco Polo, summing up his description of the wonderful place, says, "And this city, for the excellence thereof, hath the name of the city of Heaven; for in the world there is not the like, or a place in which are found so many pleasures, that a man would think he were in Paradise."

And all the other countries ruled by the great Khan were as rich as Mangi. In Armenia were tens of thousands of beautiful cities filled with works of art, and out in the open country were wonderful hot springs which cured all manner of diseases, and on the top of one of the high mountains Noah's ark still rested. And Cathay also held many rich towns. Among them, Cambalu, where the king had a marble palace with a roof of gold, as in Quinsai. And here, ten thousand soldiers guarded the palace, and the royal stables, wherein stood five thousand elephants. Great public roads led out from Cambalu to all the other cities in the empire, and along these roads were stationed post-houses where the king's messengers could find rest and refreshment, and where there were elegant apartments in which the king himself might rest when on his journey through the empire. All the king's errands were done by swift messengers, who ran from one post-house to another. These messengers wore belts from which hung gold and silver bells, and as soon as one station was reached, the letters and messages were given to another messenger and carried on to the next station, and so on, the tinkling of the bells notifying the waiting messenger to be in readiness. And so, not a moment was lost; the messengers ran swiftly over the fine roads, scarcely noticing, in their haste, the beautiful scenery or the many works of art that adorned the way, which led through deep, shady forests, and wide, pleasant meadows, and over the numerous rivers and canals, spanned by lofty bridges built of rare stone and costly marble, and ornamented with rows of polished columns and great stone lions, and curiously graven images of gods, and men, and animals. The roads extended from one great city to another, joining the most distant places together, and the Khan spent a summer in one place and a winter in another, and every city tried to outshine the rest. In the summer months the Khan spent much of his time in his palace at Ciandu, which was as magnificent as Cambalu. Here the palace extended over sixteen miles, and ten thousand white horses stood in the king's stables.



Marco Polo in the Court of the Grand Khan,
Tranquillo da Cremona

All this country was guarded by soldiers, who were like the sands of the sea for number, and the great generals were held in such esteem by the king that they were allowed to live in the most magnificent style. They all sat in golden chairs, and rode on milk-white horses, and travelled in gorgeous chariots, or in beautiful barges with silk and velvet awnings to keep off the heat of the sun.

And so mighty was the Khan, and so great were his generals, that all the other countries round were very glad to live peaceably, and try in every way to please such a powerful monarch. The riches of this country were beyond description; mountains of turquoises reached to the clouds; the lakes were full of pearls; everywhere were gold and silver mines; the rivers sparkled with gold, and the valleys were rich in diamonds. And everywhere, too, there was an abundance of choice fruits and nuts, and rare spices which grew in the gardens all the year round, so there was no lack of them summer or winter. And the people dressed in the richest stuffs, silk and velvet, and cloth of gold, embroidered with pearls and turquoises and diamonds.



Marco Polo, from an illustration in the *Book of Wonders,*
author unknown

And in Cipango, too, which lay east of Mangi, out in the sea, could be found the same magnificence. Here were palaces and temples, with roofs covered with golden plates and floors paved with gold and silver, and here also the people were rich and prosperous and happy.

And when the news of all this wealth reached Europe it was at once determined to seek those far lands, and, if possible, to bring the gold and pearls and diamonds to Spain and France, and other European countries, and many expeditions were sent out; but none of them ever reached Cathay, for all the American Continent and the great Pacific Ocean lay in the way, and the short passage to the East was never seen except in the dreams of some daring adventurers.

Chapter 2

Christopher Columbus

1451-1506 Italy/Spain

From very early times there existed overland routes of trade between Europe and Asia. During the Middle Ages traffic over these routes greatly increased, so that by the fifteenth century a large and profitable trade was carried on between the West and the East. Merchants in Western Europe grew rich through trade in the silks, spices, and precious stones that were brought by caravan and ship from India, China, and Japan. But in 1453 the Turks conquered Constantinople, and by frequent attacks upon Christian vessels in the Mediterranean made the old routes unsafe. A more practicable one became necessary.



Christopher Columbus at the gates of the monastery of Santa Maria de la Rabida with his son Diego, Benito Mercade y Fabregas

Already in the early part of the fifteenth century Portuguese sea-captains had skirted the western coast of Africa, and by the close of the century others of their number had rounded the Cape of Good Hope, in their search for a water route to the Indies. But Spain, at that time the most powerful nation of Europe, adopted a plan quite different from that of the Portuguese. What this plan was and how it was carried out, we can best understand by an acquaintance with the life and work of the great sea-captain and navigator, Christopher Columbus.

More than four hundred and fifty years ago there lived in the city of Genoa a poor workingman, who made his living by preparing wool for the

spinners. Of his four sons, the eldest was Christopher, born in 1436. Young Christopher was not, so far as we know, very different from most other boys in Genoa. He doubtless joined in their every-day sports, going with them to see the many vessels that sailed in and out of that famous sea-port, and listening for hours to the stories of sailors about distant lands.

But he did not spend all his time in playing and visiting the wharves, for we know that he learned his father's trade, and in school studied, among other things, reading, arithmetic, grammar, geography, and map-drawing. We can easily believe that he liked geography best of all, since it would carry his imagination far out over the sea and to lands beyond the sea. In map-drawing he acquired such skill that when he became a man he could earn his living, when occasion demanded, by making maps and charts.

Beyond these facts little is known about the boyhood and youth of Columbus. Very likely much of his early life was spent upon the sea, sailing on the Mediterranean and along the west coast of Africa. Once he went as far north as England and perhaps even farther, but of this we are not certain.

In the course of many voyages he heard much of the work done by Portuguese sailors and discoverers, for Portugal was at that time one of the greatest sea-powers of the world. As Lisbon, the capital of Portugal, was naturally a centre for sea-faring men, and as it was also the home of his brother Bartholomew, Columbus, at the age of about thirty-five, went there to live.

Columbus was a man of commanding presence. He was large, tall, and dignified in bearing, with a ruddy complexion and piercing blue-gray eyes. By the time he was thirty his hair had become white, and fell in wavy locks about his shoulders. Although his life of hardship and poverty compelled him to be plain and simple in food and dress, he always had the air of a gentleman, and his manners were pleasing and courteous. But he had a strong will, which overcame difficulties that would have overwhelmed most men.

While at Lisbon, Columbus married a woman far above him in social position, and went with her to live on a little island of the Madeiras, where her family had business interests. Meanwhile he was turning over in his mind schemes for a future voyage to the countries of the Far East. His native city, Genoa, had grown rich in trading in the silks, spices, and precious stones of the Indies, but the journey overland was dangerous, and a water route was much desired.

This need the Portuguese had felt along with the rest of Europe, and for a long time Portuguese sea-captains had been slowly but surely finding their way down the west coast of Africa, in search of a passage around the southern cape. This route would be easier and cheaper than the old one through the Mediterranean and across Asia. But Columbus thought out a more daring course, by which he planned to sail directly west from the Canary Islands, across the Atlantic Ocean, expecting at the end of his voyage to find the far-famed Indies.

Columbus was so full of his plan that it became the great thought of his life. A water route which would safely bring the wealth of the East to the doors of Europe would be the greatest discovery of the age. Moreover, his ambition was spurred by the thrilling account of a noted traveller, Marco Polo, who two centuries before had brought back from far-off China wonderful tales of golden palaces, of marvellous rivers crossed by marble bridges, and of countless treasures of gold, silver, and jewels.

About 1484 Columbus laid his scheme before King John of Portugal. The king would not

promise his assistance, but he borrowed hints from the charts of Columbus, and sent men of his own to learn whether they could reach land by sailing west. Meeting with stormy weather, and fearing the unknown expanse of ocean, the sailors soon put back to port, and brought word that there was no land to be seen.

When Columbus heard what the king had done he was very indignant, and at once quitted Portugal for Spain. The future appeared gloomy enough to the poor navigator without a helping friend. With bitter memories he shook off the dust of Lisbon, and, leading by the hand his little son Diego, four or five years old, trudged wearily on his journey. Columbus took Diego to the home of the boy's aunt, who lived not far from Palos, and, leaving him in her care, went in search of the king and queen of Spain, Ferdinand and Isabella.

The king and queen were at that time so much occupied in driving the Moors out of Spain that Columbus found difficulty in securing a hearing. When at last he was permitted to unfold his plans to a council of learned men they ridiculed him, because, forsooth, he said that the world was round like a globe,[1] and people lived on the opposite side of the earth. "Such a thing," they declared, "is absurd, for if people live on the other side of the earth their heads must be down. Then, too, if it rains there the rain falls upward; and trees, if they grow there, must grow upside down."

Some of the learned men, however, agreed with Columbus, and thought the carrying out of his plan by the aid of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella would bring honor and countless wealth to Spain. But their authority was not sufficient to affect those who believed Columbus to be a crazy dreamer or a worthless adventurer.

Month after month, year after year, Columbus cherished his ambitious scheme, encouraged by the few friends who were ready to use their influence for him. He followed the king and queen from place to place, as they moved their camp in the course of the war, and he sometimes fought bravely in the Spanish army. But in face of scorn and ridicule he never gave up hope of success. These were days of great trial, when even the boys in the streets tapped their foreheads as he passed by, and pointed their fingers at him with a peculiar smile.

In the autumn of 1491 Columbus made up his mind to leave Spain and try his fortune in France. So he went to the home of Diego's aunt, and once more taking his boy with him, started on foot out of the country which had so little befriended him. We can easily picture him, pale and wayworn, his clothes threadbare, his long white hair streaming over his shoulders. The travellers had gone but a short distance when they stopped at the gate of the Convent of St. Mary, which was only a mile and a half from Palos, to beg bread and water for the boy. At this moment the good prior of the convent happened to pass by. He was a man of learning and, on conversing with Columbus, became much interested in his story, and arranged a meeting of other learned men, among them the well-known sea-captain, Martin Alonzo Pinzon, who lived in Palos. The plans of Columbus appealed so strongly to this sea-captain that he promised not only to furnish money for an expedition, but to accompany it himself.

Moreover, the prior, who had been father-confessor to Isabella, won her over to the sailor's

[1] The belief that the world was round was by no means new, as learned men before Columbus' day had reached the same conclusion. But only a comparably small number of people held such a view of the shape of the earth.

cause. The queen sent what would now be nearly $1,200[2] to Columbus, and summoned him back to Court. Supplying himself with a mule and suitable clothing, Columbus, with lightened heart, sought the queen's presence. She approved his plan, but Columbus demanded so great a reward for his services as leader of the expedition that the queen refused to come to any agreement with him, and let him go.

Columbus in disgust mounted his mule, and started once more for France. At this juncture, however, one of the queen's advisers hurried into her presence, and put the case so earnestly that she sent a swift courier, who overtook Columbus in a mountain pass not far away, and brought him back. An agreement was soon reached, and Columbus accepted his commission with tears of joy.

He at once went to Palos to get men and vessels for the expedition. But here he met with serious difficulties. Sailors called the Atlantic Ocean the Sea of Darkness, and believed that it contained frightful sea-monsters, ready to dash in pieces all vessels that might come within reach. Moreover, we must remember that the vessels in those days were not safe against storms like the great ships of our day. To venture out upon this trackless sea signified to sailors almost certain death. Hence, they were unwilling to sail, and a royal decree had to be issued to compel them. Even then it became necessary to release criminals from prisons to supply the number required for the expedition.

The three caravels that were at length got ready for the perilous expedition westward in search of the Indies were not larger than many of the fishing-boats of today. The largest of the three—the flagship of Columbus—was called the Santa Maria. The other two were the Pinta and the Niña ("Baby"). The Santa Maria alone had a deck covering the entire hold of the vessel.

At last all was ready, and a half-hour before sunrise on Friday morning, August 3, 1492, this little fleet, with one hundred and twenty men and provisions for a year, sailed out of the port of Palos. It was a sorrowful hour for the poor sailors, who felt that they had looked upon their homes and their friends for the last time. Columbus steered for the Canaries, where he delayed three weeks to repair the rudder of the Pinta.

On September 6th he set sail again. When once out of sight of land the sailors, overcome with fear, cried and sobbed like children. But new trials awaited them. At the end of a week the compass needle no longer pointed to the North Star, and this strange fact filled the superstitious sailors with alarm.

Great was their consternation when a few days later the vessels entered vast stretches of sea-weed. At first the little fleet easily ploughed its way through this mass of floating green, but at the end of three days, on account of a light wind, the vessels moved more slowly. In their dismay the sailors feared that the vessels might never get through this immense sea of grass, but might have to lie there and rot, or, perhaps, escaping this danger, run upon rocks and shoals lying just beneath the grass and be broken in pieces. Though they were in the midst of obstacles apparently insurmountable, they were also in the path of the trade winds that steadily bore them onward. But in their terror, the sailors imagined they could never return because the wind would not allow them to sail in the opposite direction. When the wind began to blow from the southwest they were once more relieved of their fears.

After many days all hearts were gladdened by the sight of birds, which indicated that land was

[2] The sum sent was 20,000 maravedis of Spanish money.

near. It was an idle hope. Again and again some eager-eyed sailor shouted "land," but found later that he was looking at distant clouds.

The crews were in despair. Now in the belt of trade-winds that were steadily blowing them farther and farther from home and friends they cried in dismay: "We can never return to Spain. We are lost! What shall we do?" They begged Columbus to turn back. They became angry when he refused, and declared he was crazy and was leading them all to destruction. They even plotted to throw him overboard some night and say that he fell into the sea while looking at the stars. Columbus felt that dangers were growing thick about him, but he never faltered in his purpose. His strong will and his abiding faith in success kept him stanch in face of difficulties that would have caused an ordinary mind to give way.

On October 11th unmistakable signs of land appeared. A thorn branch with berries on it, a reed, and a carved stick came floating by. New life stirred in every heart, and the sailors looked eagerly in every direction for land.

The king and queen had promised a reward equal to nearly $600 of our present money to the sailor who should be the first to see land. Columbus had promised in addition a velvet cloak. Accordingly, all were on the alert to catch the first glimpse of land, and kept on the watch during the entire night after the appearance of the thorn-branch and carved stick.

About ten o'clock Columbus himself saw in the distance a light, which looked like a torch in the hands of some one moving along the shore. About two o'clock next morning, Friday, October 12th—or October 21st, according to our present method of reckoning time—a sailor on the Pinta saw, about five miles off, a low strip of land. This was an island of the Bahama Group. Just ten weeks had elapsed since the voyage began at Palos, and with intense eagerness Columbus and his men awaited the coming of daylight.

At dawn the boats were lowered, and all went on shore. Columbus, dressed in a rich robe of scarlet, carried the royal standard. His followers also bore banners, on each of which was a brilliant green cross with the letters F. and Y.—the Spanish initials for Ferdinand and Isabella—on each side. Above the letters were crosses. Columbus threw himself, kneeling, upon the ground. He wept for joy, and, kissing the earth, took possession of the land in the name of the king and queen of Spain. The sailors now fell upon their knees at Columbus's feet. They kissed his hands, and begged him to forgive them for their evil thoughts toward him.

At first the natives, whom Columbus called Indians because he thought he was in the East Indies, fled to the woods in fear of the Spaniards; but later they returned and worshipped the white men as beings from the sky. They thought the vessels were great birds and the sails wings. The Spaniards at once began to trade with the Indians, giving them such trifles as tiny bells, red caps, and glass beads, in exchange for tame parrots, cotton yarn, and a few small ornaments of gold, such as the natives wore in their noses.

According to the interesting description of the natives that Columbus wrote in his journal, they were very poor, dark-skinned, and naked. All of them seemed to be young and of strong build, with coarse black hair hanging long behind, but cut short over their foreheads. Their bodies were painted with various colors and in all manner of ways. The men carried sticks, pointed with fish-bones, for javelins, and moved their canoes with paddles that looked like wooden shovels.

The canoes, made out of single trunks of trees, were in some cases large enough to carry forty



Disembarkation of Columbus, Dióscoro Puebla

men. The dwellings, which were clustered together in groups of twelve to fifteen, were shaped like tents and had high chimneys. Inside the tents, hanging between posts, were nets used as beds and called "hammocks."

Columbus called the island upon which he had landed San Salvador (Holy Saviour). He wrote of the new country: "I know not where first to go, nor are my eyes ever weary of gazing at the beautiful verdure. The singing of the birds is such that it seems as if one would never desire to depart hence. There are flocks of parrots that obscure the sun, and other birds of many kinds, large and small, entirely different from ours; trees, also, of a thousand species, each having its particular fruit, and all of marvellous flavor."

Columbus sailed along the coast of Cuba and Hayti, landing here and there, and sent parties inland to find out what they could about the land and its people. Everywhere he was on the lookout for the cities of Asia—those wonderful cities of wealth and beauty described in such glowing colors by Marco Polo. He never doubted that he was in the land he had sought—the East Indies.

On Christmas morning (December 25, 1492), while it was still dark, as he was cruising along the shores of Hayti (or Hispaniola), the Santa Maria went aground on a sand-bar, where the waves soon knocked her to pieces. As the Pinta had already deserted, there now remained but one ship, the Niña. This little vessel was too small to accommodate all the men, and forty of the number, wishing to stay where they were, decided to build a fort out of the timbers of the wrecked vessel and put her guns in the fort for their defence. These men had provisions for a year, and constituted the first Spanish colony in the New World.

On January 4, 1493, the Niña sailed for Spain. All went well with the sailors until February

12th, when a great storm suddenly threatened to break the frail vessel into pieces. Poor Columbus! His heart grew faint within him. Had he and his men endured such peril and hardship to perish unknown in the sea? Would the world never know of their great achievement?

In his anxiety he wrote on parchment two separate accounts of his discovery, which he sealed and addressed to Ferdinand and Isabella. He then wrapped each in a cloth and, enclosing them in large cakes of wax, put them into barrels. One of these barrels he flung into the sea, and the other he kept on deck. The Niña passed safely through the storm, however, and on March 15th, after an absence of nearly seven and a half months, cast anchor in the harbor of Palos.

The successful voyager lost no time in reaching Barcelona, where he was received by the king and queen with triumphal honors. Everybody was ready to praise the man who had become so famous. There was a great procession in his honor in the streets of Barcelona. Leading this street parade were six Indians whom Columbus had brought back with him. These were smeared with paint, decked with feathers of tropical birds, and ornamented with bits of gold. Following them came men carrying stuffed and live birds of brilliant plumage, and the skins of different animals, all products of the New Land. Columbus rode on horseback, attended by many of Spain's great men, mounted on horses.



Columbus before the Queen, Emanuel Leutze

When the procession reached the house in which King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella were, Columbus went into the room where they sat on the throne. They did him the honor to rise as he entered, and when he knelt to kiss their hands, they again honored him, by bidding him rise and sit, like an equal, in their presence.

The poor sailor, once despised as an idle dreamer, had become a distinguished personage, honored alike by kings and princes and people. It was no longer necessary to force men by royal decree to sail with the great admiral. Many were now eager to go where they might reap wealth and honor.



Statue of Christopher Columbus
in Druid Hill Park, Baltimore

In September, 1493, Columbus again sailed, this time with a fleet of seventeen vessels and fifteen hundred men. Many of the latter were young men of noble birth, and belonged to families of wide influence. All supposed they were going to the East Indies, the land of jewels and spices and precious metals. With the purpose of founding a colony, Columbus took with him not only horses, mules, and cattle, but vines, vegetables, and seeds of many kinds.

When the fleet reached the island of Hayti, and the place where he had in the previous winter left the little colony of forty men, he found that the fort and provisions had been destroyed, and that eleven corpses had been buried near by; but not one of the forty men was ever again seen alive. After building a little town, called Isabella in honor of the queen, Columbus began exploring by land and sea. He found much that was beautiful and interesting, but much more that was disappointing. Moreover, the Indians were sometimes unfriendly, and his own men were often unruly and treacherous. At length, after four years of varying fortune, he started home, and after a long, hard voyage, during which provisions gave out, he and his men, weak with hunger, finally reached Spain in June. He was kindly received, and was promised more ships for another voyage.

In May, 1498, with six vessels and two hundred men besides the sailors, Columbus started on a third voyage, this time directing his course more to the south than he had done before. He landed on an island which he named Trinidad, and then sailed along the northern coast of South America.

He was not well, however, and in August turned his course for Santo Domingo, where he found things were going badly. Trouble with the Indians had arisen, and even more serious trouble in the colony itself had broken out. For two years Columbus struggled to set things right. But he was not

successful as a colonizer. Besides, many people were beginning to lose faith in him because he did not get expected treasures for Spain. Many others were jealous of his fame, and plotted to ruin him. At length an official was sent from Spain to Hayti to look into the situation. When he reached the island he confiscated Columbus's property, put him in chains, and sent him as a prisoner to the country from which he had but recently sailed with high honor.

In Spain the people were in sympathy with the admiral in his disgrace; so too was the queen, who sent money and summoned him to court. She received him there with tears in her eyes, and he broke down and wept at her feet.

In 1502 Columbus started on a fourth voyage, sailing along the eastern coast of Central America. But he was not able to accomplish much, and finally suffered shipwreck on the island of Jamaica, where he spent a year of misery. At last he set out for home, arriving there only a short time before Queen Isabella, his only protector, died.

Poor, sick, and discouraged, Columbus dragged out a weary life for eighteen months longer. He died in Spain of a broken heart, May 20, 1506, in utter ignorance of the greatness of his discovery. So little appreciated was he that the city annals make no mention of his death. It remained for succeeding generations to lift his name from obscurity and to give faithful acknowledgment of his achievements in the advance of human progress.

Chapter 3

Amerigo Vespucci

1454-1512 Italy

His Story

Amerigo Vespucci[1] was a native of Florence, Italy, and a friend of Columbus. He was an educated man and very fond of study.

At the time in which he lived it was difficult to find the latitude and longitude of places, and few people were able to calculate either correctly. Vespucci was skillful in the work of computing longitude, and he was also well versed in the history of all the voyages that had been made. He was familiar with the facts of astronomy and geography then known, and was well able to conduct the sailing of a ship into strange waters. It is believed that Vespucci made six voyages. He did not command his own vessels, as Columbus did, but he went with the expedition as assistant or adviser to the captain, keeping records of the voyage and making maps and charts.

In his first voyage, made in 1497, Vespucci reached the coast of Honduras, and sailed into the Gulf of Mexico. Here he found, probably on the coast of Yucatan, a queer little sea village which reminded him of the great city of Venice near his home.

The houses in this village were made of wood, and were built on piles running out into the water. These houses were connected with the shore by bridges, which were constructed in such a manner that they could be drawn up, thus cutting off all connection with the land. In one house Vespucci found six hundred people. A very large family, was it not?

Continuing the voyage around the Gulf of Mexico, many strange and wonderful sights were seen. The natives roasted and ate frightful animals, which from the description given us we now know to have been alligators. They also made cakes, or patties, out of fish, and baked them on red-hot coals. The Spaniards were invited to taste these dainties, and those of the sailors who did so found the strange food very palatable.

After sailing round the coast of Florida, the ships headed northeast, landing every now and then for the purpose of trading with the Indians. The Spaniards, finding but little gold and none of the rich spices for which they were looking, at last decided to return home.

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[1] Americus Vespucius seems to have been a man both respected and honored. The map on which his name appeared first was not at all the America of today; it was simply the part he supposed he had discovered—a small continent.

Just before sailing, some friendly Indians helped the Spaniards to make an attack upon a cannibal island. The attack was successful, and about two hundred cannibals were taken prisoners and carried to Spain, where they were sold as slaves. [This seems a very cruel act now, but in these times it was thought to be quite right to sell captives taken in war, and so Vespucci only did what he thought as perfectly fair.]

Vespucci made a second voyage in 1499, in which he sailed down the African coast to the Cape Verde Islands, and then headed his ship almost directly west. He sighted land at Cape St. Roque, and then sailed northwest, exploring the north coast of South America, then called the Pearl Coast. After this he returned to Spain.

Shortly after the return of Vespucci to Spain, he accepted an offer to take service under the Portuguese flag.



Statue of Amerigo Vespucci outside the Uffizi, Florence

In 1501 he set sail from Lisbon with three caravels, under this flag. He reached the coast of South America near Cape St. Roque, and sailed south as far as the South Georgia Islands.

As he proceeded southward, he found the country was inhabited by fierce Indians, who ate their fellow-creatures. He did not like the natives, as you may suppose; but he thought the country was beautiful, with the wonderful verdure and foliage of the tropics, and the queer animals and bright-colored birds.

Great was the joy of Vespucci when he discovered in the forests large quantities of a sort of red dye-wood which was prized very highly by Europeans. This wood, which had hitherto been found only in Eastern countries, was called brazil wood; and because of its abundance there, he gave the name Brazil to that part of the country.

The expedition sailed slowly on and at length lost sight of land. It is thought that Vespucci headed the ships southeast because he wished to find out whether there was land or not in the Antarctic Ocean.

As they sailed farther and farther south, the climate became very disagreeable. The winds grew cold and forbidding, fields of floating ice hindered the progress of the vessel, and the nights became very long.

The sailors grew frightened, fearing that they were entering a land of constant darkness. Their fear became greater when a terrific storm arose. The sea grew rough, and the fog and sleet prevented the sailors from seeing whether land was near or not. The land which they had hoped to find now became an added danger.

One day, through the sleet and snow, the sailors saw with terror a rocky, jagged coast in front of them.

This land proved to be the South Georgia Islands, and was a wretched and forlorn country composed of rocks and glaciers, and entirely deserted. For a day and a half they sailed in sight of this frightful shore, fearing each moment that their ship would be cast on the rocks and that they would all perish. As soon as the weather permitted, therefore, Vespucci signaled his fleet, and the ships were headed for home, reaching Portugal in 1502.

This voyage secured Brazil for Portugal, and added greatly to the geographical knowledge of the day.

The ancients had said that no continent existed south of the equator. But the great length of coast along which Vespucci had sailed proved that the land was not an island. It was plainly a continent, and south of the equator.

Vespucci called the land he found the New World. For a time it was also called the Fourth Part of the Karth, the other three parts being Europe, Asia, and Africa. In 1507 a German writer published an account of the discovery, in which he called the new country America, in honor of Americus Vespucius,[2] the discoverer.

This land was not connected in any way with the discovery of Columbus, for he was supposed to have found Asia.[3]

The name America was at first applied only to that part of the country which we now call Brazil, but little by little the name was extended until it included the whole of the Western Continent.

You will be glad to know that Vespucci, in the time of his success, did not forget his old friend Columbus, who was then poor and in disgrace. Vespucci visited him and did all he could to assist him.

After Vespucci had made three other voyages to the New World, he was given an important government position in Spain, which he held during the remainder of his life.

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[2] Americus Vespucius is the Latin form of Amerigo Vespucci.

[3] Notes. It must not be lost sight of that Cabot was undoubtedly the first discoverer of the mainland. Columbus did not find the mainland until afterwards. He discovered the islands of the West Indies and northern part of South America, near the mouth of the Orinoco. To Columbus all honor is due: he led the way; afterwards it was easy for others to follow.

Chapter 4

John Cabot

circa 1450 Italy

His Early Life. — Some years ago I had the good fortune to visit the fair land of Italy. While in that country I spent several days in the city of Genoa, the birthplace of John Cabot, the great navigator and discoverer of the mainland of North America.

I tried in every possible way to find out something about his early life: I inquired among the people, I talked with many school-teachers, and I visited the public library; but I got no definite information.

Though I failed to obtain historical facts about Cabot's youth, I heard a number of legendary stories which have been associated with his name. Some of these told about his childhood, the games he played, and the things that interested him most. Others gave an account of his school days, and the eagerness with which he studied geography, history, and navigation. Still others made known the many hours that he spent reading the thrilling account of the East handed down to posterity by the famous Italian traveler, Marco Polo. All these, however, are not to our purpose.



Portrait of John Cabot, Giustino Menescardi

History tells us that John Cabot, the celebrated discoverer of the mainland of North America, was born during the first half of the fifteenth century in the city of Genoa. Some years later, in 1461, he removed to Venice, where he began an eventful career as a seaman and a trader.

In those days the city of Venice carried on an extensive trade with Asiatic countries, such as India, China, and Japan. The spices, gold, and precious stones from these nations were brought to Europe partly by land and partly by sea. When the Turks rendered it almost impossible for

Europeans to travel through Asia, every sailor and trader set to work to find a water route to the East.

A Wonderful Island. — In the "Travels of Marco Polo," we read: "Cipango is an island towards the East about 1500 miles from Europe. The people of this land are white and civilized. I can tell you, the quantity of gold there is endless, for the people find it in their own island, and the King of the place does not allow it to be exported. Few merchants, moreover, visit the country, because it is so far from the mainland. Thus it happens that gold is abundant there beyond measure.

"I will tell you a wonderful thing about the residence of the Lord of Cipango. His palace is roofed with gold, the corridors and the floors of the different rooms are paved with gold slabs two fingers thick, and the windows are also made of gold: so that altogether the richness of this building is beyond belief. The island has, moreover, an abundance of pearls of a rose color, and large quantities of other precious stones."

After reading this and other glowing accounts of the East, every sailor and trader could not help being desirous of finding a water route to the rich countries of Asia.

Another incident, moreover, had a great influence in bringing about Cabot's voyage of discovery. He had heard of Christopher Columbus' journey across the Atlantic Ocean in the service of the King and the Queen of Spain. He had read of his wonderful discovery. What was to prevent him from making as daring a voyage as his fellow-countryman, Columbus? He felt that he knew just as much as Columbus, and that his knowledge of navigation was as great, if not greater.

How Cabot Set to Work. — Prompted by these and other considerations, Cabot, who was then living in England, went to see King Henry VII, and obtained his permission "to seek out, discover, and find whatsoever islands, countries, regions, or provinces, which before this time have been unknown to all Christians."



The Departure of John and Sebastian Cabot on their First Voyage of Discovery, Ernest Board (Courtesy of Bristol Museum & Art Gallery)

Cabot then hastened back to Bristol, chartered a small sailing vessel, the Matthew, and with a crew of eighteen hardy and courageous sailors, embarked at that port in May, 1497.

Strange as it may appear, there was no particular demonstration of the people to mark the event. The object of Cabot's voyage may not have been publicly known.

We can imagine the

feelings which filled the breasts of the sailors aboard the Matthew. How they must have doubted the prudence of sailing into the "Sea of Darkness"! What misgivings they must have had as to the outcome of the expedition! But the great courage and daring spirit of John Cabot counteracted all this. He acted as if he were sure of reaching the shores of Asia.

The Result of His Voyage. — After a long, adventurous voyage of fifty days, Cabot reached the mainland of the North American continent about June, 1497. What great joy must have filled his heart as he beheld a vast country in the distance (Cape Breton or Labrador)! How eager he must have been to make a landing! Surely he must have offered up a fervent prayer of thanksgiving to his Creator.

After going ashore, Cabot's first act was to erect a large cross from which were unfurled the flag of England, and the flag of St. Mark, the patron saint of Venice. He then looked around to see if he could find any evidence that the place was inhabited. As a result of his observations, he found snares set to catch wild animals. This showed him that people lived in the territory.

Having thus taken possession of the country in the name of the King of England, Cabot began his homeward journey with all haste, and reached the port of Bristol in August, 1497.

His Royal Reception. — It is natural to suppose that John Cabot, after landing in England, went at once to King Henry VII and told him about the success of his undertakings. The English King was so pleased with his discovery that he gave orders for another voyage to start early in the following year, 1498.

When the news of Cabot's arrival in Bristol became generally known, there was great rejoicing among all classes of people; for they felt that England had "gained a part of Asia without a stroke of the sword." The merchants and traders were overjoyed at the prospect of carrying on business with a country where gold, gems, and aromatic spices were to be found.

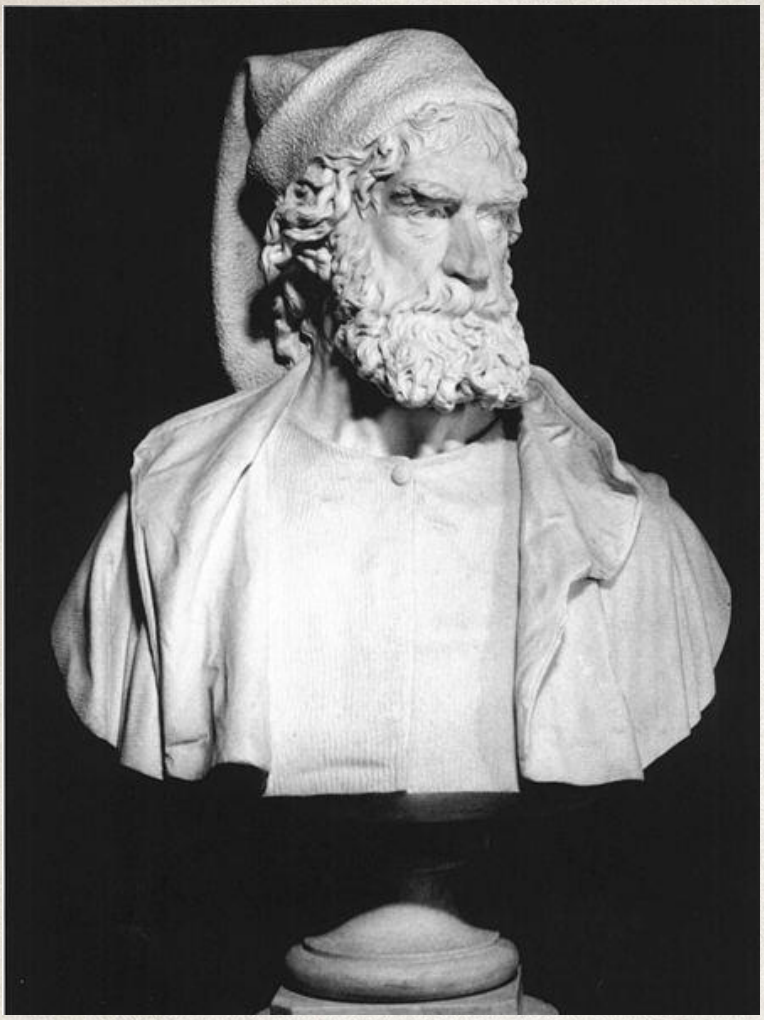
There is hardly a doubt but that Cabot thought he had discovered a part of China, or as it was called at that time the "Territory of the Grand Khan." He was sure that the abundance of gold and precious stones which Marco Polo had told about would soon be brought back to England.

While waiting for the second voyage, Cabot and his hardy sailors had time to tell the people of England about the terrible hardships which they underwent in their daring trip across the Atlantic, and about some of the wonderful things they had seen in the newly found land. They reported that the soil was fertile and the climate temperate, that redwood grew there, and that the surrounding sea was full of fish which could be caught not only with nets but with baskets.

The Second Voyage. — Some time in the first half of the year 1498, Cabot, in command of five ships and about three hundred men, set sail from Bristol on a second expedition. The vessels at first steered to the north and then to the west. On reaching the American coast somewhere near Newfoundland, Cabot wished to go farther north; but the sailors, seeing the large bodies of ice found in the ocean thereabouts, were afraid. It is said that he then sailed to the south, skirting the Atlantic coast of North America as far as Cape Hatteras.

After this no one seems to know what happened to the expedition. We cannot say for certain that it returned to England; neither can we affirm that the ships were lost at sea.

His Memory Forgotten. — For many years after Cabot's voyages, his memory was almost forgotten. This accounts in a measure for the scanty amount of facts of his early life and his unaccountable death which history possesses.



Bust of Giovanni Cabot
(Courtesy of Venice's Institute of Science, Literature and Art)

The people of his age regarded a voyage of exploration and discovery purely as a business venture. It can be truly said that if this great Italian sailor had brought back to England a ship-load of gold, or if he had procured for the English people a cargo of precious stones, his name would have been heralded in the history of all times as one of the greatest discoverers and navigators of the world. The mere finding of a new country, however, was hardly worth mentioning.

No matter what has been thought or written about the great expeditions of John Cabot, every inhabitant of North America owes him a debt of gratitude for the daring voyages which he made to our continent.

Columbus and Cabot. — We do not wish to take away one iota of the glory which rightfully belongs to Columbus. He, it is true, showed the way to cross the Atlantic, but Cabot first landed on the mainland of North America. It makes no difference to us under what auspices these discoveries were made. Columbus sailed under the Spanish flag, while Cabot flew the English flag. Both of these men were capable seamen. They were gifted with logical minds; and they did their own thinking. They surmounted all obstacles and they knew no such thing as fear. They were at heart practical Catholics and, when they landed on the newly found countries of Central and North America, they erected the cross of Jesus Christ as a token of their religious belief.

Chapter 5

Vasco da Gama

circa 1460–1524 Portugal

Both the Spaniards and the Portuguese were cut off from trade with the East, because the Turks had taken possession of Constantinople. In consequence of this, the navigators of both countries were making earnest efforts to find a water route to India.



Vasco da Gama,
Antonio Manuel Da Fonseca

Spain, as you know, had faith in Columbus, and helped him in his plan of trying to reach India by sailing westward. But the Portuguese had a different idea. They spent their time and money in trying to sail round the African coast, in the belief that India could be reached by means of a southeast passage.

This southeast passage could be found only by crossing the "burning zone," as the part of the earth near the equator was called; and all sailors feared to make the attempt.

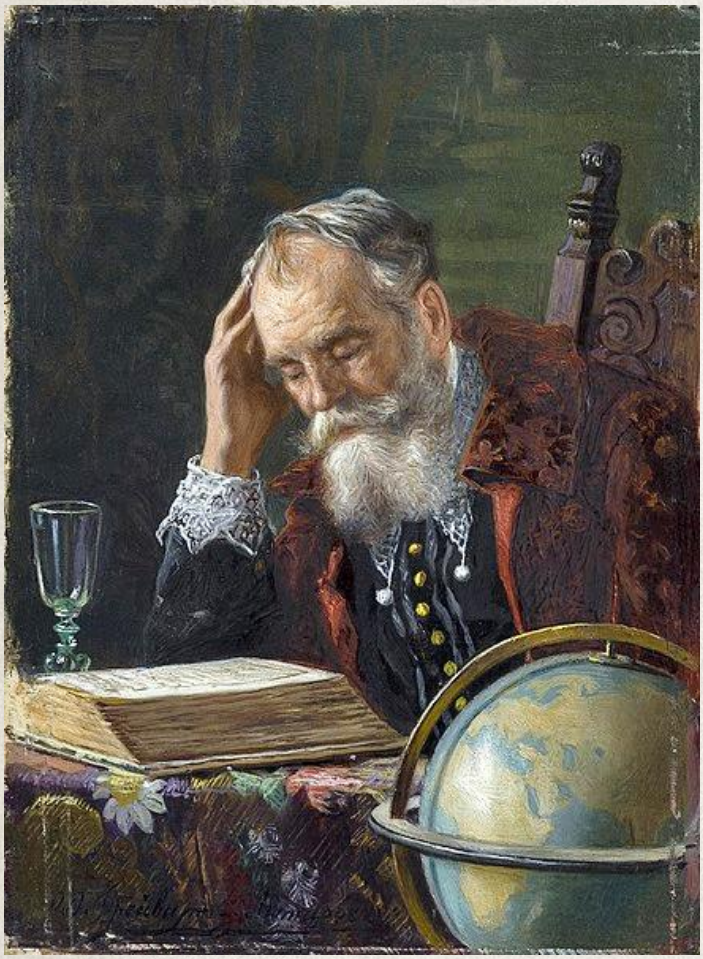
It was thought almost impossible to cross this burning zone, and the few navigators who had ventured as far as the equator had turned back in fear of steaming whirlpools and of fiery belts of heat.

In 1486, six years before Columbus discovered America, the King of Portugal sent Bartholomew Diaz, a bold and daring navigator, to find the end of the African coast.

Bartholomew Diaz sailed through the fiery zone without meeting any of the dreadful misfortunes which the sailors so feared. When he had sailed beyond the tropic of Capricorn, a severe storm arose.

The wind blew his three vessels directly south for thirteen days, during which time he lost sight of land. When the sun shone again, Diaz headed his vessels eastward, but as no land appeared, he again changed the direction, this time heading them toward the north. After sailing northward a short time, land was reached about two hundred miles east of the Cape of Good Hope.

Diaz now pushed on four hundred miles farther along the coast of Africa, and saw the wide expanse of the Indian Ocean before him. Here the sailors refused to go any farther, and Diaz, although he wanted very much to go ahead and try to reach India, was obliged to return.



Portrait of Vasco da Gama,
Oskar Freiwirth-Lützow

On the way home, the vessels passed close to the cape which projects from the south coast of Africa, and Diaz named it Stormy Cape, in memory of the frightful storm which hid it from view on the way down. When they reached Lisbon, however, King John said that it should be called the Cape of Good Hope, because they now had hope that the southern route to India was found.

Diaz won much praise for his bravery and patience in making this voyage. He had proved that the stories about the fiery zone were false, and that the African coast had an end.

It remained, however, for Vasco Da Gama, then a young man of about twenty years of age, to prove that India could be reached in this way.

In 1497 Da Gama sailed from Lisbon to the Cape of Good Hope, doubled the cape, and proceeded across the Indian Ocean to Hindustan.

He returned to Lisbon in 1499, his ships loaded with the rich products of the East, including cloves, spices, pepper, ginger, and nutmeg. He also brought with him rich robes of silk and satin, costly gems, and many articles made of carved ivory, or of gold and of silver.

The King of Portugal was greatly pleased with what Da Gama had accomplished, and his successful voyage was the wonder of the day.

The same year that Da Gama returned from India by a route around the south end of Africa, with his ships loaded with rich produce, Sebastian Cabot returned from a fruitless voyage to the strange, barren coast of North America.

It was no wonder that the voyages of Columbus and the Cabots were thought unsuccessful as

compared with the voyage Da Gama had just finished.

No one then dreamed of a New World; all were searching for the Orient—for golden Cathay.



Statue of Vasco da Gama at
Antoniadis Palace Park, Alexandria, Egypt.

Chapter 6

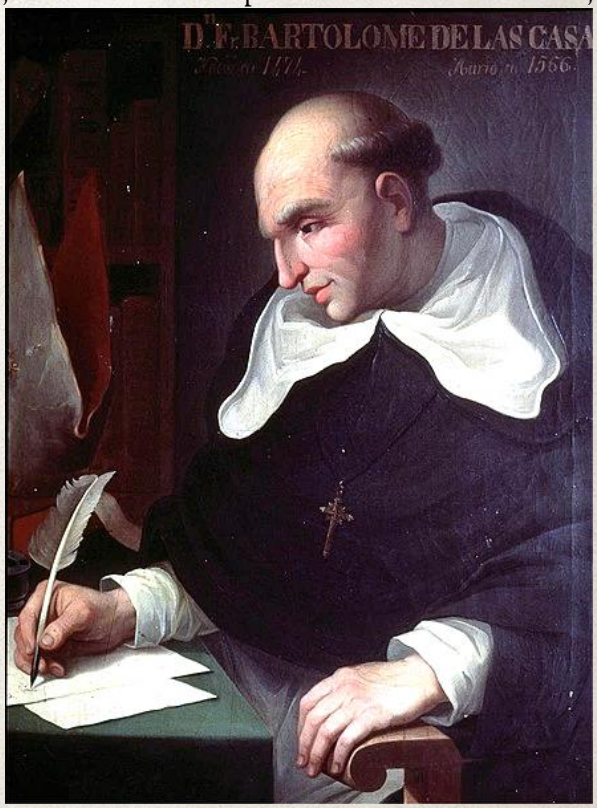
Bartolome de las Casas

1484-1566 Spain

Father Las Casas. — If you look at the map of Spain, you will notice that the once-famous city of Seville is situated on the Guadalquivir River, about fifty miles from the Atlantic Ocean. In this once-renowned commercial center, in the year 1474, was born the first priest ordained in America, the Rev. Bartholomew Las Casas.

This child, who in later years became the Protector of the Indians of America, was descended from a noble family. His education appears to have been received in the schools of his native city and at the famous University of Salamanca.

History tells us very little about the youthful days of Las Casas. He was doubtless, like many other children of his native country, a lover of flowers and manly sports. At school he was noted for his serious manner and for his unusual application to study.



Portrait of Bartolomé de Las Casas,
unknown artist

The Discovery of America. — When Las Casas had reached the age of eighteen or nineteen, the great Christopher Columbus returned to Spain. The success of his daring voyage must have fired the heart of the young Spanish nobleman for, after graduating with high honors from the University of Salamanca, he decided to visit the New World. Accordingly he left his native land in 1502, and arrived with twenty-five hundred of his fellow countrymen a few months later at San Domingo.

When Las Casas had finished his course at Salamanca, he was admitted to the bar, that is, he was permitted to practice law; but there is nothing to show that he followed this calling in the New World. After landing on the American continent, he must have used one of the three prevalent ways of making a living: (1) Bartering trinkets with the Indians for their gold, (2) mining, or (3) farming.

Raised to the Priesthood. — Judging from the character of Las Casas, we should say that from the year 1502 to 1510 he was either a farmer or a miner. During this time he must have given some

thought to the question of his vocation; for, toward the end of 1510, he was raised to the priesthood. This first ordination in the New World was the occasion of general rejoicing among the American colonists. Little did they think that Father Las Casas would in a few years become the Protector of the Indians and the fearless accuser of unscrupulous Spaniards.

It must be borne in mind that many of the Spaniards who accompanied Columbus on his voyages to America were money-making adventurers who cared little or nothing for the Christianizing of the Indians. When these Europeans found gold in many of the islands, the natives were compelled to work for them in the mines. Worse than this, groups of irresponsible Spaniards sometimes plundered the supplies of the Indians and carried off their women and children.

The natives, who at first regarded the white men as people who came from heaven, soon began to look upon them as the worst kind of persecutors; and, in the course of time, energetic efforts were made to expel the pale-faces from the West Indies.

A Dreadful Practice. — It was about this time that bloodhounds were used by the Spaniards to terrorize and to bring the Indians to terms. On one occasion twenty of these ferocious animals were let loose like wolves among a flock of lambs, and hundreds of the natives were torn to pieces. In this shocking manner, the inhabitants in some of the islands were forced to yield to the white men. Then it was that tributes of gold were exacted from the Indians. Those who could not pay deserted their farms and mines and fled to the mountains.

Many of the first Spanish settlers in America, as we have already said, were "money mad." In addition to this, they were lazy. Some of them preferred hunger to work. Consequently the Europeans saw the need of pressing the natives into service. At their urgent request, Columbus asked the Spanish government to allow him to divide the Indians of the different islands among the Spanish settlers. Spain granted the favor, and the Indians became the slaves of the white men.

In justice to Columbus, it must be said that he did not intend that this allotment of the Indians should last more than a few years; but his successors, Bobadilla and Ovando, made the slavery of the Indians lawful.

The Franciscans and the Dominicans. — The Franciscans have the honor of being the first Religious Order to arrive in the New World in 1493: three or four secular priests came at the same time. Seventeen years later, in 1510, three Dominican Fathers landed at San Domingo, and here founded their first community in America. Their influence in the New World was soon felt. Many little abuses which had crept into the Spaniards' way of living were soon stamped out; but the worst abuse of all, the enslaving of the Indians, was not corrected. The followers of St. Dominic felt that some steps should be taken to better the condition of the natives. After giving the subject much thought, it was decided that one of the Fathers should preach a special sermon on the cruel and barbarous treatment of the Indians by some Spaniards.

A Memorable Sermon. — In due time the sermon was written, read by the Fathers, and then signed by each. All the Spaniards, from the Governor down, were invited to be present at the Dominican church on the first Sunday of Lent, 1511.

This particular day came and the church was thronged with Spaniards, who expected to hear some startling news or some pleasant surprise. The surprise came, but it was anything but pleasant, for the preacher accused many of the Spaniards of being unjust, cruel, and barbarous.

Taking for his text, "I am the voice of One crying in the wilderness," Father Montesino said:



Bartolomé de Las Casas, unknown artist

"I ascend this pulpit to let you know that I am the voice of Christ crying in the wilderness of this island. Hence it is meet that you listen to my words with no ordinary attention, but with all the power of your souls and your five senses.

"Tell me, with what right and with what justice do you subject the Indians to so cruel and so horrible a slavery? With what authority do you wage your abominable wars against these people—many of whom you have slaughtered? Why do you overburden them with work, and why do you not always give them sufficient food to keep them from starving? Nay, why do you kill them daily with excessive labor that they may bring you gold? What steps have you taken to have them know God, their Creator, to be baptized, to hear Mass on Sundays and Holy-days? Are you not bound to love them as yourselves? Rest assured that in the state in which many of you are now living, you can no more save your souls than the Moors or the Jews who do not believe in Jesus Christ."

The Result of the Sermon. — On that very afternoon the Spaniards of San Domingo sent a deputation to the Dominican Fathers, demanding that the preacher should on the next Sunday withdraw his insulting words. When the superior of the Dominicans would not consent to their request, the Spaniards threatened that dire punishment would be meted out to the preacher.

On the following Sunday Father Montesino, nothing daunted, preached a still more severe sermon against the unjust slavery of the Indians. He proved that everything he said in his first sermon was true; and he asserted that the Spaniards' treatment of the Indians was crying to heaven for vengeance.

Las Casas as Chaplain. — Such was the deplorable condition of the Indians when Las Casas was ordained a priest in the year 1510. A few months after his ordination, the Governor of Cuba invited him to be chaplain of his army. In this trying and difficult position, Father Las Casas, by his kindness and thoughtfulness, won the respect and confidence of the Indians.

After spending about two years as chaplain of the army in Cuba, Father Las Casas was awarded one of the best sections of the island, and the Indians of the neighborhood to be used as slaves. A few years later he gave up this property, because he realized that the slavery of the Indians was



Bartolomé de Las Casas, Constantino Brumidi,
Courtesy of Architect of the Capitol

unjust, and that he, a priest of God, should not grow rich on slave labor. The Governor of the island tried to dissuade him, but it was useless. Father Las Casas had made up his mind to spend the rest of his life protecting, defending, and Christianizing the Indians of America.

Las Casas Calls on the King. — After a few months Father Las Casas went to Spain to appeal directly to King Ferdinand in behalf of the Indians. Here he found many obstacles. The Spanish settlers in America had powerful friends at court. These tried in every way to counteract the words of Las Casas. They accused him of being a born disturber who thought more of the Indians than he did of his fellow countrymen. Notwithstanding their calumnies, Father Las Casas gained his point. He was made the official Protector of the Indians in America, and three Fathers of St. Jerome were appointed commissioners to look into the question of Indian slavery.

Before leaving for America, the three commissioners were influenced more or less by the friends of the Spanish colonists. When they reached their destination additional pressure was brought to bear on them. As a result, they were only half-hearted in their aid to better the condition of the Indians. Father Las Casas left no one in doubt as to the object of his mission. He boldly told the Spanish officials in the New World that it was the wish of the King that the natives should not be kept in slavery.

The Spanish officials, however, were not willing to free their slaves. Such a course would interfere with their money-making schemes. The three commissioners seemed to be wavering as to whether the measure was necessary. In this predicament the Protector of the Indians went again to Spain to let the King know the real state of affairs in the New World.

His Work at the Spanish Court. — During the following five years Father Las Casas tried to have more stringent laws passed to better the condition of the Indians. The colonists in America, too, had their representative at the Spanish Court. Nevertheless, the Protector of the Indians was successful: the Fathers of St. Jerome were recalled, and Las Casas' scheme of colonization approved.

Toward the end of the year 1520, Father Las Casas sailed for the New World and a few weeks

later arrived at Porto Rico. Previous to his landing, a number of Spaniards had come to the Island to procure some Indian slaves. Owing to the good work of the Dominicans, the native Indians treated the Spaniards kindly; but when the Europeans seized and carried into captivity a number of the natives, the anger of the Indians knew no bounds. Every white person whom they could seize was put to death. On this account, Father Las Casas went to San Domingo. Here the royal decrees were published, but unfortunately they were never enforced by the Spanish officials.

Las Casas Becomes a Dominican. — Very much disappointed and discouraged, Father Las Casas betook himself to the Dominican convent. After some weeks spent in prayer, he entered the Dominican Order in 1521. The succeeding four or five years were spent in making his novitiate. This period of study and prayer served to fit him for the very onerous duties which later fell to his lot.

It happened that there was one Indian chief on the island of Hispaniola (now called Haiti) who had never been conquered by the Spanish forces. For ten years he and his followers had lived in the hills and mountains of this country in spite of the Spaniards. They did more: they often put the soldiers of Spain to flight.

In the year 1529, one of the Spanish captains was ordered to crush the defiant chief. Before attempting to do so, he went to Father Las Casas and asked him to use his influence in pacifying these people. The Protector of the Indians thereupon prevailed on the natives to cease their warfare on the white men and to pledge allegiance to the King of Spain.

The Conquest of Peru. — About the year 1530 Francisco Pizarro received permission from the Spanish Crown to conquer the inhabitants of Peru. When Father Las Casas heard what Pizarro intended to do, he went immediately to Spain and obtained a decree forbidding any one to treat the natives of Peru as unjustly as those of the West Indies. With great haste Father Las Casas returned to America, and set out for a place near Guayaquil where Pizarro was encamped. Without fear or trembling, he presented the decree to the Spanish leader. Thereupon all the officers and soldiers promised to obey the royal commands. Las Casas then returned to Nicaragua where a Dominican convent was built.

Father Las Casas and two or three other Dominicans went to Guatemala about 1535 to begin missionary work among the inhabitants of that country. Not long afterward, orders came from the King of Spain that everything should be done to convert the Indians to Christianity. The Spanish colonists argued that it was impossible to Christianize the natives in a peaceful manner; but Father Las Casas was convinced that it could be done. The Governor of Guatemala accordingly permitted the Dominicans to undertake the work.

Contrary to the opinion of the colonists, the Dominican Fathers converted the most ferocious and warlike tribe of Indians in Guatemala without shedding a drop of blood. In order that these converts should not be ill-treated by the Spaniards, Father Las Casas returned once more to Spain. The result of his visit was that further laws protecting the Indians were enacted by the Spanish government.

Las Casas Becomes a Bishop. — At the beginning of the year 1543, the Spanish government was holding session at Barcelona. Father Las Casas went there to thank the King for having made new laws in favor of the red men. On this occasion the Protector of the Indians was offered a bishopric in Peru—an honor which he respectfully declined. However, he was shortly afterward

appointed Bishop of Chiapas in Mexico, and was consecrated in Seville, March 31, 1544. That same year, after a most tiresome journey, he reached Chiapas.



Friar Bartolomé de Las Casas Converting an Aztec Family,
Miguel Noreña

Spain had decreed that the American Indians who had been enslaved by the Spaniards should be set free. Bishop Las Casas tried in every possible way to have the decrees enforced, but without success. Later on, when they were partly repealed by the government, Bishop Las Casas made up his mind to return to Spain to plead the cause of the children of the forest.

Literary Work of Las Casas. — Bishop Las Casas, in the course of his busy and zealous life, took time to write not only a "General History of the Indies," but also a number of smaller works in defense of the American Indians.

When the brave and saintly bishop was approaching death, his fellow Dominicans knelt around his humble bed and recited the prayers for the dying. He then asked their forgiveness for any offenses that he might have committed, and begged them to continue his work in behalf of the Indians. A few moments later, holding in one hand a blessed candle and in the other a crucifix, the first priest ordained in America expired.

Chapter 7

Vasco Nuñez de Balboa

1475-1519 Spain

His Birth. — Seventeen years before the discovery of America by Columbus, there was born, in Spain, a child who was destined to engrave his name on the pages of history as one of the bravest and most heroic navigators of all times. This boy was Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, the courageous discoverer of the Pacific Ocean.

Descended from an honorable family, Balboa received only an ordinary education; for, at an early age, he entered the service of a Spanish nobleman.

Balboa Crosses the Atlantic. — At the age of twenty-five, in the year 1500, Balboa decided that he would seek his fortune in the New World. Accordingly he joined an expedition for the shores of America. After a long and perilous voyage, he landed at Darien. Here the commander and his men made friends of the natives, and collected a large amount of gold and pearls. When these had been placed on board, they found that the ships had been injured by a worm which abounds in the water of the Torrid Zone.

Having repaired the vessels as best they could, they embarked for Spain; but, before they had gone very far, they were obliged to cast anchor at a small island near San Domingo. As soon as the necessary repairs had been made, the vessels again sailed for Spain. This time a terrific gale drove them back to port. While waiting for favorable weather, the Spaniards made a thorough examination of the worm-eaten vessels, and found them entirely unsafe to cross the Atlantic.

Balboa Becomes a Farmer. — Some time later, other ships were fitted out to carry the gold and pearls to Spain. Balboa, however, did not go back to his native land, but turned his attention to farming. Unfortunately his adventurous nature was not suited to the ordinary work of a farmer. Instead of making money at the business, he fell into debt. This brought on restlessness and discouragement. Realizing that something had to be done, he determined to embark on another voyage of discovery and exploration.

Fearing lest the people to whom he owed money would have him cast into prison were he to leave the neighborhood, Balboa placed himself in a barrel which was carried on board a ship just as she was about to sail. When the vessel was some distance from the shore, Balboa, to the great astonishment of those on board, came forth from his hiding-place. At first the Captain was very angry and threatened to put him off on the first uninhabited island; but, when Balboa made himself useful, the Captain allowed him to remain.

Balboa Offers a Suggestion. — The first landing of the expedition was made at San Sebastian. Here the Indians attacked the Spaniards with the utmost fury, and forced them to return to their ships. This incident was a source of discouragement to Captain Enciso. Just then Balboa went to

the Captain, and told him of a place in Darien where the natives were well disposed, and where an abundance of pearls and gold could be easily secured. This timely information buoyed up the spirits of the Spaniards. Accordingly, with light hearts they set sail for the spot.

Within a short distance of their destination they landed. Contrary to their expectations, they were attacked by five hundred warlike natives; but the bows and arrows of the Indians were no match for the firearms of the Spaniards. The natives were thus put to flight after a short contest; and when Captain Enciso entered the village, he found an abundance of provisions and a large quantity of gold.

In the absence of the royal governor, he took command of the colony. He was in many ways unfitted for the office. He was too strict. He did not take into account the men with whom he had to deal. Consequently, he was soon afterward deposed, and Balboa became governor.



Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, artist unknown

Balboa Leads an Expedition to Coyba. — Guided by two Spaniards who had been treated very kindly by Careta, the Indian chief of Coyba, Balboa led an expedition to that part of the country. The native chief welcomed the Spaniards most heartily. Balboa then asked him for provisions. The latter said that he had none to spare.

"Don't believe him," said one of the Spaniards, "I know that he is not telling the truth."

Pretending that they were satisfied with the chief's answer, the Europeans left the village. That very night, when the Indians were asleep, they returned, plundered the little town, killed many of the natives, and took prisoner the chief, his wife, and children.

This action of the Spaniards frightened the chief. He appealed to Balboa for mercy, and said that he was willing to enter into a treaty of peace and friendship with the white men. The Spanish commander was only too willing to sign the treaty and earn the good will of the natives. With the help of Careta, Balboa and his men then explored the neighboring country and made friends of the Indians, or conquered them, if they resisted the commander's authority.

A Quarrel about Gold. — In their tours of exploration, the Spaniards obtained large quantities of gold and other metals from the natives. On one occasion, as Balboa was dividing the spoils among his men, a quarrel ensued regarding the proper share to be given to each. Careta's son, who happened to be looking on, said:

"Why do you quarrel about such a trifle? I can tell you about a place where gold is so plentiful that the natives eat their food out of golden vessels."

The Spaniards listened with rapt attention to the Indian. They did not wish to miss a word that he said. The chief's son then continued:

"This place is situated beyond high and rocky mountains very difficult to cross. When you reach there, you will find a vast amount of gold."

Balboa Undertakes the Journey. — Guided by a number of Indians, Balboa and his followers set out for the much-desired country. On their way thither, they met an Indian chief who thought that he and his warriors could prevent them from crossing his territory. However, the smoke and the report of the Spanish guns soon terrified the natives, who scampered off to the mountains, leaving a large amount of gold and jewels to the Spaniards.



Bronze Statue of Vasco Nuñez de Balboa
in Madrid, Spain, by Enrique Perez Comendador

Delighted with the result of their recent encounter, the Spaniards began to climb the high mountain. When they were nearing the highest peak, Balboa ordered his men to rest while he ascended alone. Imagine how his heart must have beat with joy when he saw for the first time the vast Pacific Ocean. Being a practical Catholic, he knelt and thanked Almighty God for having allowed him to make such a wonderful discovery.

Balboa then beckoned to his men to ascend and witness the grand sight. Their delight knew no bounds. As soon as all had enjoyed the beauty of the scene, the Catholic priest who accompanied the party chanted the opening words of the Te Deum. This was the signal for all to sing that beautiful and inspiring hymn of praise and thanksgiving. Balboa subsequently ordered a large tree to be cut down, made into a cross, and erected on the very spot where he first saw the Pacific Ocean.

Balboa Takes Possession of the Pacific Ocean. — The Spaniards then went down the mountain on the opposite side. As they approached the shore, an Indian chief, with a large number of warriors, attacked the white men.

After the Spaniards had fired their guns and had given the bloodhounds their liberty, the natives begged for mercy. They did more: they brought generous presents of gold to the explorers.

When Balboa and his followers reached the Pacific, the tide had receded. Under the shade of a large tree, they waited for its return. As the waves came rushing towards them, Balboa, with a sword in one hand and a banner of the Blessed Virgin in the other, waded knee-deep into the water, and took possession of that vast ocean in the name of the King and the Queen of Spain.

Balboa Explores a Neighboring Island. — Wishing to secure a larger supply of provisions, gold, and pearls, Balboa and his men decided to explore a neighboring island. The Indians tried to dissuade them. They told them that the sea thereabout was especially dangerous. The Spanish sailors, however, paid no attention to their counsel, but started at once in frail canoes. All day long they were tossed about by the driving wind and waves. Toward evening the storm became less violent, and they landed on the island. Having fastened their canoes to a tree near the shore, the Spaniards took a much needed rest. They were soon afterwards awakened by the roaring of the waves and the whistling of the wind. They then perceived that the rolling tide was gradually climbing up the sides of the island. To avoid drowning, they climbed to the highest part, but, as they did so, the water followed them.

The Spaniards were thoroughly frightened. Their predicament reminded them of the Flood; and they wondered what was going to become of them. They were already standing in water knee-deep. They called upon the Saviour to come to their assistance, and they implored the Blessed Virgin to save them from a watery grave. Just then the water began to abate. When they were able to get to their canoes, they left the island without delay and returned to the mainland.

In Search of Gold and Pearls. — Balboa continued his explorations of the surrounding country, and succeeded in making friends of the Indian chiefs, and in obtaining from them generous presents of gold and pearls. At last the Spaniards had so much gold and other valuables that they could carry only a small amount of provisions. On this account they were on more than one occasion threatened with starvation on their homeward march.

To be brief, the expedition, after suffering many hardships, landed at Santa Maria on January 19, 1514. Every Spaniard in the town turned out to receive Balboa and his party; and, when the colonists saw that there was a large amount of gold and other precious metals on board, they were delighted beyond measure.

The Enemies of Balboa at Work. — When Captain Enciso returned to Spain, he did everything in his power to blacken the character of Balboa; and, what is more to be regretted, he succeeded in doing so. The result was that the Spanish King was very much displeased with the discoverer of the Pacific Ocean, and sent out a new governor to take his place.

No sooner had he done so than a ship loaded with gold and pearls arrived in Spain. When the Spanish King read the report which Balboa had sent him, and realized that he had discovered a new ocean, and when he saw the large quantity of gold and pearls sent to him by the Governor of Darien, he was deeply grieved for having believed the calumnies of Captain Enciso. He thereupon gave orders to his counselors to think of some way in which Balboa could be sufficiently rewarded for his great work.

Davila Arrives in America. — In June, 1514, the new governor, Davila, arrived at Darien. It was a great surprise to the colonists. They were satisfied with Balboa, and they saw no reason why

he should have been cast aside. In fact they desired to take up arms to prevent the new governor from landing. Balboa, however, persuaded them not to do so.

The new governor, desiring to have a true account of the condition of the colony, had a long conference with Balboa. When the latter had given him all the information he needed, Davila took every occasion to show his dislike for Balboa. The Governor's jealousy became so intense that the discoverer of the Pacific was thrown into prison and brought to trial on a framed-up charge; and, had it not been for the influence of the Bishop of Darien, he would have been declared guilty.

The Beginning of the End. — Governor Davila was a mean, jealous man, who could not bear to have in his sight such a popular hero as Balboa. He proposed to send him back to Spain, but his counselors said that such a course would serve merely to call special attention to the true greatness of the discoverer of the Pacific.

After a few months the King of Spain appointed Balboa Lieutenant-Governor of the Southern Sea and Governor of the province of Panama and Coyba. These new honors conferred on Balboa served to make Davila more spiteful.

The Governor soon found out that the people of the colony thought much more of Balboa than they did of himself. This of course added to his fears. The Bishop of Darien once more came to the rescue. He advised Governor Davila to give his daughter in marriage to Balboa, and thus end the bitter feeling that existed between himself and his fellow countryman. As Davila thought well of the Bishop's advice, he sent for Balboa, invited him to become his son-in-law, and to assist in the government of the colony.

A Light in the Shadow. — The recent action of the Governor brought a ray of hope to the heart of Balboa. He was, moreover, given permission to build some vessels for another voyage to the Pacific Ocean. Before he was ready to sail, it was rumored that a new governor had been appointed in place of Davila. Wishing to ascertain how much truth there was in what he had heard, he sent one of his trusted followers to the seat of government in the colony.

The man whom Balboa sent to find out whether there was any truth in the rumor turned out to be his worst enemy. Instead of doing the work for which he was sent, he went directly to Governor Davila and gave him a false impression regarding the plans of Balboa. He insinuated that the Governor's son-in-law was planning and scheming to establish a colony of his own. These false accusations and one or two other trifling matters caused Balboa to be recalled and placed in prison to await trial.

Balboa Asserts His Innocence. — When Governor Davila visited Balboa in prison and accused him of trying to throw off the authority of the Spanish King, the discoverer of the Pacific replied with indignation: "If I were guilty, what would have induced me to come here and place myself in your hands? If I had intended to rebel against the King, what prevented me from doing so? I had four ships ready to sail and an open sea before me. What had I to do but to spread sail and press forward? There was no doubt but that I might find a land, whether rich or poor, which would furnish enough for me and mine, where I should have been entirely free from your control. Knowing that I was innocent, however, I came here the moment you sent for me. What is my reward? Slander, insult, chains."

Balboa Found Guilty. — Balboa's protest had no good effect on the Governor. It served only to embitter him against his son-in-law. In due time the trial began. Everything that jealous and

envious minds could invent was brought against the discoverer. At length he was declared guilty; but it was recommended that he should be treated mercifully on account of the great work that he had done.

Davila, however, would not listen to the plea for mercy. He said: "If Balboa has deserved death, he shall die." The colonists almost to a man believed that he was not guilty, and that the witnesses had not proved the charge. Yet they were afraid to say a good word for their former leader lest they should share his sad fate.

The Morning of the Execution. — The awful morning arrived. Balboa was led to the place of execution. Before him walked the town crier, shouting: "This is the punishment soon to be inflicted by the command of the Spanish King and his lieutenant, Governor Davila, on this man for his traitorous conduct toward the Crown."

These false words stung Balboa to the quick. In his indignation he exclaimed: "The charge is false; never did such a crime enter my mind. I have always served my King with truth and loyalty, and I have tried to enlarge his dominions."

At the place of execution the Catholic priest, after giving Balboa the ministrations of the Church, took leave of him just before he ascended the scaffold. Then the discoverer of the Pacific, with the courage and fortitude of an innocent man, laid his head upon the block for the cruel blows of the executioner.

Thus died, in the prime of life, Balboa, one of the greatest explorers of America.

Chapter 8

Ponce de Leon

1474-1521 Spain

Away to the east of the mainland of North America lie the islands to which Columbus first led the ships of Spain. Here the Spaniards had begun their search for gold, and the harsh and cruel treatment of the Indians for which Spanish conquerors in the New World have been justly infamous.

The beautiful islands, with their warm and delightful climate, their tropical fruits, and their cool sea breezes, had long been the homes of gentle and trustful natives, who gladly welcomed the strange men in the white-winged ships. But the Spaniards did not long deserve this trust. Greed for gold seems to have killed all kindness from their hearts, and they made miserable slaves of the once happy, care-free natives. Cruel Spanish governors were placed over them, who drove them to dig in the mines, where their unaccustomed and unceasing toil soon brought them to final rest in death. Thousands of lives were thus wasted in the treasure search.



Portrait of Ponce de Leon,
Andres Cortes y Aguilar

The larger islands, Cuba and Haiti, were the first scenes of Spanish conquest. Ovando, an early governor of Haiti, is called "a human monster" for his cruel deeds. The Indians of eastern Haiti were aroused by the treatment accorded to their neighbors, and when they in turn came under the cruel rule of the Spaniards, resisted their oppressions. A long and bloody campaign followed before these Indians were subdued. Among the Spaniards who fought here was Ponce de Leon, a companion of Columbus on

his second voyage and a veteran soldier. When the conquest was complete, Ponce de Leon was left by Ovando to govern the unhappy red men.

But in these days of adventure and treasure seeking, "the lion"—for that is the meaning of De Leon's name—chafed at the dull life he was now leading. He stood on the headlands of Santo Domingo, and looked eastward toward the misty blue mountains dimly seen against the bluer sky. He longed to feel the roll of waves against a good ship's timbers, and the whistle of the wind through sail and shroud.

He remembered those misty mountains, on the outward voyage from Spain. Columbus had stopped beneath their shadow to find water for his ships. Ponce de Leon could well recall the beauty of the harbor, with green-clad mountains rising in the background and gorgeous plants and flowers nearer shore. "Puerto Rico," Columbus had named it—"the rich port."

When Indians came across in their dugout canoes from Puerto Rico, De Leon eagerly questioned them about their country. The unsuspecting natives, little dreaming of the sad fate in store for them and their tribes, told of gold in the mountains and in the beds of streams.

It was enough. Ponce de Leon must seek these golden shores. Ovando's consent gained, the short voyage of ninety miles was soon accomplished, and de Leon stood again, after sixteen years, at Aguadilla, the "watering place" of Columbus's ships. Nothing was changed. The same forest-clad mountains stood like cool green walls, back from the shore. There were the same beautiful trees and flowers, the same Indian village, whose hospitable people received the Spaniards with kindly greetings.

In Puerto Rico was enacted again the sad story of greed and cruelty, of treachery and war. A Spanish city was founded on the north shore of the island, mountains and river beds were searched for gold, and great bands of Indians were set to working the newly dug mines. At first the Indians believed, as the Aztecs had believed, that the Spaniards were immortal, and that it was useless to resist. But a shrewd chief resolved to learn whether a Spaniard could not suffer death. He ordered two of his followers to seize a Spaniard as they were crossing a river together, and to hold the suspected immortal under water for a while. Then bearing the Spaniard's body, now limp and unresisting, to the bank, they sat down beside it, watching until they could no longer doubt the man was dead.

The news spread like wildfire, and a great band of outraged Indians gathered to attack the Spanish town. The Spaniards, however, in steel armor, and with their death-dealing guns, won an easy victory, and some of the Indians fled to the mountains, while the rest sadly bowed to their fate as slaves.

Ponce de Leon was now governor of Puerto Rico, and he settled down as he had done in Santo Domingo, to the tasks of his office. He built the city of San Juan on a small coral island close in shore. This became the seat of government, and here was built Ponce de Leon's "White Castle" (Casa Blanca), standing high to overlook the sea.

The governor was no longer young. He could look back over an eventful life, in which he had valiantly borne his part. He had seen strange sights too in these beautiful islands, where he had lived now for nearly twenty years. He had heard strange stories from the red-skinned natives of other wonders which he had not seen.

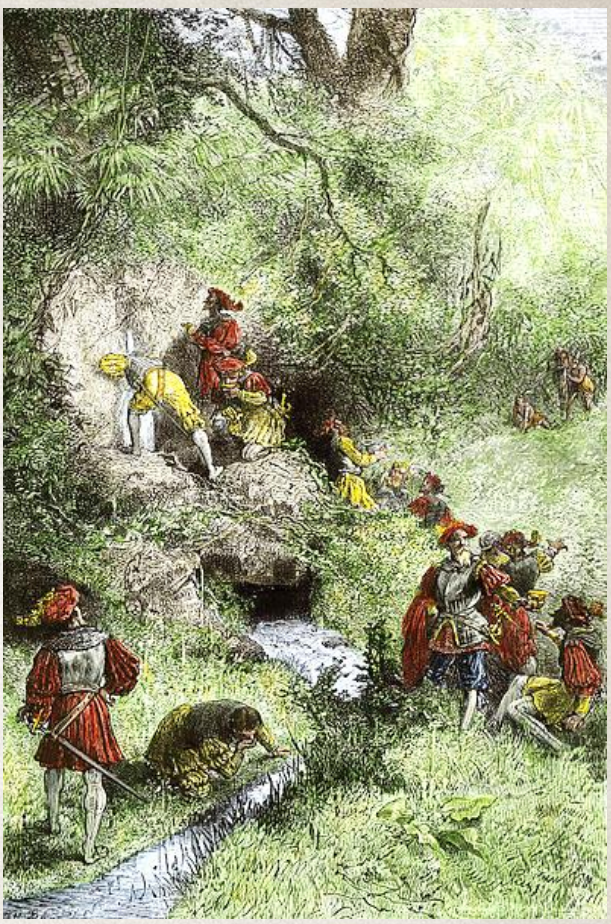
I have no doubt that sometimes he wished he were no longer passing middle age, but were young

again, as when he fought the Moors at Granada in old Spain, before he had set out with Columbus to cross the great ocean in quest of fame and gold.

Sometimes as he paced the garden of Casa Blanca, he gazed out upon the changing waters of the sea, and longed for new adventures on the rolling deep. There were islands to the northwest. Should he explore them? He remembered the story he had heard of an island from whose earth gushed the fountain of eternal youth. He who should drink of its sparkling waters would feel the strength of youth in his veins, and if he should bathe in the stream flowing from the fountain he would remain young, and live forever.

Ponce de Leon thought oftener as the days went by of the magic fountain. At last he resolved to seek it. Why not? He had wealth and ships. He was as much at home at sea as on the land. He must find the fountain soon, while he was still strong—before old age should creep up behind him, and seize his limbs, binding him to the chimney corner.

So the White Castle no longer knew the lion's tread, and ships were sailing in and out among the beautiful islands of the Bahama group, bearing an anxious seeker for a crystal fountain, which should bring back the years of youth and joy.



Ponce de Leon in Search of the Fountain of Youth, author unknown

There are nearly three thousand Islands in the Bahama group; yet Ponce de Leon went bravely to work searching for the isle of the magic fountain, Bimini, the Indians called it, and wherever De Leon landed, he asked questions and heard more stories about the wonderful place. Always, too, the Spaniards looked for gold and jewels; but they found little, and the search went on. At this island and that they touched; in this stream and that they bathed; they took long drinks from crystal springs. But youth seemed as far away as ever.

Winding in and out among the islands, the ships passed through the Bahamas, and sailed on to the northwest. It was spring, and on Easter Day land was again seen. Drawing nearer, the Spaniards saw a lovely shore, green with foliage, bright with blossoms and the gorgeous plumage of many birds.

This was the land we know as Florida. The name was given it on that long ago Easter Day, and was taken from the day itself, which Spaniards call "Pascua Florida," the day of the flowery feast. For many days the Spanish ships followed the coast of the flowery land. At first they hoped that here they should find the wondrous fountain, but they drank and bathed with no result. At last the ships were turned back, and De Leon gave up the search. And yet he did not really give up, for he meant to return another time and search again.



Ponce de Leon in Florida, Thomas Moran

Years passed before he made the second voyage. Old age was drawing nearer now. But the brave spirit of the old adventurer was still strong. With many followers he landed on the Florida coast, as he had long ago landed on the fair shore of Puerto Rico. He had conquered there, and made the island Spanish ground. Here he would do the same. He had been ruler of Puerto Rico, dwelling in his White Castle high above the sea. Here also he would rule, and would build another Casa Blanca; and perhaps he would yet find Bimini and the fountain of youth.

The Indians of Florida were fiercely resentful of the coming of the strangers, and fighting soon began. Indian arrows fell thickly on the armor of the Spaniards, and Ponce de Leon was wounded by a poisoned dart. He fell, and was carried on board ship. From the first it seemed likely the gallant old soldier would fight no more, and the ships were turned back. They sought Cuba, the nearest Spanish island, and here De Leon died. He had found, not youth, but death, in the flowery land. His body was carried back to Puerto Rico, where it still rests, while above it we may read these words:

"Beneath this stone repose the bones of the valiant
Lion whose deeds surpassed the greatness of his name."



Statue of Ponce de Leon in the Vizcaya gardens, Miami Florida

Chapter 9

Hernán Cortéz

1485-1547 Spain

Columbus had gone on his great journey to find gold, but nowhere did he find it. Other Spaniards came to America, all looking for gold, like Columbus. But gold does not grow in the street nor on the dusty roads. It is found in gold mines, deep, deep under the earth, where men work by candle-light and dig and dig.

Now, there was a man named Cortéz, who wanted gold—much gold. He wanted to become a very rich man and go back to Spain, and live in a beautiful castle, with servants, and horses, and fine clothes, and jewels of many colors that glistened in the sun. Cortéz was a very young man when he went to America to live. He was only nineteen, but he was strong and as brave as a lion. There was a Spanish Governor in the island where Cortéz lived, and the Governor did not like Cortéz. He threw the young man into prison, and when Cortéz escaped, the Governor threw him in again. But Cortéz was very brave and very clever, and so once more he got away, and hid himself so that the Governor could not find him.



Portrait of Hernán Cortéz, unknown author

Now, there had come news from further west, from the land which we now call Mexico, that there was much gold in that land. So the Governor of the island said to himself, "I will send some soldiers there, and they will take the gold away from the Indians and bring it to me; then I shall be a rich man, and can go back to Spain and live in a castle." For in those days there were castles in Spain, large and gray and beautiful, with great iron gates and a ditch of water all around, so that no man could enter except the friends of the owner. You see the Governor of this island wanted to be rich and great, and that is why he sent a little army of Spanish soldiers to the new land of Mexico.

"Who is the man that will lead my army?" asked the Governor. "There will be many dangers. Perhaps the ships will go down in a storm and all will be drowned; perhaps the food will give out and the soldiers and their Generals will die from hunger, or it may be that the Indians will fight them and shoot them to death with bows and arrows. I must have a good General—strong, and as brave as a lion." And then he thought of Cortéz, the brave, strong young Spaniard, and he made him General of the little army.

So one day the ships sailed away to the new land of Mexico. Cortéz cheered the men by telling them stories of the great country they were going to find. "We are to sail and to fight," said he; "to fight for our good King, for Spain and for God. The people that live in this land are not Christians. They do not believe in our God, and we must teach them about Him and make them Christians." But even while he spoke, the young Cortéz thought of gold, gold, gold—dollars of gold piled up to the sky; goblets and plates and dishes of gold; tables and chairs of gold. Gold, gold, yellow gold, that would make the young Spaniard the richest man in all the world.

The little ships took up their anchors and sailed west towards the sun setting in the waters. It was a beautiful sea, all green and blue, with here and there reefs of white coral, and at last, far in the distance, they saw the beautiful new land of Mexico. The sun shone bright upon the green trees of the forest, and all the flowers of the field, red and purple and blue and yellow, glistened in the bright light. The boats came up to the shore.

"Here," cried Cortéz, as he stood on the white beach, "here I shall found my city, and I shall call it the 'City of the True Cross,' in honor of God and the good King of Spain." And to this day the city bears that name—the "City of the True Cross."

Now, there lived in the new land of Mexico, high up behind the mountains, a nation of Indians called Aztecs. They were very proud and strong and brave, and had conquered many peoples. These Aztecs were not like the Indians we see in the circus. They had a beautiful city made of wood and stone, with houses full of gold and silver ornaments, and this wonderful city was built upon floating islands. The King of the Aztecs was a very great man. His name was Montezuma, and his father had been King before him and his grandfather had been King before him; and so, for so many, many years, that no one among the Aztecs, even the oldest, could remember.

Now, there was a story among the Aztecs that some day the Children of the Sun would come from the East and drive Montezuma and his Indians away. These Children of the Sun, according to the story, were not red like the Aztecs, but white like Cortéz and his Spanish soldiers. So when Montezuma heard of the white men, who had come and founded the City of the True Cross, he called his wise men together. They were very old and very wise, and they bowed deep to Montezuma, because he was King, and they listened to what he said.

"Now, my Lords," said Montezuma to the wise men about him, "I have strange news to tell you. There have come from the East the Children of the Sun. They are white men, with black hair and beards, and their clothes are made of metal as bright as silver, so that it glistens in the sun. They ride on big, strong animals that run faster than a man." You see, Montezuma had never seen horses. "And," went on the King, "these children have come here in houses that sail on the sea—in ships such as we Aztecs know not of. I fear that, when they see our beautiful city, they will kill our people, and then the Aztec nation will be no more."

The King paused, and in the great hall, where the wise men were gathered, all was silent, so



The kind King Montezuma wanted peace,
and said that he would give the Spaniards more gold
if they would only go back to their own country.

silent that the breathing of the wise men could be heard. Then again the King spoke:

"My Lords!" he called out, "what shall I do?"

And a young man, the bravest of all the Aztec princes, arose quietly and, facing the King, answered his question.

"The Aztecs, my Lord," he said, "have always fought. We must do as our fathers have ever done, fight for our King and our beautiful 'City of the Floating Islands.'"

Montezuma was silent as he listened to the brave words of the young prince, and all the wise men were silent too.

Then a very old man, the oldest and wisest of all the wise men in the kingdom, rose in his turn; and all the wise men listened as the old man spoke.

"Not so, my gracious King, not so," he said slowly. "We are brave men, but we cannot fight the Children of the Sun. It is true that our soldiers are many and the white men are few; but the Sun has given to them his fire. They have tubes that are called guns, and when the Indians fight these white children, the tubes speak out fire and noise, which kill the red men. Where are our brothers to the East who have fought the white men? Dead, my Lord, dead. We cannot fight against the Sun or against his children. We must send to the white men presents—rich presents of gold and silver, and beg them to go away in their houses that sail the sea—to go away, they, and their horses, and their guns, and not come up to our beautiful city."

And as the old man had said, so the King Montezuma did. He gathered together great chests of gold and silver, dresses and cloaks of bright green peacock feathers, and heaps and heaps of red rubies, and milky white pearls, and precious jewels that glistened in the sun. "Take these to the white men," he said to his servants; "take this gold and silver and all these beautiful gifts to the white men, who are Children of the Sun, and beg them to go away and not come up to our beautiful city."

The servants did as Montezuma had bidden them. They did not have horses, but all day and all night they ran as swift as the bird flies, until at last they came to where Cortéz and his soldiers waited. Then they fell on their knees and bowed their heads to the ground.

"Behold, oh Children of the Sun," they said, "this gold and silver, and all these rubies and precious stones, and all these beautiful things are the presents of our good King Montezuma to the

white men who have come from the East; and our King Montezuma begs the white men not to go up to his beautiful city, but to take the gold and silver and to go away in their wonderful houses that sail on the sea."

Now, when Cortéz saw all the gold and silver that Montezuma had sent, he became very greedy. He wanted still more gold, and he knew that if Montezuma could send him such beautiful presents, there must be great riches in the wonderful city. So he said to the waiting servants, "Tell your good King Montezuma that I thank him for the gold and silver which he has sent me, and that I and all my men with me will come to visit him in his beautiful city."



The Meeting of Cortés and Montezuma, unknown artist

Then the servants went back with the message. Now, it was a long and dangerous journey to the beautiful city of the Aztecs, and Cortéz feared that his men might be afraid to go so far from their ships, so he called them together. "I am going on a long and dangerous journey," he said; "those who go with me shall become rich, very rich, but those who are afraid can stay here on the seacoast." And the soldiers answered, "You are our General, Cortéz, and where you go we will go too." Then Cortéz burned his ships so that no one could turn back, and with his little army marched up to the beautiful city where King Montezuma lived.

Now, when Montezuma heard that the white men were coming to his beautiful city, he did not know what to do. Some of his wise men said, "Let us fight the Children of the Sun," and others said, "Let us have peace; let us welcome the white men as guests to our city." So Montezuma did not know what to do.

When Cortéz reached the high lands and looked out upon the city, he saw the strangest sight in the world. The city was built on islands that floated on the lakes, and there was water all about it, and bridges with gates, and soldiers that stood by the gates to keep the white men out. And Cortéz was afraid. You see the bridges were very narrow, and it would have been very easy for the Aztecs to shoot the Spanish soldiers as they crossed the bridges; so the crafty Cortéz said to the

Indians, "Listen, my friends; let us come into your beautiful City of the Floating Islands, for we are tired after our long journey. Let us rest with you a little, for we are your friends and we wish you to be ours."

So the Aztecs let the white men cross the bridges and enter the gates of their city. Now, as soon as Cortéz and his soldiers were inside the city they behaved very badly. They went out on the streets and quarreled with the Aztecs. They found fault with the palace which the good King Montezuma had given them to live in, and they always thought of ways in which to take from the Aztecs their gold and silver and precious stones. Now, Cortéz, who was very strong and brave, was also very cruel and deceitful. He invited Montezuma to come and see him in his palace, and when the Aztec King came to see him, Cortéz told his soldiers to hold him prisoner. Then the white men went out into the streets and fought the good Indians and killed many of them. The kind King Montezuma wanted peace, and said that he would give the Spaniards more gold if they would only go back to their own country. But the Spaniards did not wish to go back, not until they had found all the gold and silver in all the land of the Aztecs. So they fought battles, many battles, and the Spaniards, who were brave, but very, very cruel, conquered all that country. Many of the Aztecs were killed, and even the good King Montezuma lost his life.



Monument to Hernán Cortés
in Badajoz, Spain, by Medellín

Thus it all came to pass just as the wise men had foretold, and the City of the Floating Islands became the white men's city.

But it did not go well with Cortéz. To be sure, at first he became very rich, and had beautiful houses, and lands, and horses, and gold and silver; but he did not long keep these things. He grew poor again, and when he got to be an old man, he was very sad and unhappy. And sometimes I think he must have been sorry for his cruelties, and lies, and wickedness, and for all the unkind things he did to the poor Aztecs when he and his soldiers went up into Mexico and conquered the beautiful City of the Floating Islands.

Chapter 10

Ferdinand Magellan

1480–1521 Portugal/Spain

While Columbus was trying to persuade the Portuguese king to provide him with ships for crossing the "Sea of Darkness," a baby was born far up among the mountains of Portugal who was to become as great a sailor as the famous admiral himself. When this child, Ferdinand Magellan, became a man, he found himself living in exciting times. Now that Columbus had shown the way, others crossed the Atlantic. They explored various parts of the coast, and at last people began to realize that not a group of islands but a great mass of land lay between the Atlantic and China. They hoped to find a passage through it. Everybody was talking about voyages. From early in the morning till long after the sun had set, the hammers of the shipbuilders rang; and sometimes the last blow was hardly struck on a vessel before every place was taken, from captain to cabin boy.



Portrait of Ferdinand Magellan,
Charles-Philippe Larivière

Magellan served in the Portuguese navy faithfully for many years, but when he asked for the promotion that was his due, the king refused. "You give me permission to serve some other sovereign?" demanded Magellan. "Do what you like," the king replied coldly. Magellan knelt to kiss his hand, as was usual in parting, but the king drew it back. The indignant sailor went straight to Spain and laid his plans before the Spanish ruler.

"I have been in the Indies for seven years," he said, "and I know what wealth one can get by buying spices of the natives. My friend Serrano is now in the Moluccas, and this is what he writes me." He showed the letter of Serrano in which was written, "Here is a new world. Come if you want to get rich." Then said Magellan, "If you will

give me ships and men, I will go to the lands across the Atlantic, and I will follow the coast southward till I come to some strait that leads to the China Sea. I will find the way to the Moluccas, and I will bring home such loads of spices as never yet came into any Spanish port."

The king granted his request, and then came a busy time of making ready. The ships must carry provisions for two years at least. They must have a good supply of powder and shot and cannon balls of iron and of stone. There must be darts and javelins and lances and pikes and crossbows and arquebuses and coats of mail. The natives of the Moluccas would not care for money, but they would care for glass beads, fishhooks, and bright-colored cloth, brass and copper bracelets, brass basins, little bells, knives, scissors, and looking-glasses; therefore a great quantity of these things was stored in the holds of the vessels. There were twenty thousand little bells, for instance, and five hundred pounds of glass beads.

These treasures were useful long before the explorers came to the Moluccas. Their first landing-place on this side of the Atlantic was in the Bay of Rio de Janeiro, and there the natives swarmed about the ships. "Give me that," one would say by signs, "and you may have this." The native would paddle away with a little bell or a fishhook, and the sailors would hasten to cook the big basketful of sweet potatoes or the half-dozen fowl that he had given in exchange.

The ships kept close to the shore, and before long they were at the mouth of the Rio de la Plata. "It is possible that this is a strait," thought Magellan. For two days he sailed up the stream, but the water became fresher every hour, so he knew that he was in a river. He turned back and went on to the south, gazing closely at every opening that looked as if it might be a passage. The weather grew colder and colder; and at last he saw that he could go no farther before spring. So he anchored in a sheltered bay and shortened the rations. Then he had to meet greater trouble than ice and snow, for the sailors began to grumble. "There is no strait," they said. "This land stretches from pole to pole. Our lives are worth more than all the cloves of the Moluccas. Let us start for home."

Magellan, however, had no idea of giving up. "Of what do you complain," he asked. "Here is a sheltered bay with plenty of wood. There are fish in its waters and there are birds on its shores. The winter will soon be past, and then we can push on to a world that is rich in gold and spices. Your king will not forget to reward you. Will you go back to Spain and say, 'We were cold, and so we came home'? You are Spaniards, and Spaniards are brave. I would rather die than turn back!" After this talk the sailors were content, but the captains led them into a second rebellion. Then the admiral did not plead, but punished the leaders severely.

One morning, an amazingly tall man appeared on the shore of the bay. He danced and sang and poured sand on his head. "Go ashore," said Magellan to one of his men. "Do whatever he does, and see if you can make friends with him." The sailor went ashore. When the giant danced, he danced; and when the giant poured sand on his head, the sailor poured sand on his own head. "Come on board our ship," said the sailor by signs, and the native went. He was so tall that it is said the Spaniards came up only to his waistband. They soon found that he was strong, for when they showed him his face in a little looking-glass, he was so amazed that he jumped backward with a force that threw four men down on the deck. Other natives almost as tall came afterwards. Their feet were dressed so clumsily that the Spaniards called them Patagonians, or large-footed men. These giants were good-natured and gentle. The chaplain taught one of them to say the Lord's Prayer, and he was so pleased that he walked about shouting it at the top of his voice.

As soon as spring had come, the ships went on. Another opening showed itself. "It may be the strait we are looking for," thought Magellan, and he sent two of his ships to explore. Suddenly a fierce storm broke out. Several days passed, but no ships appeared. "They are surely wrecked," said the sailors, gazing anxiously over the water. "What is that coming around the point?" one of them cried, for he had caught sight of a white sail shining in the sun. In a moment more the two lost ships were in view. All sails were set, and flags and pennons were fluttering in the wind. Boom! Boom! went the big guns. "Hurrah!" shouted the men on the lost vessels. "Hurrah!" shouted the men who had been waiting. "What have you found?" Magellan called eagerly. "Is it a bay?"

"It is a deep channel," they replied; "it is no bay and no river."

The admiral called his captains and pilots. "Shall we go on?" he asked.

"No!" replied one of the pilots. "We have not much food, and if there should be a storm or a calm for some time, we should starve. We have found the strait, and now let us go home and come back with another fleet."

"Do you all agree?" demanded Magellan.

"No," cried the others. "Why should we go back now that the way has become easy! The Moluccas must be close at hand. Let us keep on."

"We will," declared Magellan quietly, and he would probably have said the same whether the others agreed or not; "we will go on till we have found the Moluccas. We will keep our promise to the king if we have to eat the leather on the ships' yards. May God help us and give us good fortune!"

On they went through the winding passage which was afterwards known as the Strait of Magellan; and at last there came a day when the stern commander wept for joy, for before him spread a broad ocean so calm and quiet that he called it the Pacific.

Now the navigators of that day made one great mistake: they thought the earth was much smaller than it is. Magellan supposed that he was perhaps a two or three weeks' sail from the Moluccas; but he went on and on, and still they seemed to come no nearer. There were provisions for only three months, and two months had already passed. "Land ahead!" cried the watch one day, and then every one was happy. But the land proved to be only a little island with no water, no fruit, no food of any kind. It was too late to turn back, for they had not provisions enough for the voyage across the Atlantic; so they spread all sail and went onward, watching the western horizon as closely as Columbus had done. The little water that was left on board was so brackish that, thirsty as they were, they could hardly drink it. The biscuits were stale. At last even these gave out, and the men really did eat the leather on the ships' yards. They were almost ready to eat the ships themselves.

After fourteen weeks of suffering on the Pacific, it was rather hard that, when they did come to land, they should fall among thieves. But so it was. They anchored off a group of islands to buy food, and the natives swarmed over the vessels and stole from under the owners' very eyes everything they could lay their hands upon. They did not spare even the admiral, for they stole the small boat which hung at the stern of his ship. It is no wonder that he named the islands Ladrones, or the thieves' islands.

Then came another group of islands which long afterwards were called Philippines; and now the sailors had plenty of oranges, cocoanuts, and figs a foot long, as they called bananas.

"Where is the best place to buy spices?" Magellan asked the chief.

"Over at the island of Sebu," he replied.

"Will you give us guides to show us the way?"

"If you will help me get my rice in, I myself will show you," was the reply. So the proud Spaniards went out among the rice and worked two days to help a savage chief bring in his crop. Then they all sailed to Sebu.

The king of Sebu was very friendly. "You shall be my brother," he said to Magellan, "and no one but Spaniards shall trade in my land." They made a formal treaty of friendship. "I will help you to punish those who do not obey you," said Magellan. The chief of the little island of Mactan had no idea of obeying the king of Sebu, and Magellan set out to punish him. "Do not do it," pleaded the admiral's friends. "It is no gain to us if we conquer them." He would not yield, however, for the friendliness of the king of Sebu had given him an idea which he meant to carry out. "What a glorious thing it would be," he had said to himself, "if I could report to the king of Spain that all these islands are willing to obey him and to trade with no other countries!"



Statue of Ferdinand Magellan,
Antoniadis Palace Park, Alexandria, Egypt.

He made ready for what he thought would be only a little skirmish. It never entered his mind that forty-nine men in armor could be overpowered by any number of savages; so the Spaniards rowed boldly up to the island and landed. They were greeted with a storm of arrows and spears; but where were the islanders? Safely hidden in the bushes. Not one Spanish shot in twenty did them any harm. Of course they tried hardest to kill Magellan. He was wounded many times; but he held out for a long while, hoping to give his men time to retreat. At last he fell. One of the men who kept close by his side wrote afterwards, "The Indians threw themselves upon him with iron-pointed bamboo spears and scimitars and every weapon they had, and ran him through until they killed him." The Spaniards retreated to their ships. That night they sent a messenger to beg for the admiral's body. "Give it to us and you shall have cloth, bells, knives, whatever you like," he said. But the savages replied, "No, not for the whole world. We shall keep that body, and then we can say to our enemies, 'See what we took from the lordly Spaniards!'"

There was nothing to do but to press on to the Moluccas, and before long the vessels were off the little island of Tidor. The chief came on board for a friendly call. He was not an altogether easy visitor to entertain, for, as he would never bow his head, it was rather difficult to get him safely into the little cabin. He and the Spaniards agreed on how much should be paid for cloves. Red cloth, yellow cloth, linen, hatchets, knives, scissors, and caps were to be given in generous quantities; but soon there were so many cloves to be sold and so few to buy them that a yard of bright-colored ribbon would pay for one hundred pounds of the precious spice. Every sailor was allowed to carry home a certain number of pounds. All were eager to buy, and when their trinkets gave out, they bartered even their jackets and shirts; so they were somewhat scantily clad when they sailed homeward.

Five vessels had left Spain. One was lost off the coast of Patagonia; one proved unseaworthy and was burned; one deserted and returned to Spain; one finally fell into the hands of the Portuguese; and the Victoria alone was left. As she crossed the Indian Ocean and rounded the Cape of Good Hope, the air must have been fragrant behind her, for, besides all that the officers and sailors bought for themselves, she carried twenty-six tons of cloves. In 1522, three years from the time that the Victoria sailed away, she anchored near Seville. Magellan was gone; but it was he who planned the voyage, and it was his courage and perseverance that made it possible. His body remained in far-away Mactan, but the glory of the first journey around the world is his alone.

Chapter 11

Francisco Pizarro

1478–1541 Spain



Portrait of Francisco Pizarro,
Amable-Paul Coutan

Once upon a time, there lived in a little village in Spain a boy who tended pigs. He was a very ragged boy. His clothes were old and torn; he wore no cap, and he had never in all his life had on a pair of shoes. His food was even worse than his clothing. He ate nuts and grapes and stale crusts of bread, and sometimes he had cheese. But meat he could not have more than once a month. This was because the boy was very, very poor.

Now, it is not pleasant to tend pigs. They are such dirty animals, and they grunt and grunt and make ugly noises all the time. It is very disagreeable to sit all day and have nothing to do but to talk to filthy pigs, and see that they do not walk off into the woods and get lost. So the little Spanish boy hated his work and wished that he could get away.

The name of this little boy was Francisco Pizarro. I do not wish to pretend that he was a good boy, because he was not. He was a bad boy, and he grew up to be a wicked man; but one thing I must say for him, he was surely very brave. And perhaps he became bad because, as a boy, he did not have a good home nor any nice boys to play with.

Near where Francisco lived was a beautiful castle. It had big, light rooms, and long tables, and fine gilt chairs, and wonderful pictures, and everything that the heart could desire. Francisco had never seen the inside of this castle. There was a great wall all around it, and in this wall a big, strong gate that was locked every night. A soldier in a yellow-and-red coat stood at this gate, and of course

he would not let the ragged little swineherd in. The young Francisco used to watch the old soldier as he pulled at his mustache, and sometimes, when the soldier wasn't looking, the boy pressed his head against the iron bars and looked into the garden. He could only see a little corner of the castle, but he saw the beautiful trees in the garden, and the soft, green grass and the fountain which seemed so cool in the hot afternoons.

It made Francisco very angry to see this beautiful garden and not be allowed to go into it. He complained to his mother, but she could not do anything, because it wasn't her castle, and she was as poor as Francisco. "You are only a swineherd," she said to him, "and swineherds cannot have castles; so stop thinking of the castle and go back to your pigs."

But Francisco did not stop thinking of the castle. He had seen in the garden a little boy of his own age, and he saw that the boy's clothes were made of fine, soft cloth, and that he had a lovely black feather in his cap. He remembered, too, that a kind old man, with a long white beard, had walked with this boy in the garden, and had taught him many things out of a great book. Poor Francisco had never been to school, and he had never had a teacher, like this boy with the fine clothes; but he wanted all the things that the little boy in the garden had, and he made up his mind that he would get them.

I told you before that Francisco was not a good boy, and so he did not ask himself whether it was right for him to want all these things. "I do not care," he said almost out loud; "I do not care what my mother says, or what the priest says, or anybody. Good or bad, right or wrong, I am going to get my castle." That will show you the sort of a boy Francisco really was.

Now, Francisco saw that it was no use to stay in his little village; there he would always be a swineherd. Every day he hated the pigs more and more. He hated them so much that he threw stones at them when they squealed. At last, with two other boys, he ran away. I think that Francisco and his two friends were a little afraid, at first, that their mothers would send after them and catch them. So they went away by night, and by the next morning they were far along the quiet road. Day after day they walked. They used to find chestnuts on the ground, and over the high, green hedges hung bunches of wild purple grapes that anybody might pick. The good country people were all as poor as poor could be; but they always gave the tired boys a bite of bread and a cup of goat's milk. Francisco was very happy. He was glad to be away from the dirty, squealing pigs, and he believed that every step he took brought him nearer to the castle he had dreamed of.

At last, the boys reached Seville. Now, Seville was a very large and beautiful city. There were fine houses and glorious palaces, like the castle that Francisco wanted, and women in beautiful dresses and men rode up and down the crowded streets on great black horses. It was all like Wonderland; and, as Francisco looked at everything—the streets, shops and people—his eyes almost popped out of his head.

But in this rich city of Seville, Francisco was poorer than ever before in all his life. Here in the great city nobody cared for the ragged boy, and there were no kind country people to give him bread and goat's milk. Yet, after a while, Francisco managed to make a little money, though even then he was still poor. Often he went to bed without supper, and his castle seemed to be as far away as ever.

Of all the things in the great city of Seville, Francisco liked the soldiers best. They seemed so big and brave in their beautiful uniforms, and the boy envied them and wished that he, too, could be a soldier. "It's a good way to get rich," he thought to himself. It was a good way in those times.

Nowadays people don't get rich by killing each other; but in the olden days, to be a soldier was one of the best ways to get money and become great.

So Pizarro, who was now quite big and strong, became a soldier. A great war was being fought in Italy, and Pizarro was sent there with other Spanish soldiers to fight for his King. The young man was very brave. I think that, even then, he was cruel, but the Spaniards did not care about that, so long as he was only brave. So when he came back from the great war in Italy, everybody said, "Pizarro is a very good soldier."

Now, in the meantime, Columbus had found America. I told you, in another story, how the people in Spain were very glad over the news, and how everybody wanted to go to the wonderful new lands to make a fortune. Well, you may be sure that Pizarro wanted to go too; but for a long time he could not leave Spain. I cannot tell you why, because I do not know myself. Anyhow, he could not. But at last he got a chance, and with a band of other Spaniards went to the new country that Columbus had found.

By this time Pizarro was no longer a boy, nor even a young man; he was almost forty years of age. He had seen many lands and done many things; yet he was still poor, and it seemed to him as though the castle that he had dreamed of as a boy was as far away as ever.

Well, at first America was no better than Spain. Pizarro lived on a rich island, which was then named Hispaniola, but which is now called Cuba. There were many other Spaniards on the island, and these were all just as greedy and anxious to get rich as Pizarro. They were a very wicked set of men. All the bad things that a man can do they did; but above all, they were cruel to the poor Indians. They used to make the red men work for them day and night, and if the work was not enough, they beat the poor Indians until they died. I think that Pizarro was just as cruel as the rest; but in spite of his wickedness he did not get rich.

Now, after a while, when Pizarro was almost fifty years old, he went to a new country in America, where the Indians were very rich, and where there were very few Spaniards. This was the land of Darien, where Balboa had gone about ten years before. Here the friendly Indians had much gold and many beautiful jewels. They gave to Pizarro many precious stones and more gold than he had had in all his life; so the swineherd became rich at last.

But Pizarro was not satisfied even with these riches. The more he had, the more he wanted; so one day, when he heard of some islands in the great ocean to the West, where the Indians were very rich, he made up his mind to go to these islands and take the gold from these Indians. His men were very glad to go, so they got canoes and paddled out to where the islands lay. This was a very bold thing to do, because the sea was rough, and many times the canoes turned over and the soldiers were almost drowned.

At last they reached the island, and Pizarro, standing up in his canoe, saw the Indians crowding on the beach, with their bows and arrows in hand, ready to shoot the first Spaniard who landed. Now, Pizarro, though a wicked and greedy man, was very brave; so he told his soldiers to fire their guns. As soon as the Indians heard the guns of the Spaniards they were frightened, and after a little battle they ran away. Then Pizarro and his men landed on the sandy beach. Here they found many pearls, which they took, and when there were no more pearls on the island, they paddled back to their homes.

When Pizarro had sold these pearls he was very rich indeed. He had now enough money to buy

his castle. It was really not exactly a castle, but a fine, big house in Darien, with fields around it and cattle, and a great many Indian servants to do whatever Pizarro wanted. You would think now that Pizarro would be satisfied, for he was a hundred times richer than the other little boy who used to live in the castle in the old, old days when Pizarro was only a swineherd.

But the greedy Pizarro was never satisfied. After a few years, he heard how the brave Cortéz had conquered Mexico, and he heard, too, that Cortéz had become even richer than he was. So Pizarro wanted to be as rich as Cortéz, and he looked around for a new nation to conquer.

Now, at this time there was living in Peru, many hundreds of miles to the South, a great tribe of Indians called the Incas. They were not savages, but wise, kind people like the Aztecs of Mexico, whom Cortéz had conquered. These Incas were very rich. They had wonderful gold and silver mines, and they owned so much gold and silver that they could cover walls with them; and they also had precious stones, green emeralds, red rubies, blue sapphires and beautiful, brilliant diamonds that glistened in the sun.

I could tell you many things about these curious people—how they prayed to the sun and the moon instead of to God; of the wonderful temples and palaces that they built; of their fine, hard roads cut through the mountains, and of the King's messengers, who ran along these roads, day and night, carrying news. I could tell you how all the people obeyed the Inca, who was King of the country; how they all worked for him, and how he gave them food and clothing and houses, so that no man in all the land was ever hungry or thirsty or cold.

Now, when Pizarro heard of these Incas, he thought to himself, "I will go up to Peru and fight with these people, and take away from them all their gold and silver and jewels and all their cities and palaces." I think that it was wicked of Pizarro to want to disturb these good, quiet people, and it seems to me that the man who had been a poor swineherd should have been satisfied with the money he had, and could have left the Incas alone.

But Pizarro was always greedy. He got together a little band of soldiers and started to go up to Peru. I say up, because Peru was high up among the mountains. Pizarro thought that it would be easy to find Peru; but things did not go as he had hoped. Nobody could tell him where the great country lay, and there were no maps to show him the way. By mistake, Pizarro and his little army landed on a lonely desert island in the Pacific Ocean. There were swamps and marshes on this island, and there was little to eat, and even the water was not good to drink. The men suffered from mosquitoes and great flies, that stung them so they could not sleep. And worse than all, there were poisonous snakes that bit the men so that they died. They suffered from hunger and thirst, and some fell sick and died. Pizarro sent back his ship for more men and more food, and I am sure he was glad when, after a few weeks, the white sails were seen again. The ship brought plenty of food; but the Governor of Darien, who was jealous of Pizarro, would not send any more soldiers. Instead, he sent word by the ship to Pizarro, saying, "Pizarro, you must come back to Darien."

Now, the men were only too glad to go back. They had suffered enough, and they did not want to be bitten and starved any more—no, not for a hundred Perus. "We will go home," they said, "as our Governor says." At first the bold Pizarro said nothing; then with the point of his sword he drew a sharp line in the sand.

"North of this line," he said, "is home; south of this line are Peru and glory and gold." And then he stepped across the line, meaning that he was going to Peru, even if he had to go alone. The



Pizarro Seizing the Inca of Peru, John Everett Millais

soldiers all saw that Pizarro was a brave man, but none of them wanted to go with him. "We do not wish to be killed," they said to themselves. At last, the pilot of the ship, a brave, reckless fellow, with a long beard, named Luiz, crossed the line. "I go," he said, "wherever Pizarro leads." After that others followed. At last there were thirteen men across the line who were willing to go with Francisco Pizarro.

These brave men, I can tell you, had a pretty hard time before they reached Peru. They had to cross the sea on a raft, which is a very dangerous thing to do. But the Indians were kind to them and gave them food to eat, and when they got to Peru the Incas were even kinder. Now, Pizarro was not only greedy, but he was also very deceitful, and he made believe to the Incas that he was their friend; but all the time that he was taking their beautiful presents, he was learning about the country, so that he could come back in a little while with a bigger army and rob and murder them.

And, in a few years, Pizarro did come back with a big army. This time he had two hundred men and thirty horses and a great many guns. The Incas in all their lives had never seen a horse, and had never seen people killed with guns; so Pizarro knew that they would be very much frightened when they saw his men on horses, and saw the guns that killed with bullets. And they were afraid. Wherever Pizarro and his soldiers went, the Incas lost their courage. When they saw a man on a

horse, they thought that it was all one animal, half man and half horse; and so frightened were they, that Pizarro came to one city that was quite empty, for all the people had run away in fear of the cruel Spaniards who were half men and half horses.

Yet I do not think that Pizarro would have conquered Peru if he had fought fair. There were so many soldiers among the Incas that they seemed to spring up everywhere; but Pizarro was very crafty, and he thought out a very clever, cruel plot. He made believe he was a friend to the Inca, who was the great King of all these people, and he invited him on a visit. Then when the Inca came to visit Pizarro, that wicked man had him arrested and cast into prison, and all the Indians who were with the Inca were killed or driven away.

Now, the Inca was a very brave young man, but he did not want to be killed. He knew that when he was dead, his soldiers would lose their courage. After a while, he noticed that Pizarro was very greedy for gold; so he said to him, "If you will let me go free, Pizarro, I will fill up this room with gold, and it will all be yours."

The greedy old Pizarro was very happy over this, for he always wanted gold. Now, I do not know why any man should want so very much gold, because you cannot eat it or drink it or wear it. But Pizarro was greedy, as greedy as any old man in all the world, and so he promised the Inca to let him go free if he filled up the room with gold. The Inca sent for his messengers, and day after day the servants of the Inca came carrying great heaps of gold. At last, after six months, the room was almost filled to the ceiling; but even then the treacherous Pizarro did not keep his word. He made believe that the Inca was trying to raise an army against the Spaniards (which I think he would have had a right to do if he wanted to, for, after all, the country belonged to him and not to the cruel Spaniards); so, instead of letting the brave Inca go home, as he had promised, the cruel Pizarro told him he must die, and the very same day he had the Inca put to death.



If you will let me go free, Pizarro, I will fill up this room with gold, and it will all be yours.

After that, the greedy, deceitful Pizarro got more gold, and more gold, and always more and more and more. Wherever he went he made the people give him money. He really ruled the

country, although he pretended to the Indians that he did not, and he ruled it very cruelly indeed, and every day he became richer.

But after all, the money he got did not do him any good. He was now one of the richest men in all the world. But nobody loved him, and I think that in his secret heart Pizarro was not very happy. Every day the savage old man became more greedy and more wicked and more cruel, until not only did the Indians fear him and hate him, but the Spaniards hated him even more. There was a man named Almagro, who had once been his friend; but Pizarro cheated him, too, and then murdered him. Well, at last, one day, the son of this Almagro, a young man named Diego, went to Pizarro's palace with some of his friends. "You have killed my father," cried Diego; "now it is your turn." The cruel old Pizarro, though he was seventy years old, fought bravely to the end; but he was stabbed over and over again, and at last he fell dead at the feet of Diego.

And thus ended the life of the brave, wicked Pizarro, the swineherd who wanted a castle. He became one of the richest men in all the world and conquered a nation; yet sometimes I think he would have been happier if he had always remained till the end of his days a poor swineherd.



Bronze Equestrian Statue of Francisco Pizarro
in Trujillo, Spain

Chapter 12

Giovanni da Verrazzano

1485–1528 Italy

Verrazzano was a native of Florence, Italy, and a pirate like many other sailors of that time. Being known as a daring seaman, he was asked by Francis I, King of France, to take command of a fleet of four vessels and try to find a western passage to rich Cathay. For Francis had become very jealous of the Spaniards, and felt that his country ought to have a share in the riches of the New World.



Engraving of Giovanni da Verrazzano, F. Allegrini

Verrazzano sailed from France full of hope and joy; but he had gone only a short distance when a severe storm arose, and two of his vessels were lost sight of forever. The two remaining vessels were obliged to return to France.

After some delay Verrazzano started again, with one vessel called the Dauphine. With this vessel he reached the island of Madeira, and from this island he sailed, January 17, 1524, for the unknown world.

The voyage lasted forty-nine days, after which time a long, low coast was sighted in the distance. This coast, which was probably North Carolina, afforded no landing place, and for some time Verrazzano sailed north and then south, searching for one. The search proved unsuccessful, and as the crew were in need of fresh water, Verrazzano decided to send a boat ashore.

So a small boat was manned, and the sailors tried very hard to reach the shore, but the surf was so high that they were unable to do this. At last one brave sailor jumped from the boat into the foaming breakers and swam toward the shore. He carried in one hand presents for the Indians, who were standing at the water's edge watching the strange sight. At length the sailor succeeded in swimming so close to the shore that he was able to throw the presents to the Indians.

His courage then deserted him, and in terror he tried to swim back to his vessel. The surf,

however, dashed him on the sandy beach, and he would have been drowned had not some of the Indians waded in and dragged him ashore. These Indians quickly stripped him of all his clothing and began to build an immense bonfire. The poor sailor thought his end had come, and his former companions looked on from their ship in horror at the preparations.

All of them thought that the Indians meant to burn him alive or else to cook and eat him. To their great relief, the Indians treated him very gently and kindly; they dried his clothes by the fire and warmed him.

These kind Indians looked very savage. Their skin was copper colored, their long, straight hair was tied and worn in a braid, and their faces were very stern; for, you know, an Indian never laughs or smiles.

In spite of their fierce looks, however, they were very good to the pale-faced stranger, and when he was strong again they led him back to the shore, and he swam out to his ship.

Verrazzano was glad to see his sailor return in safety from this dangerous trip. The man had risked his life, but no water had been obtained for the crew. So Verrazzano started northward, and along the coast of Maryland he made a landing and secured the much-needed fresh water.



Monument to Giovanni da Verrazzano in New York

At this place the Frenchmen had an opportunity to return the kindness that the Indians had shown their companion, but I am sorry to have to tell you that they did not do so. While searching for the water, Verrazzano and his followers came suddenly upon a little Indian boy, whom they seized and carried off to their ship. The mother of the boy came quickly from some bushes to rescue her son, and they would also have stolen her, but she made so much noise that they were obliged to run in order to escape from the rest of the tribe, who came to help her. The Frenchmen reached their ship in safety with the poor little Indian boy, and quickly set sail.

Verrazzano proceeded northward, following the shore, and at length came to a very narrow neck of water, with rising land on both sides. Through this strait Verrazzano sailed, and, to his surprise, came out into a broad and beautiful bay which was surrounded on all sides by forests, and was dotted here and there with the canoes of Indians who were coming out from the land to meet him.

You have, of course, guessed that this

strait was the Narrows, which separates Staten Island from Long Island, and that the bay was the beautiful New York Bay.

Verrazzano followed the shore of Long Island to a small island, which was likely Block Island. From this island he sailed into a harbor on the mainland, probably Newport, where he remained fifteen days. Here the Indians received their pale-faced visitors with great dignity and pomp. Two of the Indian chiefs, arrayed in painted deer skins and raccoon and lynx skins, and decorated with copper ornaments, paid Verrazzano a visit of state.

Soon after this Verrazzano sailed away, again northward. The climate grew cooler and the country more rugged, and the vegetation changed. Instead of the sweet-scented cypress and bay trees which the sailors had admired along the Carolina coast, there were dark forests of stately pines, which were grand but gloomy.

Great cliffs of rock extended along the shores, and from these heights the natives looked down upon the lonely little ship in fear, anger, and amazement. At length they consented to trade with the pale-faces; but they lowered a cord from the rocks and drew up the knives, fishhooks, and pieces of steel which they demanded in exchange for furs and skins. Once Verrazzano and a few of his men tried to land. But the Indians fiercely attacked them, and a shower of arrows and the sound of the dreaded war whoop caused the Europeans to fly to their ship for safety.

So Verrazzano gave up the plan of landing among these fierce Indians, and continued his voyage northward as far as Newfoundland. Here provisions grew scarce, and Verrazzano decided to sail for home.

The return voyage was a safe one, and Verrazzano was greeted with joy when he arrived in France. Upon his discoveries the French based their claim to all the country in the New World between Carolina and Newfoundland, extending westward as far as land continued.

Verrazzano wished very much to go again to this new land and try to plant a colony and to convert the Indians to the Christian religion. But France at this time was plunged into war at home, and all trace of Verrazzano is lost. Some say that he made a second voyage, and that while exploring a wild country he was taken prisoner and killed by a savage tribe of Indians. The story that is most likely true is that he did return to the New World, and that while there he was taken prisoner by the Spaniards and hanged as a pirate.

Chapter 13

Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca

1490–1559 Spain

During all this time, while Cortéz was fighting in Mexico and Pizarro was making his plans to go to Peru, there lived in Spain a great noble, named Cabeza de Vaca. This man was always talking about America. He could tell you about Christopher Columbus and his great voyages, and about Balboa and Cortéz, and all the other Spaniards who had gone to America. Whenever any ship came back from that land, De Vaca was always anxious to hear all the news.

Now, as the years went on, De Vaca thought that he, too, would like to go to America. He said to himself, "If Cortéz can find gold and riches in that country, why cannot I?" Besides, he believed, like so many others at that time, that somehow or other he could find a way through America to the Indies. The Indies were supposed to be very rich, and De Vaca thought it was a country with more cities than the stars of the heavens. He had been told that each of these cities had more people in it than you could count in a year, and he also thought that all these people had gold and diamonds and rubies, and would give them to you for little glass beads. "If I only can find a way to this place," he said to himself, "I shall be the richest man in the world. I shall be as great as the great King."

So, because he wished to find gold in America and because he wanted to find a way to another land which, he thought, was even richer than America, De Vaca sailed away to the West. He was not the captain of the fleet; but, being a rich lord, he was, of course, very important. West the ships sailed, until one bright day in Spring they landed at Tampa Bay, in Florida.

Now, Cabeza de Vaca and the Spaniards with him were not the first men who had come to Florida. This part of the country had been found about sixteen years earlier by a rich Spaniard named Ponce de Leon; and the story of how Ponce de Leon came to find Florida is so interesting that I must tell you about it.

Ponce de Leon was one of the brave men who had sailed with Columbus across the great ocean, and afterwards he had been made Governor of an island called Porto Rico. He was rich, and famous, and powerful; but he was not happy, because he was growing old and he wanted to be young.

In those days the people believed that old men could grow young again, just as they believed many other things that we now know are very foolish. One day an Indian came to the great Ponce de Leon and said to him, "If you will go to the islands of the West you will find there a magic fountain. Bathe your hands in the fountain and drink the waters, and as soon as you have done so, a strange thing will happen. Your white beard will become black; your dim eyes will grow clear; your weak, thin legs will grow strong and stout again."

Ponce de Leon loved youth more than he loved money or power or anything else in the world. So he made up his mind to sail away on a ship and find the magic fountain. I do not know whether

he wanted only to get young himself, or whether he wanted all the people in the world to bathe, so that no one would ever grow old and no one would ever die. It would have been very strange, I think, if Ponce de Leon had found the fountain. There would never have been any old people any more, and your grandfather would have been as young as you are.

Well, there wasn't a place in all the islands of the West that Ponce de Leon did not visit to find the magic fountain. Every day the old man would put his hands under some little fountain, and then watch to see whether his hair would grow black and his legs strong again. It never happened, and, for one, I do not believe that there ever was such a magic fountain. Well, one Easter morning, while sailing around looking for islands, where the magic fountain might be hidden by trees, Ponce de Leon saw a beautiful new land, the most beautiful land he had ever seen. There were wonderful green palms that never died, and on the ground were flowers of all colors, red and yellow and blue and purple. The air was soft and warm, and high up in the trees the birds sang so sweetly that it almost made the old De Leon weep. "It is Paradise," he said; "here I shall surely find my youth."



Monument to Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, in Houston, Texas

He called the country Florida, which is the name it still bears, and he looked everywhere for the magic fountain, of which he had been told by the Indian. But he did not find it at that time, nor did he find it later, though he came back again, with many men who wished to make homes in Florida. The Indians were very unfriendly; they did not want the Spaniards to land, so there was a battle between the Spaniards and the Indians and De Leon was shot. The arrow had been dipped in poison and the wound got worse and worse, and in a short time Ponce de Leon died.

So it happened that the old man who looked for youth found death instead. Yet, today, Florida is a beautiful land, where the flowers still grow and the birds still sing, and many people go there from all over our country to bathe in the wonderful salt water and the warm sunshine, and here

they get health and strength, though, of course, they do not get what Ponce de Leon looked for—youth everlasting.

Perhaps the Spanish noble, Cabeza de Vaca, thought of the poor Ponce de Leon when, so many years after, he and his companions landed in Florida. "What will happen to us?" he said to himself. "Will we find what we want, gold and a way to the Indies, or will we too die from hunger and sickness and the poisoned arrows of the Indians?"

When the Spaniards landed from their ships, they found that the Indians were quite as unfriendly as they had been to Ponce de Leon.

So the Spanish noble, De Vaca, told the captain, whose name was Narvaez, that he thought it would be safer to stay near the ships. The Indians had told Narvaez that there was gold in the country towards the West, near the mountains. Narvaez wanted gold right away, so he and his men didn't listen to De Vaca, but began their weary march inland.

Now, this march was much longer and harder and more dangerous than any of the Spaniards had thought when they started. There were no roads or even paths, and they had to cut their way through great forests, where the trees and bushes grew so thick that you could hardly tell where you were going. Often they lost their way in swamps. Their feet sank into the water, and they had to ask each other's help so that they would not sink into the swamp and die. The sun, too, was broiling hot, and the mosquitoes and insects bit them all day and all night, so that often they cried out with pain and could not sleep.

Besides, every day the Indians were more and more unfriendly. This was the Spaniards' own fault. They had burned some Indian chiefs, whom they had found in a little village, and all the other Indians hated the Spaniards and thought them very wicked. They called them white devils. Now, the Indians knew of a good way through the swamps and the forests, but they would not tell the Spaniards, because of the Indian chiefs whom the Spaniards had burned. So Narvaez and De Vaca and the men who were with them had to fight their way through the great swamps. Some poor fellows died of sickness, and all were hungry and tired. So you can well believe that they were glad to reach at last a little Indian village.

The Spaniards expected to find gold here, but there was hardly any gold in all the village. They did find a little corn and enough food to keep them from dying; but even with this they were little better off than before. The Indians were their enemies, and whenever a Spaniard walked away from the village he was sure to be killed with an arrow. Even when the Spaniards led their horses to water, they were shot at by the Indians, who were hidden behind trees. At last things became so bad that the Spaniards had to go back to their boats by the sea. It was a hard march. They could only get food from the Indians by fighting for it, and many Spaniards were shot, and many others fell sick and died from the bad water in the swamps. They had to go on, because the Indians would kill any who stayed behind. So they marched, and marched, and marched, day after day, and day after day, losing men all the time, until at last they reached the great sea.

But it wasn't Tampa Bay, where they had left their ships many weeks before, nor was the coast like any they had ever seen before. There was no life anywhere on all the great water, and there was no human being on all the miles of hot, white sand that stretched away as far as the eye could see. The soldiers lost their courage. "We shall never get home," they cried in despair. "We shall die on this terrible seacoast," and some of the great, strong, bearded men threw themselves on the sands

and cried as though their hearts would break.

Well, after a while they picked up courage. No matter how bad things look, a brave man never gives up hope. They knew that they were hundreds of miles west of Tampa Bay, but they remembered that there were some few Spaniards living near the place where they were. So De Vaca and the others made up their minds to build boats in which they might sail to the other Spaniards. Well, it is not easy to build ships when you have no sails, and no tools, and no pitch, and no ropes; but with patience you can do almost anything. So the Spaniards cut down trees for wood, made rope out of the hair of their horses' tails and manes, and used their shirts for sails. Month after month they worked, living on horse-meat and shell-fish and a little corn which they took from the Indians.

At last the boats were finished and they sailed away. Up and down the coast they went, always hunting for the Spaniards who lived nearby, and all the time things grew worse and worse with



Shipwreck, Hendrik Kobell

them. They were hungry and sick and frozen to the bone. For days the sun beat down on them, burning their skin, and then the cold shock gave them chills and fever. At last a great storm came, that drove their boats apart and threw them up against the rocks.

The boat on which De Vaca sailed landed on a little island, and the little band of soldiers would surely have died of hunger if the Indians had not been very kind. The Indians built large fires for the half-drowned men, and gave them hot food and drink, and when some other boats appeared like little specks far away in the distance, they threw more wood on the fires so that the smoke would rise in clouds and guide these ships also to the shore.

Here the tired Spaniards stayed for many months; but most of them did not live long. One after

another they died, until only De Vaca and three others were alive. These four were all who were left of the bold men who had sailed for Florida a year before.

But the troubles of the brave De Vaca and his three tired men were not yet over. They could not stay long on the island with the good Indians, so one fine morning they said good-by to their new friends, and made their way to the West. It is a great wonder to me that they did not all die, for their troubles and dangers were great. Sometimes the Indians were kind to them, and gave them food and a place to sleep; but often they were very cruel, and once they kept De Vaca and his men locked up, and made them work as slaves.

You can imagine, perhaps, how hard it was for Cabeza de Vaca, who was a noble and a great man in his own country, to have to be a slave in a little Indian village. In Spain there were always people to wait on him, and whenever he wanted anything, he called and a servant came to ask what he wanted. But here in the little Indian village, where all the people were half naked, he had to work in the fields and dig, and cut wood and carry water, and do whatever else his master told him. Yet, I wonder, did De Vaca ever think of the thousands of Indians who had been made slaves by the Spaniards? Slavery is always wrong, and it was just as wrong to have Indian slaves as to have black slaves, or white slaves, or slaves of any kind.

So this great noble had to work for the Indians, but it was not for long. In a short time, the Indians saw that their slave was wiser than they were; he could teach them many things, and he could cure them when they were sick. So they were good to him and treated him as a chief, and after a while they let him and his three men go free.

Now that De Vaca and his three men were free, they started on their journey again. They went on day after day, week after week, month after month, and year after year. It was six years, six long years, that they walked on and on over deserts and thick forests, crossing deadly swamps and great, wide rivers. Often they had nothing to eat but nuts and roots, and as their clothes had worn out, they froze in winter and almost burned in summer. Many a time they wanted to lie down and die; but, being brave men, they never quite gave up hope. So they kept on. Then one day, through the great forest they caught sight of the sea, and they were so happy that they wept tears of joy; and here they found that they were among their own people again. For the first time in six years they saw white faces once more; for the first time in six years they heard men speaking their own beautiful language, the Spanish language, which they loved so dearly.

You can well imagine how glad everybody was to see them. The tired but happy Cabeza de Vaca had to tell his story over and over again—all the wonderful adventures he had had since he landed in Tampa Bay, of the great rivers and swamps he had crossed, and of the sufferings he had passed through. And where do you think he was? He was far to the West, way out upon the Gulf of California, near the great Pacific Ocean. Cabeza de Vaca had walked across America.

It is true that De Vaca never found the things he came to America to find; for not always did men find gold and glory like Cortéz and Pizarro. But De Vaca was happy and satisfied. When he sailed away back to his own home in Spain, he had no gold to take with him, but he was happy, happy to be with his own people once more, happy that he no longer had to be a slave to the Indians in America.

Chapter 14

Jacques Cartier

1491–1557 France

Verrazano told such wonderful stories of America that many other Frenchmen felt a desire to go and see the country for themselves and find out if the stories were true. But some years passed before any new expedition was sent out, and even then it was only undertaken because the French became jealous of the power that Spain was getting in the New World.

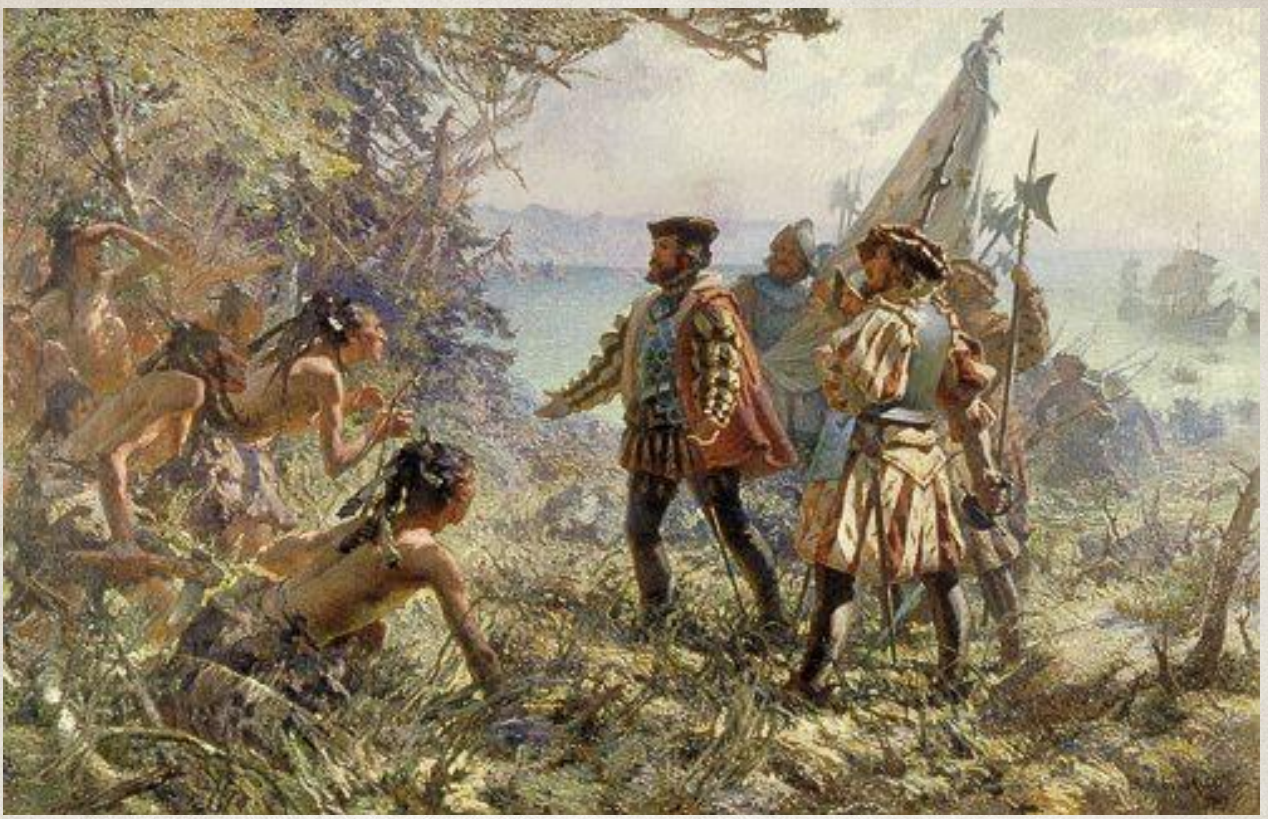
Spain already claimed Mexico, Peru, Florida, and the Pacific, and all at once the French king became alarmed and asked if God had created the new countries for Castilians (Spaniards) alone! His courtiers hastened to tell him no, indeed, and that France had as good a right as any other country to own and settle America. And so Verrazano was sent out, and after him, ten years later, came Jacques Cartier, who left the fort of St. Malo in April, 1534.

The ships sailed across the Atlantic, taking a more northerly course than usual, and in twenty days reached Newfoundland. Cartier coasted along until he reached the Straits of Belle Isle, which he passed through and entered the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and then sailed leisurely along the western coast of Newfoundland. But much to his disappointment the country was not beautiful and pleasant, as he had heard, but, on the contrary, very dismal and inhospitable. The fertile valleys and green fields that Verrazano had spoken of were nowhere to be seen, but instead only rocks and stones, and wild rough coasts.

The natives were very savage in appearance and not very friendly; and Cartier made a very short stay here, and steered across the Gulf to a bay on the opposite side, where he found the natives also in poor condition, living on raw fish and flesh, without clothing, and using their upturned canoes as houses. But the country itself was much pleasanter than that on the opposite side of the Gulf, and so Cartier decided to take possession of it. Accordingly he called all his company together, and with great ceremony raised a huge cross and claimed the whole region for the King of France.

The natives had all gathered round and stood looking on curiously. There stood the cross, thirty feet high, carved with three fleur-de-lys, and the inscription, "Vive le Roi de France;" and not at all understanding what right these strangers had to their country, the chief and his principal men told Cartier, as well as they could by signs, that they would much rather he should take the cross down again and go away with his ships and leave them in peace. And Cartier explained to them in turn that the king he served was very powerful and rich, and able to send many soldiers and take the land by force if he so wished; but that also he was a very kind and loving king, and wanted to do all that he could for the Indians, and that the very best thing that could happen to them would be to have some Frenchmen come there and settle and teach them the arts of peace.

And then he gave them some trifling presents, some strings of glass beads, and yards of bright



Jacques Cartier meets the Indians of Stadacone, Marc-Aurele de Foy Suzor-Cote

calico, and bits of colored glass, and shining penknives, and the Indians were so impressed by these gifts that, partly from a desire to obtain more, and partly through fear of the great unknown king, they not only let the cross remain standing, but what was much more, the chief consented to let his two sons go back to France with Cartier, and see for themselves the riches and power of his country and king.

And so the two Indian boys sailed away with these white strangers, and learned stranger things than they had ever dreamed of. Never before had they been farther away from land than they could go in a day's journey in their birch bark canoes; but now, as they stood on the deck of this great ship, and saw the land fade from their sight, and the great, boundless sea all around stretch away and away until it met the sky, and the sun drop down into the water and redden its glossy waves, it was all so different from what they had been used to that their hearts grew sick with longing for home and the fear that they had sailed into a new world and left their friends forever. But by and by, as the familiar stars came out, and the moon's friendly face appeared, and the night came softly down on the sea, the ship ceased to seem so strange and looked very comfortable and pleasant, and when the morning came they did not look backward, but only forward, to that mysterious France toward which they were sailing, and which they reached after a pleasant voyage early in September.

Cartier had been gone four months, and his account of his voyage was so encouraging that it was decided to send out another expedition as soon as the winter was over. The Indian lads were well received at the French court. The king was very kind and condescending and generous, and

told them that it would be his greatest pleasure to send over some of his subjects, and make all the Indians Christians. And the two boys, Taignoagny and Domagaia, looked at the silk and velvet robes of the French nobles, and at the diamonds and rubies that glittered in their sword-hilts, and at the king's beautiful palaces, and the marble cathedrals and splendid mansions of Paris, and decided that to be a Christian must be indeed a happy lot, and expressed their willingness to have their whole tribe converted as speedily as possible.

Their whole visit was a succession of wonders and delights, for France was more beautiful even than their wildest dreams of their own "happy hunting-grounds," where it was supposed that the Indians had everything they could desire. But what Canadian Indians had ever dreamed of such a land as this, with its fields of flowers, and miles of ripened grain, and sunny slopes purple with luscious grapes? Even the winter was pleasant, with but little snow and ice outside, and warm, comfortable rooms inside. Very different from their own winter, where the snow lay thick on the ground for months, and the rivers and lakes were frozen, and the pines and balsams hung thick with icicles whose musical tinkling seemed like a sad song for the summer that was gone. Yes, Cartier had told the truth, his king was very powerful and rich and great, and when the spring came and another fleet left St. Malo, Taignoagny and Domagaia were quite in love with France, and very eager for the voyage to be over, so that they could tell their friends all the wonderful things they had seen there.



Jacques Cartier, Theophile Hamel

Cartier and his companions were in fine spirits, for the voyage promised to be a fair one, and they were all sure that honor and wealth awaited them in the New World. In August they arrived at the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and passing Anticosti Island entered the mouth of a great river. Taignoagny and Domagaia said that the name of this river was Hochelaga, and that it came from a far distant country, and was so long that no man had ever seen the beginning of it. Cartier listened to this story with interest; the stream was so broad and deep that he thought perhaps it was not a river

at all, but a strait, and that he had at last discovered the long looked-for passage to the East. But the Indians told him that as they went up the river it became narrower, and its waters changed from salt to fresh, and then Cartier saw that it could not be the wished-for strait, and so made no haste to follow its course.

He sailed slowly up the great river, which is now known as the St. Lawrence, examining the country on either side, and looking for a good place to spend the winter. He passed the Saguenay, and some distance beyond anchored at an island called by him Isle-aux-Coudres, because of the abundance of hazels, and after a short stay here, sailed still farther on and stopped at another island, which abounded in grapes and which he called Bacchus Island—now known as the Isle d'Orleans. Here he received a visit from the natives, a large number of whom had come from the shore in canoes to look at these white visitors.

Cartier invited them on board his ship, but they were afraid to come very near until Taignoagny and Domagaia appeared, and assured them there was no danger, and that the Frenchmen were friends. The Indians were rejoiced to see their two young countrymen again, and came crowding aboard the ships to hear their wonderful stories about France. Donnacona, the chief, made a long speech, in which he offered his friendship to Cartier and thanked him for his kindness to his young countrymen, and then kissed his hand and placed his arms about his neck in token of gratitude and trust, and then he invited Cartier and his men to his own home at Stadacona, a little village which stood where now stands the beautiful city of Quebec. The village stood on the cliffs, high above the river, which flowed beneath, and which formed there a pleasant and safe harbor for the ships. So Cartier accepted Donnacona's invitation and they all went to Stadacona, and spent some time there very pleasantly, getting acquainted with the Indians and learning their mode of living, listening to their stories of bear and deer hunts, and their accounts of snow-shoeing and tobogganing, and expeditions up the river and into the great forests all around.

Particularly they liked to dwell upon their battles with another great chief who lived farther up the river. This was Hochelaga, after whom the river was named, and who was the most powerful chieftain in the country. Donnacona was very jealous of him, and was therefore much surprised and grieved when one day Cartier said that he had made up his mind to go and pay Hochelaga a visit.

In vain Donnacona tried to make him believe that the way was long and dangerous, and that Hochelaga would probably take him prisoner and treat him and his men very cruelly. Cartier was all the more resolved to go. And then Donnacona resolved to play a trick upon him, and see if he could not frighten him from going to Hochelaga, and so keep all the shining looking-glasses and knives, and bright basins, and pretty glass beads for himself and his own people, for he could not bear to think that any of this wealth should fall into his rival's hands. So one afternoon, as Cartier and his friends stood looking over the sides of their ship, they saw a most horrible sight. A canoe pushed out from shore and approached the vessel. It was paddled by some disguised natives, and in it were three Indian devils. And dreadful devils they were—the Frenchmen had certainly never imagined such a kind before. Their faces were as black as soot, and they were dressed in black and white hogskins, and wore horns more than a yard long on their heads. And as they neared the ship they shouted and yelled in a very diabolical manner, and altogether acted as much like devils as they knew how. And crowds of natives followed them down to the bank, shrieking and howling and throwing up their hands, and then rushing back to the woods as if in great fright. Taignoagny and

Domagaia, who stood by Cartier's side, also threw up their hands, and looking toward heaven declared that these devils had come from Hochelaga, and that the god Cudruaigny had sent them to warn the French that all who attempted to visit Hochelaga should perish on the way, for Cudruaigny would send snow-storms, and ice-storms, and cold piercing blasts from the north, and the French would all die miserably of cold and exposure.

But the French only laughed at the devils, and called Cudruaigny a "noddy," and said they had received word from heaven that the weather would be fair, and that they would all be defended from the cold, and so the Indian devils, who were no match for French priests, turned back to the shore, and the natives, giving three loud shrieks in token of their defeat, took the devils in their midst and began a wild dance on the beach; and the next day, when Cartier started for Hochelaga, they sent their good wishes with him, and promised protection to those who remained behind.

For days and days Cartier sailed along the beautiful banks of the great river, stopping now and then to enter the great forests which were full of all kinds of game, or to gather the wild grapes that hung full on every side; and everywhere the natives came down to the beach and greeted them pleasantly, and when they reached Hochelaga they found a great crowd of Indians waiting to receive them and lead them to their village. Cartier and his companions put on their velvet mantles, and plumed hats, and dazzling swords, and marched on with great pomp, followed by the admiring crowd.

The village was very pleasantly situated; in front flowed the shining waters of the Hochelaga, which was nearly a mile wide at that point, and behind, like a protecting spirit, stood the beautifully wooded mountain which Cartier called Mount Royal, a name which it still bears. The village itself stood in the midst of great fields of Indian corn, ripe for gathering, surrounded by palisades for defence against hostile tribes. There were about fifty huts, that of the chief being the largest, and situated in the centre near the great public square, where all the people now gathered and looked with wonder and reverence on these new-comers. And the mothers brought their little children in their arms, and begged that these white strangers would touch them, thinking in some strange way that even the touch of these wonderful visitors would bring blessing with it. They were quite ready to believe that these white men came from a land richer and greater than their own; indeed they would have believed that they came from heaven itself if Cartier had told them so, for all the Indians always worshipped beautiful objects, and they thought that men whose skin was soft and white, and who wore such rich clothing, must belong in some great land where men were nobler and better than poor half-clothed races like their own.

And so they brought their sick king and laid him down before Cartier, and asked him to touch him and heal him, and Cartier knelt down and rubbed the king's useless limbs and prayed over him; but more than that he could not do. But the sight of the kneeling Christians, and the sound of their prayers uttered to an unseen God, filled the Indians with awe: they too knelt down and looked toward heaven, and made the sign of the cross, and prayed as well as they knew how, that the strangers' God would pity them and heal their sick and lame and blind.

King Agouhanna then gave his crown of porcupine quills to Cartier as a token of gratitude, and as this was the only thing of the least value that the poor chief possessed, Cartier accepted it with great courtesy, and in return presented the tribe with some of those brass rings and brooches and beads and knives that Donnacona had tried in vain to keep for himself. And these made the Indians

wild with joy, and so altogether the visit of the Frenchmen was a great success, and when they returned to Stadacona they told such stories of the kindness and good-will of the Indians at Hochelaga that Donnacona was quite devoured with jealousy and hated his rival more than ever.

The French built a fort now, and got ready to spend the winter comfortably, and their preparations were made none too soon, for in a few weeks the river had frozen over, and the ships lay buried in snow, and the strangers began to see a Canadian winter for themselves and judge how they liked it. Although very different from any winter they had ever spent before, it might have been a pleasant one had not a terrible disease broken out among the Indians, which soon spread to the French camp. In a short time twenty-four of Cartier's men had died, and the rest were all sick but three.



Statue of Jacques Cartier by Georges Bareau, on the ramparts of St Malo, on the stronghold of Holland

Cartier became afraid that the Indians would attack the fort and destroy his men, if they learned of their weakness, so he ordered them to keep away, and whenever any of them came near he had his men beat against the sides of their berths with sticks and hammers, so that the Indians would think they were at work. But the Indians, instead of meaning harm, thought only of doing good. As soon as they learned that the French had taken the disease they came to them and offered their own remedies, and tried in every way to be of use. The squaws brought to the camp the boughs of a certain tree and taught the French how to prepare tea from the bark and leaves, and this medicine was so powerful that in a few days all the sick became well, not only those who were suffering from this disease, but also those who were afflicted with any other malady. It is not known exactly what this tree was; it may have been the sassafras, or possibly the spruce; but whatever it was it cured the sick and the French were very grateful, and said that all the physicians in France could not have done as much in a year as these Indian squaws accomplished in one day by means of this wonderful medicine.

The French made a very cruel return for all the kindness they had received from their dark-

skinned friends, for in the spring, when Cartier left Canada, he carried with him the good chief Donnacona and nine of his countrymen as prisoners to France. It was a very wicked and treacherous thing to do, for Cartier had invited the chief and his men on board the ships to take part in a feast that was being given in honor of his departure; but as soon as he saw that the Indians were in his power he gave orders for the ship to sail, and so Donnacona and his friends were carried away from their relatives, who stood crying and begging for mercy on the bank of the river, and that was the way the French left Canada and its friendly people, who had shown them nothing but kindness and trust.

It was not usual for Frenchmen to treat Indians in this way, for of all the Europeans who came to America the French were the most beloved by the natives. They were the only ones who could live peaceably side by side with their Indian neighbors, who grew to love and respect them, sometimes attending their churches and often bringing their children to be baptized by the kindly French priests, and Cartier being a Frenchman was afterward very sorry for the deceit he had practised, and, no doubt, would have taken Donnacona and his captive friends back again to Canada; but the Indians could not live in exile, and before long they had all died of homesickness except one little girl, who indeed grew up and married happily, but who still longed all her life for a sight of the wide shining river and the dark clustered pines of her native land.

Four years after, France made another attempt to settle Canada. Cartier then met with the reward of his former treachery. The Indians were no longer friendly, and refused to believe him when he said that only Donnacona was dead, and the rest were all married and living in France as great lords.

Besides, the French had been disappointed in not finding gold and silver in the country, and so after awhile Cartier's ship sailed back to France again, and it was nearly fifty years before another attempt was made to make a French settlement in the northern part of America.

Chapter 15

Hernando de Soto

1500-1542 Spain

In the olden days, while the bold Columbus was sailing across the ocean, there lived in a gray, mossy castle in Spain a young lad named Ferdinand de Soto. This Ferdinand was a very lonely boy. He had no father and no mother, and there were no other boys with whom he could play. All he could do was to watch the birds flying in the green woods near the castle, and listen to their sweet songs. Sometimes, in the long, beautiful afternoons, he would go out walking with his faithful dog, or ride on top of his big black horse, that the boy had known and loved ever since he was a little baby.

Ferdinand did not go to school. There weren't many schools in those days and only the very rich could go; and Ferdinand, though he lived in a castle, was very poor. But he did learn how to ride on a horse and how to fence with a sword. His servant taught him these things. This servant was a good, strong old man, with eyes as black as coal and hair and beard as white as snow. Soon the young Ferdinand learned so well that he could fence better than his teacher, and as for horses, Ferdinand could ride horses that the old man was afraid to mount.

One day there came to the castle a very rich nobleman, named Don Pedro. He looked at the handsome young Ferdinand and was very much pleased with him. Ferdinand was very polite and had good manners, so at last Don Pedro said to him, "You seem like a very fine lad. How would you like to come to my palace and



Engraving of Hernando de Soto, John Sartain

learn to read and write and become a great soldier like your father used to be?" "I should like it very much," replied the young Ferdinand. "I should like to learn many things and then be a soldier; and when I am a man I wish to go to America like Columbus." "Very well," said Don Pedro; "come with me and live in my palace."

You can imagine how happy the young Ferdinand was to leave the gloomy old castle to go with Don Pedro. And he was still happier when he got there; for the rich Don Pedro had a daughter named Isabella. This Isabella was as beautiful as the day and as good as she was beautiful. The two children liked each other, and in the lonely afternoons they played many games while the sun cast its long shadows on the green grass. Ferdinand now had lessons. He learned to read and to write; he went to a great school where they taught him many wonderful things, and every day he grew taller and stronger, until at last his birthday came around again and he was nineteen years old.

Then a strange thing happened. The young Isabella, too, had grown up to be a beautiful girl, with wonderful deep gray eyes, and red lips that curved like a bow, and her hair was as black as the darkest night. Ferdinand loved Isabella very tenderly, and Isabella loved Ferdinand, and they wanted to marry and live happily ever afterwards. But Don Pedro was away in America and they had to wait until he came back.

At last Don Pedro came home, and Ferdinand went up to him and said, "Don Pedro, you have been very good to me. You have brought me up like your own son. Now I am a man and I love your daughter, Isabella. May I have her as my wife?"

Now, Don Pedro was a greedy man, and he wanted his daughter to marry a great, rich lord, and not a poor young boy like Ferdinand. So he said, "No, I will not let you marry my daughter. You have taken my food, but you may not take my child." So Ferdinand was sad and did not know what to do, for he loved Isabella very dearly; but he could not marry her against her father's wishes.

Then Don Pedro thought of a very clever plan. He said to himself, "If the young Ferdinand and the young Isabella live here in my castle, their love will grow until it knows no bounds; and perhaps some day when I am away serving my King, these young people will get married. That will never do. But if I can get Ferdinand away, then Isabella will forget him, and will marry a great, rich lord and live in a beautiful, big castle."

So the clever Don Pedro said to Ferdinand, "You have always wanted to be a soldier and go to America like the great Christopher Columbus. Now is your time. You are a man, and can gain honor and gold for yourself, and new countries for your King. You must not think of Isabella; you must think of America."

The words of the clever Don Pedro moved the heart of the brave young lad. "You are right, Don Pedro," he answered; "I will go to America."

I think that Ferdinand must have been very sad when he had spoken these words; for little did he know whether, in all his life, he would ever again look upon the sweet, beautiful face of Isabella. Perhaps on his way to America the little ship would strike a rock or go down in a storm, and Ferdinand would be drowned. Or perhaps the Indians would kill him, or he would die of a fever, or would be cast into prison, with nothing to eat or drink but bread and water, and the rats would squeak, and the day would be as dark as the night. Perhaps he would be thrown into such a prison by some wicked man and never be set free again. And even if he came back after many hard years and many great perils, he might find that Isabella had married and forgotten all about him; so you

may well believe that Ferdinand, brave young man as he was, wept bitter tears when he said good-by to the fair Isabella.

And yet Ferdinand was anxious to go. All the brave young Spaniards wanted to go to America to fight the Indians, to teach them about God, to find gold for themselves and new countries for the King. Every now and then some young man would come back from America with gold, and silver, and pearls, and rubies, and beautiful, wonderful birds, and strange things that no man had ever set eyes on before; and many were the stories about the red men who lived in the beautiful land of America.

Well, at last the ship was ready and Ferdinand sailed away, and for fifteen long years he stayed in America. I cannot begin to tell you of all the wonderful sights he saw there, or of the many bold deeds that he did. Of all the brave men who had gone to America, none was braver than Ferdinand de Soto. After a while he met the Spanish General, Pizarro, who was going to Peru to conquer that country. Pizarro told De Soto about Peru and the Incas, of their wonderful temples and palaces, and how rich they were with all their gold and silver. "I am going to Peru to conquer that country," he said to De Soto, "and I want you to come with me because you are such a brave man."

Now, when Pizarro said these words to De Soto and told him of all the dangers he would meet in that new land, the young Ferdinand was not afraid. He loved danger as he loved the beautiful Isabella whom he had left in Spain. "I will go with you, Pizarro," said Ferdinand, "and I will be a brave and true soldier." And so, during all that great war against the Incas of Peru, Ferdinand fought bravely by the side of Pizarro, the wisest and the bravest of all the men in that army.

When Peru was conquered, and after many other great adventures, Ferdinand returned to Spain. Fifteen years had passed since he had left. Now he was no longer a poor boy, but a rich and powerful man, and everybody respected him because of his wise words and brave deeds. You may be sure that Ferdinand was very happy to see once more the beautiful country in which he was born. However much you may travel, you are always happy when at last you come back to your own home. So it was with Ferdinand. He almost cried with joy when he saw again the old, mossy castle where he had played as a boy. There were the same old trees, the same long, dusty road where he used to ride upon his great black horse; but most happy of all was Ferdinand when he saw again the beautiful Isabella. She was more lovely than ever. Her father, the clever Don Pedro, was now dead, and during all of these long years the beautiful Isabella had loved the young Ferdinand. She had been very sad because Ferdinand was away, but she never forgot him; and when the great lords of Spain had come to her and asked her to marry them, she always shook her head and spoke sadly. "No, my good lord," she answered; "I love the young Ferdinand de Soto who fights for his King in the land of America. I shall wait until he comes for me."

So they were married, and all the great lords and ladies who were invited to the wedding said they had never seen so handsome a couple. There were plenty of cakes and wine for all the people who came, and there was a table where the poor could sit down and eat as much as they wished. Everybody laughed and cried for joy. Then Ferdinand took his beautiful wife to a great palace in Seville, and there they lived so happily that the days flew by like minutes, and even the King envied them because they were so happy.

The brave Ferdinand was very good to his beautiful wife. He bought for her all that her heart could desire. So it happened that he spent all the gold and silver that he had brought with him from

America. Then, one day, Ferdinand said to his wife, "I shall go to America again to bring you more gold and more silver and all the beautiful things that are found in that country." Ferdinand said this to make his wife happy; but the beautiful Isabella was not happy. "I was so sad when you went away the last time," she said, "I cannot bear to have you leave me again. Let me, I pray you, go with you and share your dangers."

So the good Ferdinand de Soto kissed his brave wife and told her she might go with him; and many young lords of Spain wanted to go also. They all knew how bold and true and wise Ferdinand was; so the ships were filled with young nobles, all dressed in bright-colored clothes. After a long journey, the ships came to the island of Hispaniola, where there were many Spaniards. Here Ferdinand told Isabella to wait for him. "There are many dangers where I go," he said; "but soon I will come back with gold and silver and all that the heart can desire." Little did Ferdinand know when he kissed his wife good-by that he would never again see her in all this world. Boldly he sailed to the land of Florida. Here he found many wonderful things, but nowhere did he find the great mines of gold and silver that Cortéz had seen in Mexico and Pizarro in Peru. The Indians told him that gold and silver could be found in the great wild country to the West; so Ferdinand and his little army marched toward the West. Every day they moved further and further away from their home, and further and further away from the lonely Isabella, who waited on the island. Everywhere they looked for gold, but the Indians always pointed toward the West, where the sun sets. Always they said to the Spaniards, "Go West; go far West into the wild, wild country and there you will find gold."



Statue of Hernando de Soto
in Spanish Plaza, Mobile, Alabama

In their long, hard march, the brave Ferdinand de Soto and his little army had many adventures. Sometimes the Indians were friendly and would sit down with the white men about the fire and smoke their long pipes. This was a sign among the Indians to show that they were friends with the

white men. But sometimes the Indians were not friendly and fought with the Spaniards. I do not blame these Indians for fighting with De Soto. Before De Soto had come to this land, there had been other Spaniards there, and these men had been very, very cruel. They had killed many Indians and thrown their pretty little babies into the river, and one day they took the Indian chief and cut his nose off. Some of the Indians thought that all Spaniards were cruel and wicked, and so they fought against De Soto and killed many of his men.

Then other misfortunes befell De Soto. There were many great rivers to cross and there were no boats; so De Soto made canoes out of the trunks of trees and moved his little band of soldiers over on these. But sometimes the boats were unsafe, and horses and men were drowned. Then, too, many of the men died of fever because they had to go through great swamps, where no white men had ever been before, and where you sank into the ground up to your waist. Sometimes there was not enough food, and many of the men grew sick and died; so the soldiers grew afraid and begged to be taken home. But the bold De Soto said, "No; we are all brave men and we must never turn back."

Then there happened one of the greatest things in all the world. De Soto had come to America to find gold and he did not find it; but he found what was much greater, a mighty river. This river was the greatest in all America. It was so large and great that the Indians called it the Mississippi, which means in their language the Father of Waters. This river has become the great water way of America; cities have grown upon it, boats have gone up and down its wide waters, and more good has come from it than from many barrels of gold. And it was Ferdinand de Soto who first found this river, who first came to the Father of Waters.

When De Soto saw this Mississippi River, there were no boats on it and no cities near it. It was just a great, wide river, gleaming in the sun, stretching out its wide arms toward the north and the south. But De Soto was happy. He loved the river as he loved the beautiful Isabella, who waited for him so many, many miles away. And now Ferdinand was willing to turn back. The Indians were not at all friendly, and his army was very little and very weak. Many of the soldiers were sick from the fever; so sadly De Soto turned his back on the great river and started his march home.

But before he had gone many miles, the great Ferdinand de Soto fell sick. Every day he grew worse, and every day he longed to see his beautiful Isabella and the wonderful Mississippi River that he had found. But the fever grew worse and worse, and at last the brave Ferdinand de Soto died.

The sad soldiers buried him in the forest and then started homewards. But before they had gone many steps, one of the soldiers, who was very clever, thought of a plan. "If the Indians find De Soto's grave," he said, "they will know that our brave leader is dead. Then they will no longer fear to attack us. Therefore, let us bury him in the great river that he loved so well, so that no man can find his grave." And this they did. They took up his body and put it into the hollow of a great, heavy tree, and in the dead of night they placed it in the river and let it sink. This was almost four hundred years ago. Yet, perhaps, even to-day, at the bottom of the great Mississippi River, there lies the body of the brave Ferdinand de Soto, who, among all white men, was the first to come to the Father of Waters.

Chapter 16

Sir Francis Drake

1545–1596 England



Sir Francis Drake wearing the Drake Jewel at his waist,
Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger

Within fifty years after Columbus had shown the way to America, Spaniards, Italians, English, French, and Portuguese visited the New World. All were hoping to find gold; but the Spaniards were most successful, for they conquered Mexico and Peru, and won their rich mines of gold and silver. Every year ships loaded with American treasure sailed into Spanish ports. England and Spain were not on good terms, and it was the special delight of the English seamen to capture a treasure ship. One of the most daring of these seamen was named Francis Drake.

Even when Drake was a very small boy, he wanted to go to sea. If there had been no one to object, he could almost have launched his own house and sailed away on the ocean, for he, his parents, and a troop of younger brothers lived in the hulk of a great war-ship that lay just off the queen's dockyard in Chatham. When he awoke in the early morning, he could hear the little waves beating against the sides of the vessel. Then as he lay and listened, the sound of hammers could be heard, the creaking of ropes, and the songs of the workmen in the dockyard. Strange, wild dreams had this little blue-eyed boy. "Some day," he said to himself, "I will go off on one of those boats that the men are building. I will fight with the Spaniards, and I will capture great ships loaded with silver and gold. Then when I come sailing back

to Plymouth, the people on the wharf will shout, 'Three cheers for Francis Drake!'"

With his mind full of such dreams as these, he must have felt disappointed when he was sent to sea with the skipper of a small trading vessel. There was no hope of capturing Spanish ships, for the little craft did nothing but sail quietly back and forth between England and Holland or France, carrying goods to sell in the different markets. Still he was at least on the ocean; so he made the best of it, and worked so faithfully that when the skipper died, he gave the young sailor the boat. Drake might have gone on trading if Spain and England had been friends; but Spain had begun to send out vessels to seize every English craft that could be captured, and Francis Drake's little coaster would have stood small chance of escape. So he sold it, and went on several voyages on vessels that were larger and better able to protect themselves.

On one of these voyages he sailed away in the highest spirits. "When I come back, I shall be a rich man," he said to himself. There were six vessels in the little squadron. The admiral was a famous sailor, Sir John Hawkins. Drake was put in command of the Judith. They sailed to the African coast, seized some negroes, carried them to the Spanish settlements, and sold them as slaves. The ships were loaded with the gold and pearls which had been received in payment, and started for England. Before they had sailed many days, they were so disabled by a storm that the admiral had to put into the Spanish port of Vera Cruz for repairs. There, in the harbor, were twelve great Spanish ships loaded with gold and silver. On the following day twelve more arrived with the same sort of cargo. Hawkins and Drake said to the Spaniards, "We wish to refit our vessels and sail for home. If you will agree not to interfere with us, we will not touch your ships." The agreement was made, and for three days everything was quiet and friendly. Then, in spite of all their promises, the Spaniards suddenly made a fierce attack on the English vessels. Hawkins in the Minion and Drake in the Judith succeeded in escaping and making their way to England; but the pearls and gold went to the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico.

Drake reached home before the admiral, and told his story of the treachery of the Spaniards. He had lost all that he had invested, and he appealed to the queen to oblige Spain to make his loss good. Queen Elizabeth was not sure that England was strong enough to fight with Spain, so she did nothing for him. Then Drake took matters into his own hands. He went on voyage after voyage. He robbed Spanish colonies, and he took Spanish gold and jewels wherever he could find them. King Philip of Spain complained bitterly of the "master thief of the western world" but the queen did not punish her seaman.

On one of his voyages Drake had landed on the Isthmus of Panama and made his way across it. When he reached the highest point of the isthmus, the Indians who were his guides showed him a tall tree. "Climb it," they said; and Drake obeyed eagerly. Steps had been cut into the tree, and soon he was on a little platform which was supported by the branches. Behold, a vast ocean was on either hand. "Behind you is the North Sea, from which you have come," said his guides, "and before you is the South Sea." "Into which I will go," said Drake to himself. "May God give me leave and life to sail an English ship on that sea but once!" he cried.

Year after year passed. One night a messenger came to Drake to say, "Her Majesty the Queen wishes to see you." The bluff sailor and the mighty sovereign had a long talk. Not many months later five ships sailed out of Plymouth Harbor under Drake's command. They were not only fully armed, but they were provided with all the luxuries of the time. The fragrance of costly perfumes

floated back to the crowds on the wharf. The furnishings of the admiral's cabin were of the richest satin and velvet. The table was spread with the finest of linen and laid with dishes of silver and gold. When the commander was ready to dine, the sound of violins was heard, and the music continued until the meal was ended.

As the ship sailed away, some people on the wharf said, "I hope his voyage to Egypt will be a success." Others retorted, "Those ships will never see Egypt; they are going to trade and explore in the South Sea." Still others smiled knowingly and said to themselves, "The exploring will be searching for Spanish ships, and the trading will be seizing Spanish treasures." This last was exactly what Drake meant to do; but if a hint of his plans had reached Spain, the treasures would have been safely hidden. Sixty years earlier Magellan had sailed through the strait that bears his name, but no one else had ever succeeded in making the voyage. "What Magellan did, I can do," thought Drake, and he sailed down the coast of South America and steered boldly into the strait. Two vessels had already been broken up as unseaworthy; a fierce tempest scattered the other three; one sank; and the commander of the second went home in despair. For fifty-two days Drake was driven about by terrible storms. When the gales ceased, he found that his vessel was lying among a group of islands. He landed on the most southern and walked alone to its farthest extremity. There he stood looking at the breakers rolling up on the shore. Before him the waters of the Atlantic and the Pacific mingled. He threw himself on the ground, clasped his arms about a jagged rock, and said to himself, "I am the only man in the world who has ever been so far south."

The exciting part of the voyage was yet to come. Some of the treasure that the Spaniards took from Peru was carried to Panama by land, and some was loaded on shipboard and carried up the coast to the isthmus. One of these ships with a cargo of good yellow gold was lying in Valparaiso. The crew caught sight of white sails coming toward them. "See!" they cried. "There's one of our ships! Get the wine ready and we will make a night of it!" The flags were run up and the drums were beaten in welcome; but almost before the Spaniards had discovered their mistake, the Englishmen had seized the ship and fastened the men under the hatches. So it was that the Golden Hind went merrily up the coast, now and then seizing a vessel full of provisions or valuables. One day some of the men went ashore, and there they came across a man who had laid down his burden of silver bars and fallen asleep. "Pardon us, sir," they said with mock politeness in the best Spanish they could muster. "We are grieved to disturb you, but we will make amends. We will relieve you of the weight of the silver, and then your journey will be less wearisome."

Drake was aiming for Lima, where he expected to find vessels worth capturing. The vessels were there, but every ounce of treasure had either been taken ashore or carried away two weeks earlier on a ship which was known among sailors as the Spitfire. "We will catch her," thought Drake, and he set out in pursuit. He captured one ship. "Where is the Spitfire?" he demanded. "Ten days ahead," was the reply. The next capture said, "Five days," and the next, "Two days." Then Drake swung before the eyes of the sailors a golden chain that gleamed and glittered in the sunshine. "This goes to the man who sees the Spitfire first," he said. A boy, Drake's own nephew, was the fortunate one to win the reward. The Spitfire yielded without a blow, and such a cargo went into the hold of the Golden Hind as no English vessel had ever carried before: thirteen chests of Spanish dollars, eighty pounds of gold, twenty-six tons of silver, and more jewels than could be counted. Two or three other vessels were captured, but they proved to be loaded with silk and linen and china, and

there was little room for such trifles in the treasure-laden hold. "I think her Majesty will be satisfied with what I have done," said Drake to himself, "and now we will make for home."

The Spaniards were keeping close watch of the strait; but that did not trouble Drake in the least, for he had another plan in his mind. Mariners believed that there was a northern channel which led from the Pacific to the Atlantic. The Northwest Passage they called it, and Drake meant to find this passage and sail home through it. Straight north went the gold-laden vessel. The weather grew colder and colder, and when he was as far north as Vancouver Island, he saw that it was of no use to try to go farther. So he determined to reach England by steering west across the Pacific and rounding the Cape of Good Hope. He went south again and entered a harbor near where San Francisco now stands. The cliffs were white like those of England. "In the name of Queen Elizabeth," declared Drake, "I claim this land for England, and I name it New Albion." He set up a "fair great post," and to the post he fixed a plate of metal marked with the date and the name of the queen. So it was that the English paid their first visit to the western shores of what is now the United States.

Then the Golden Hind crossed the Pacific. Drake fell among thievish savages, he ran upon a reef, and he was caught in fearful gales; but at last he sailed into Plymouth Sound, the first English captain who had been around the world. His enemies were waiting for "the pirate," as they called him, and King Philip was clamoring for his punishment; but Queen Elizabeth would not give up either Drake or the treasure that he had brought. In a few months she went in all state to dine with him on board his vessel. Before she left, she made him a knight. Thousands of people visited the Golden Hind, and she forbade that it should ever be destroyed.

The queen was in need of brave sailors. A few years later Philip prepared a great fleet to attack England. He was so sure of victory that he called his fleet the Invincible Armada. Sixty vessels had already assembled off Lisbon and Cadiz. Here was a chance for Drake. He set out with four of the queen's vessels and



Queen Elizabeth Knighting Drake on Board the "Golden Hind" at Deptford, T. H. Robinson

twenty-six provided by merchants. Every one was eager to have a share in the enterprise, for wherever Drake went he found treasure. He sailed straight for Cadiz, and before the Spaniards even guessed that their enemy was at hand, he was burning ships and destroying stores. This was all very well, but Drake did not mean to return to England empty-handed. He had heard that a Portuguese vessel with a precious cargo was near the Azores. He sailed out boldly, captured the ship, loaded his vessel with a greater treasure than ever before, and went home. He sent a gay little message to the queen that he had "singed King Philip's beard." In reality he had done so much harm to the Armada that it could not sail for a whole year.



The Armada in Sight (cropped), John Seymore Lucas

At last, however, the Armada came. The English had made the best preparations that they could, and their fleet lay off Plymouth. Drake and the other admirals were playing bowls on shore when suddenly a man ran among them so out of breath that he could only gasp, "The Spaniards, the Spaniards! They are off the coast!" Two of the officers started for their ships. But Drake called, "Gentlemen, let us go on with our game: there will be time enough to beat the Spaniards afterwards." The game was played out, and then the admirals went on board their vessels. The Spaniards had a great many stately, top-heavy ships that they called galleons; the English had a mongrel fleet made up of almost all the kinds of craft that had ever been built. If they had been willing to stand still and be fired at, the Spaniards would probably have beaten; but a little English boat, hardly longer than a fishing smack, would dash up under the high guns of a galleon and fire a shot or two. Then, before the clumsy Spanish vessel could turn around, the English boat had slipped away and was firing at another great war-ship. Drake was the man of whom the Spaniards were most afraid. People believed in magic in those days, and many a man whispered, "He has sold himself to the



Burial of Admiral Drake, Thomas Davidson

devil, and Satan is helping him." They must almost have thought Drake to be Satan himself when they knew his next exploit. The English sent burning boats among the galleons. In their fright the Spanish ships cut loose from their anchors and soon were widely separated. Then was Drake's time. He dashed up to one after another and captured it, and with twelve of the great vessels in tow went back to the fleet. The winds and waves finished the work, and only sixty of Philip's ships ever went back to Spain.

Drake made another expedition across the Atlantic in quest of treasure, but it failed. The Spaniards had learned better how to meet "the dragon," as they called him, and they hid their riches more carefully. Sickness came upon the little company. Every day there were deaths. At last Drake himself fell ill and grew worse rapidly. The face of the surgeon was grave, and the men gathered in groups to talk of the suffering admiral.

"There will never be another man like him," they declared.

"No," said one, "he never forgot his men, and when there was a prize, he gave us the generous share."

"He was good to his prisoners, too," added another. "Any other man would have killed them, but he let them go free, and once he even gave them a vessel to go home in."

"He brought a stream of fresh water into Plymouth, and he and Sir John gave the Chatham Chest to help poor sailors."

"He never would let a church be burned or the house of any woman that begged for mercy."

So the men talked of their beloved commander. The fleet had anchored near the little island of Puerto Bello, and a few days later it sailed slowly out to sea, bearing the leaden coffin in which were the remains of the dead admiral. Trumpets were blown, cannon were fired, and then the body of the old hero was lowered solemnly and reverently into the ocean.



The statue of Sir Francis Drake on Plymouth Hoe, Plymouth, UK

Chapter 17

Sir Walter Raleigh

1551-1618 England

More than three hundred years ago, in a little town on the shores of the sea, there lived an English lad whose name was Walter Raleigh. This Walter was a very bright, happy boy, active and brave. He loved all kinds of sports. He loved to run and fight and play. He loved to breathe in the cool, fresh air, as every evening he ran along the lonely country roads; but most of all he loved the sea. Every day the young Walter could be found in the blue water, swimming near the shore, or rowing in a boat, or sailing before the wind. He loved the sea, and was not afraid of it, even in the stormiest weather.

Now, Walter was not the only English boy who loved the sea. All the little English lads loved it. The English at this time did not live in great cities as they do today. Many of them, like Walter Raleigh, lived in little towns and villages right on the shores of the sea. They could look at the water



The Boyhood of Raleigh, John Everett Millais

every day when it was blue and quiet and the sky was clear, and also when the sea was rough and angry and storms broke out from the clouds overhead. There were many bold fishermen in those days, and these fishermen would sometimes take the little lads out with them in their boats; and so it happened that at this time many of the English boys knew a great deal about the sea and became good sailors.

The young Walter used to listen to long stories about the great English sailors who were taking their ships to all the seas; but the stories he loved most to hear were of two brave young Englishmen, named Francis Drake and John Hawkins. These sailors hated the Spaniards, who were then the strongest and most cruel people in the world. So these brave English sailors used to fight against the cruel Spaniards and lay in wait to capture their vessels and all the gold and silver that was in them. Sometimes I think the English sailors were just as cruel as the Spaniards with whom they fought; but they were very brave, these English sailors were, and when the young Walter heard about them, he, too, wanted to go to sea and fight the Spaniards and take their gold.

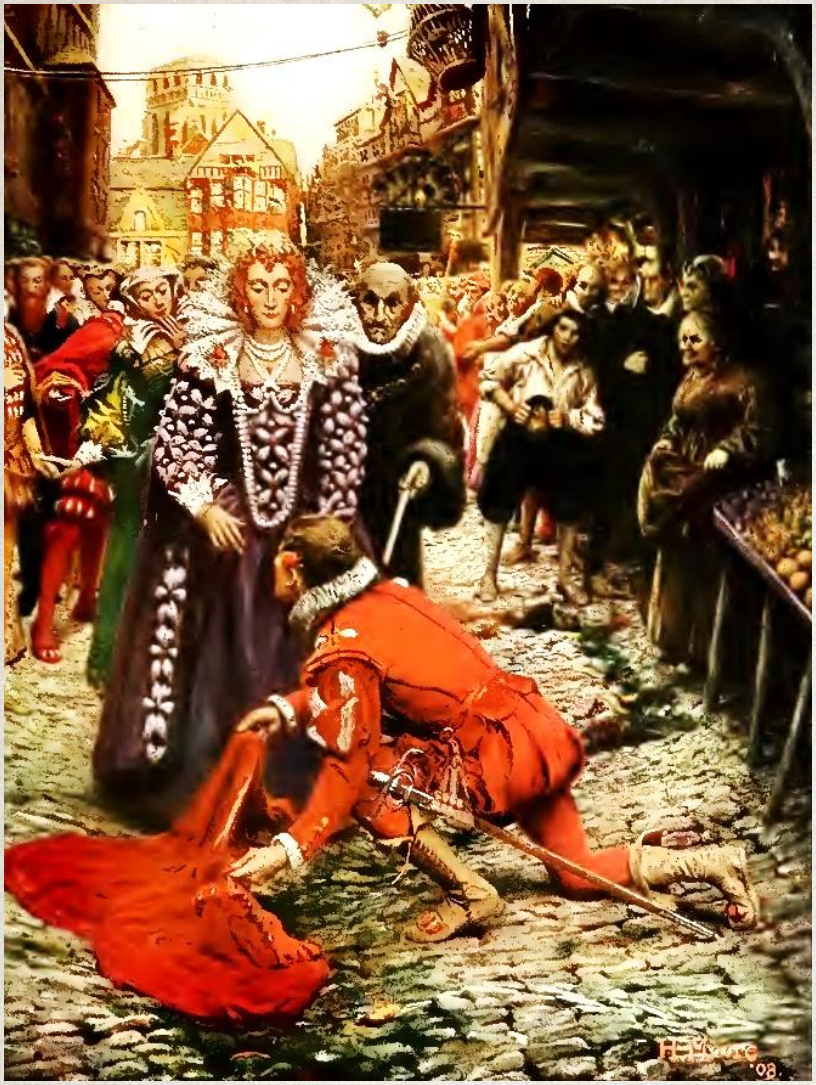
But the time had not yet come. The young Walter was only fourteen years old, and he had much yet to learn. A boy should learn many things before he becomes a man. So the young Walter was sent to the great University of Oxford, where he was taught a great many things. He used to study out of big books, that were so heavy that a boy could hardly carry them. It was a very beautiful place, this Oxford, and Walter met there many lads from all over England. They told him wonderful stories about the great men of England, the soldiers and sailors, the poets and the great lords who lived in London and saw the Queen every day, and helped to rule the kingdom. Walter longed to grow up to be a lord, so he, too, could see the Queen and help to rule the kingdom.

Now, Walter loved to study; but, more than anything else, he wanted to go out into the great world and be a man. So at seventeen he left the beautiful school at Oxford and went to France, where a great war was going on. He fought for six years, doing many brave acts and becoming a great soldier. Then he went to Holland and helped the people of that country to fight against the Spaniards; and everywhere he went the people loved him, because he was so brave and handsome and witty.

But Raleigh loved the sea even more than he loved fighting, and when he was twenty-six years of age, he left the army and went on a ship to America. He wanted to go to Newfoundland, which is an island many miles north of this country, because he thought he could sail further and find a river or strait that would lead right through America to the Pacific Ocean. If he could find such a river or strait, then he could sail right through America to the Indies, and do what Columbus tried to do so many years before.

Well, there isn't any such strait in all America, and so Raleigh never could have found it; but he did not even get the chance. The Spaniards saw his little vessels and sailed after him, and he lost one of his ships and his other ships were damaged; so the brave Raleigh had to come home again.

Then there happened a little thing that made Walter Raleigh the most famous man in all England. One day, while he was in London, he saw the Queen walking along the street. Now the Queen, whose name was Elizabeth, was very proud and very fond of clothes. She had over a thousand dresses, and many of these were embroidered with beautiful jewels. I do not know how many shoes and slippers and silk stockings she had, but I do know that she had very many. Now, just as Walter looked up, he saw that the Queen stopped in front of a muddy place in the street.



Walter sprang forward and spread his handsome cloak on the muddy spot.

She did not want to get her new shoes wet. The great lords who were with the Queen looked worried. They did not know what to do; but young Walter sprang forward, took off his handsome cloak, the most beautiful cloak he had, and, kneeling down before the queen, spread the cloak on the muddy spot in the road, so that she could walk on without getting her shoes dirty.

Well, the Queen was very much pleased. She smiled at the handsome young man at her feet, and, telling him to rise, asked, "What is your name, young man?" "May it please your majesty," he replied, bowing very low, "my name is Walter Raleigh." "Well, Master Raleigh," replied the Queen, "you have done a very gracious act. Ask of me what you will and you may have it."

Now, this was the way in which queens spoke in those days when they were pleased with anything you did; and sometimes the man would ask for a suit of armor, and sometimes for a horse, and sometimes for a hundred pieces of gold. But Walter Raleigh asked for none of these.

"May it please your majesty," he said, "if I may have anything I wish, then I ask for the cloak upon which your majesty has just deigned to step." By this he meant that it was a great honor for the Queen to walk on his cloak.

Now, Queen Elizabeth was very much surprised.

"Why, Master Raleigh," she answered, "the cloak is not mine to give; it is yours and has always been yours."

"Not so," replied Walter Raleigh; "not so, your majesty. The cloak was mine until your royal foot touched it, but in that moment it became yours. And this is what I ask of your majesty, that you give to me my cloak that I may always look on it and remember this day."

So the Queen gave Raleigh his cloak, but she gave him many other things besides. She made

him a knight, which was something that all men wanted to be, and she let him have lands and gold and many beautiful things. She made it a law that no man in all England could sell broadcloth or wines except only Walter Raleigh, which made the young man even richer than before.

Those were good days for Walter Raleigh, or, as he was now called, Sir Walter Raleigh. He was the greatest man in all England. His clothes were the finest in the kingdom. Even the band around his hat had pearls on it, and he wore diamonds and rubies and beautiful feathers, and the white ribbons that tied his shoes had beautiful, gleaming jewels sewed all over them. He even had a suit of armor that was made all of silver. Indeed, he had so many things that I cannot remember them all.

Of course, Raleigh loved to be a great lord among the English and help to rule the kingdom, but he loved the sea even more. "Now, that I am rich," he said, "I wish to buy ships and sail to America. There I can find a new land for England, and in after years Englishmen will bless the name of Walter Raleigh."

So Sir Walter Raleigh went to the Queen and told her of his plan. "Yes," said the Queen, "I shall be glad if you send your ships to America and find new lands for England; but you cannot go yourself, Sir Walter. I want you to stay in England and help me rule the kingdom." She said this because she was very fond of Sir Walter, and was afraid he might die on the long journey, or be killed by the Indians in America. Now, the Queen's words made Sir Walter very sad. He wanted to go with the ships to the new land, because ever since he was a little boy he had loved the sea; but he had to do as the Queen said, so the ships sailed without him.



Sir Walter Raleigh, William Segar

Now these ships went to America and came home again. The sailors brought back with them a string of white, gleaming pearls, skins of strange animals, and two Indians, to show Englishmen what red men looked like. They told Sir Walter wonderful stories of the beauty of the country, and when Sir Walter heard the stories of the sailors, he wanted to go to this new land more than ever; so the next year he sent out more ships. Now, on these second ships went one hundred brave men, who, when they saw the new land, called it Virginia. The Indians told Ralph Lane, the Governor of this colony, many strange stories. They told him of a

beautiful city, back in the forest, where the walls were made of pearl, and where there was gold and silver in the streets. Now, we know that there was no such city; but the Governor believed the Indians, and instead of planting corn for the winter, he and his men searched and searched for the walls of pearl. Everything went badly with the little colony. There was not enough food to eat, and many of the men starved to death. The Indians, too, became unfriendly, though at first they had been very kind to the white men. I will tell you why they changed. One day an Indian stole a silver cup from an Englishman, and instead of punishing the thief, the white men burned all the corn that all the Indians had planted, and set fire to all their houses, till the whole village was in ashes; so the poor Indians had nothing to eat, and no place to sleep, and I, for one, don't blame them for not being friendly to the white men.

Every day things grew worse, and at last the little band of Englishmen went back to their own country. They had not found gold or silver, but they had found what was much better, tobacco, potatoes and corn. These things had never been known in England before, though to-day all the people as the Americans do. Sir Walter himself liked tobacco very much, and, being a grown man, he used to smoke every day out of a great, long pipe. One day a very funny thing happened. He had hired a new servant, a man who had never seen tobacco in all his life. Sir Walter sent him out to bring in a great pitcher of beer, and when he came back he saw smoke coming out of his master's mouth and nose, and he thought that he must be on fire. So what do you think he did? He poured the pitcher of beer over Sir Walter's head to put out the fire. Of course the fire did not go out, but all of Sir Walter's clothes were spoiled; but Sir Walter had more clothes, and so he only laughed.



Sir Walter Raleigh smoking a pipe and being doused by a servant who thinks he's on fire.

The ships which Sir Walter had sent to America all came back, but he did not lose hope, and after a while he sent out a third colony to the new land. In this colony there were one hundred and fifty men, seventeen women, and eleven little children, and Captain John White was their Governor. But the people of this colony, too, were cruel to the Indians, and so, of course, the Indians were unfriendly to them.

After a little while all their food gave out, and as the Indians would not give them corn, they asked Captain White to go to England and come back with more food. Now, Captain White did not want to go on this long journey. His little granddaughter, the first English child ever born in America, was only a few weeks old, and Captain White didn't wish to leave her; but if he did not go back, the people would die of hunger. So one fine day he set sail for England.

Now, at this time, there was a great war going on in England against the Spaniards, and all English ships had to be used in the fight; so Captain White's vessels were taken from him, and he could not go back to his little granddaughter, Virginia Dare, nor to the men and women and children he had left in Virginia. It was three years before he could get ships to cross the great ocean,

and when he did make the long journey, the people he had left so long ago had all been lost. What became of them no man ever knew. Perhaps they died of hunger or were killed by the Indians. It was all so many, many years ago, and the people that were alive then are now all dead; so we shall never know what did become of the little band whom Sir Walter Raleigh sent to America, or of the dear little baby, Virginia Dare.

After a few years, Raleigh, who still loved the sea, got the Queen to let him leave England. This made him very happy, and, buying some ships, he sailed across the ocean to South America. Here he landed in a country called Guiana, not a rich country, but where there were many Indians. Of course, these Indians told him wonderful stories, and, of course, these stories were not true. A tribe of Indians, they said, who lived up the river, were so rich that they sprinkled gold dust on their bodies; and back in the forest were other tribes who had eyes in their shoulders and mouths in their chests. Raleigh believed these foolish stories, because in those days people were not so wise as they are to-day, and so he sailed up the great river in search of these riches.



Raleigh Parting from His Wife, E. Leutze

Well, as there was no gold or wonderful city, of course, Sir Walter Raleigh could not find them, though he hunted a long time, and so, after a few months, he went back to England a very sad man.

Now, as Sir Walter Raleigh grew older, this is what happened. Queen Elizabeth, as queens sometimes do, grew tired of her friend, and one day poor Sir Walter was thrown into prison.

[During his long stay in prison, Raleigh wrote, among some poems and essays, a history of the world, which is among the most interesting of the many wonderful books of the sixteenth century.]

Of course, the Queen let him out again, but, by this time, everyone had turned against him. Now, many men hated Sir Walter because of his great pride; so, when Queen Elizabeth died, and a new King, King James, ruled over England, the King heard many stories against Sir Walter. He believed these stories, and so, for the second time, Sir Walter was put in prison. Here he stayed for



Statue of Sir Walter Raleigh, Bruno Lucchesi, in Raleigh, NC

twelve sad years. That was a long time to stay in prison; but, I suppose, Sir Walter would have been there even longer had he not thought of a plan by which to get out.

You see, Sir Walter knew that King James was very fond of gold; so he sent a man to the King to say, "In South America is much gold. If your majesty will let me out of prison, I will go to that country, and after a short time will return to England with my ships full of gold." This plan pleased King James very much, so he let Sir Walter out of prison, and gave him ships, and sent him to South America.

But we cannot always do what we promise to do; and though Sir Walter tried very hard, he could not find any gold in South America. Instead, he became very sick, and some great Spanish vessels, seeing how small his ships were, chased him, and forced him to return home. Poor Sir Walter Raleigh! —you may well believe that he was sad at the thought of meeting his angry King.

And the King was angry when he found that Sir Walter had not brought the promised gold. He threw him into prison, and then a little later ordered his head to be cut off. By this you see how very angry the King was.

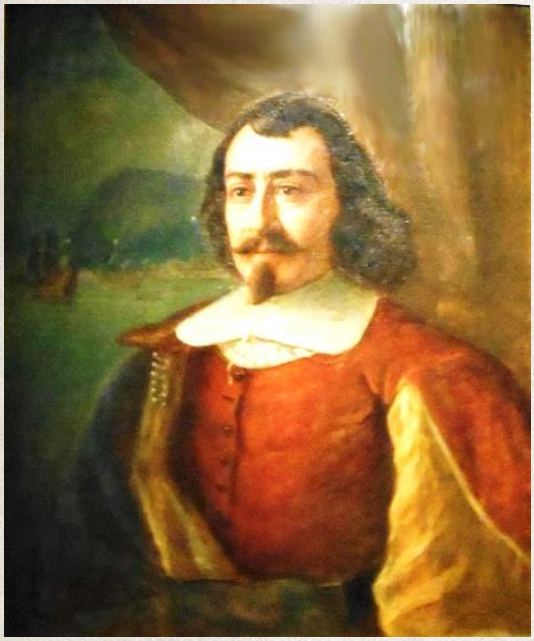
Now, Sir Walter was always brave. He was brave as a little boy, brave as a soldier, and brave when he came to die. Touching the edge of the axe that was to cut off his head, he said, "This is a sharp medicine, but a sound cure for all diseases." By this he meant that after death his troubles would all be over.

And so they were. Though the cruel King James cut off the head of this brave man, he could not make people forget him. Even to-day we remember Sir Walter Raleigh. We have a city named Raleigh in memory of him, and in all parts of our country the children are told of the brave little English boy who loved the sea.

Chapter 18

Samuel de Champlain

1567–1635 France



Samuel de Champlain, Baron H. de Holmfeldt

A French Lad. — Far, far away in France, the country of the French, and long, long ago in the sixteenth century a baby boy was born in the small seaport of Brouage. His name was Samuel de Champlain. His mother and father being gentle people, he was taught to read and write, to be courteous and kind and brave. His father was a captain in the royal navy and the boy Samuel soon learned the ways of ships.

The Wars of Religion. — France in those days was a very sad country. The people were continually at war with one another over their religion. Instead of the freedom of worship that we have in our country, each man insisted that everyone else should think just as he did. Some were Roman Catholics and were called Leaguers while others were Protestants and were called Huguenots. These two parties fought each other all over France until the poor country was wet with the blood of its people. The weak king was sometimes on one side and sometimes on the other so that those who wished to serve the king had a hard time to know on which side to stand.

Champlain Serves the King. — Although a Catholic, Champlain believed he should first serve his king and hard as it often was he was able to do so all his life. For a time he served in the royal navy with his father. Later he became a soldier and fought bravely in the wars which continued for many years. The king was killed and several other men claimed his throne. The one who had the best right to be king was Henry of Navarre, a brave nobleman who loved his country more than he did himself. His white plume and bright smile were enough to lead his ragged soldiers to one victory after another. Champlain followed him and fought for him until Henry was at last crowned king of France. For Champlain's brave services the king gave him a pension and a place at the court.

An Expedition to Canada. — It was not long, however, before he tired of life at the court. He gladly accepted an invitation which was to determine the course of his life from then on. For many years French fishermen had been in the habit of visiting the waters around Newfoundland and the mouth of the St. Lawrence River. No fishing grounds were as good as these and the long and

dangerous voyage across the Atlantic Ocean was more than repaid by the rich cargoes of fish with which they returned. A great nobleman of King Henry's court wished to establish near the St. Lawrence River a French colony which would convert the Indians to Christianity. He thought it would also be a profitable trading and fishing post. As a brave gentleman and an experienced sailor Champlain was asked to be one of the leaders of the expedition. From what we already know of this hardy adventurer we may be sure he was only too glad to go. He did not know, however, that the rest of his life would be spent in serving the interests of this little colony.

His Diary. — Champlain had one habit which was most fortunate for those who later wished to know about his life. He kept a diary or daily account of what he did. This, together with the drawings with which he illustrated it, is the most valuable record we have of his life and work. To be sure he did not draw well and these illustrations were so poor you would have thought a child had drawn them, yet they picture pretty well what he wished to show. His account, though filled with strange stories that no one to-day believes, was believed at that time by intelligent men. When a boy he had studied map making. Besides writing and drawing the story of his adventures he also made maps and charts of the coasts he visited. These were so carefully done that they represent the best maps of that day and are those from which later and more accurate ones are drawn.

Champlain Explores the St. Lawrence River. — Other members of the company were soon busy establishing trading posts and exchanging blankets and trinkets with the Indians for valuable furs. Champlain, however, with several Indian guides began to explore the St. Lawrence River. He advanced past the rock of Quebec and up the river to the hill which he called "Mount Royal." This is now the Canadian city of Montreal—the French form of the name. Beyond this point the party met the powerful tossing current of the Lachine Rapids. Although Champlain and his companions as well as the Indians were all skillful canoeists, they had to give up the attempt to force a way against the swift stream.

Returning to their companions at the mouth of the river Champlain next heard of a way by water to a great sea. His hopeful fancy at once imagined that its farther shores might be those of



The Arrival of Champlain in Quebec, Henri Beau

Cathay, or India, that far-famed eastern land, a route to which all daring navigators sought. With Indians as guides he pushed his canoe for thirty or forty miles up the beautiful Saguenay River only to have to turn back at last without having found any sea.

Meanwhile things were going badly in France. The nobleman who first established the colony had died. Champlain, fearing the little band of adventurers would lose the support of those at home, sailed back to France. He found some rich and influential men who promised to help and the next year he returned to Canada.

The Founding of Quebec. — Champlain explored the coast from Nova Scotia to Massachusetts. He took notes of all he saw and made maps of the coast line. He again sailed up the St. Lawrence to where the river narrows to less than a mile. On a great towering rock which was itself a natural fortress, he began the building of a fort and the establishment of a settlement which was to become the greatest city of New France. The Indians called the spot Quebec which meant in their language a narrow place or strait. This name it still bears as one of the chief cities of Canada after more than three hundred years of history. Few cities of the world have such a magnificent situation, its mighty rock standing like a giant sentinel guarding the stately river flowing at its base. Champlain chose the location wisely and although at times it seemed as though the colony would never prosper at last it grew to be a strong and sturdy town.



Madame Champlain Teaching Indian Children,
Adam Sherriff Scott

An Indian Battle. — He was already on good terms with the Indians who lived around the St. Lawrence. Each year they believed and trusted in him more. Although other white men earned the hatred of the red men by the way they behaved, the savages never ceased to regard Champlain as their friend. To the south of where these Indians lived in what is now the State of New York there dwelt the Iroquois, a bold brave nation of warriors whom all the other Indians greatly feared. Against these Iroquois the northern Indians were preparing an expedition in which Champlain had promised to aid them. Indeed they depended much upon his help for it was his armor and his gun which they hoped would win the battle for them. They set out up the St. Lawrence to where a river, the Richelieu, joins it from the south. Along this river they made their way with much difficulty until they finally came to the broad waters of a lake which has ever since borne the name of Champlain. Here they were met by a strong band of Iroquois. They disembarked from their canoes and each side prepared to fight upon the shore of the lake. The Iroquois were taller, stronger and much better

armed than their enemies. There is not much doubt how the battle would have gone had it not been for Champlain and his two companions all of whom wore armor and carried guns.

Champlain Defeats the Iroquois. — Champlain wore the doublet and long stockings worn by soldiers in those days. Over his doublet he buckled on a breast plate and back piece made of thin steel while his legs were protected by pieces of steel and his head by a plumed casque or helmet. Across his shoulder hung by a strap his bandoleer or ammunition belt. At his side was his sword and in his hand he carried his arquebus, a short gun with a big barrel from which several bullets could be fired at once. Just as the battle was about to begin and the Indians were yelling at the top of their lungs Champlain stepped into a place between the shrieking savages. His appearance created a great deal of surprise among the Iroquois who had probably never seen a white man before. Some of them discharged their arrows at him and he in turn aimed his arquebus and fired. Two of their chiefs were killed and a third wounded. Champlain's companions then fired from where they were standing at one side. This was too much for even the brave Iroquois. They took one look at their fallen comrades and then turned and ran. The battle had been won for the Algonquins, as most of Champlain's Indians were called. This was the first time that white men had taken sides with one Indian tribe against another and it was to have a far-reaching effect. In all the success which the French were to have in their relations with the Indians the Iroquois were always their bitter enemies, and in later years this fact did much to lose the continent of North America for France and win it for the English.

The Colony Meets Hardship and Discouragement. — Every year Champlain now had to spend at least a part of the time at Paris looking after the affairs of his colony. It grew very slowly and there was much quarrelling. As the winters are very severe in Canada, the colonists had neither proper houses, nor enough firewood, nor the right kind of food, nor warm enough clothing. There was a great deal of suffering and each year many died before the warm weather came again. They depended almost entirely upon supplies sent from France and when these failed to come they had a miserable time of it. One wonders sometimes why they preferred to face the cold, the hunger and the danger of this savage land than to return to France, a country of smiles and sunshine. This question is answered when we remember that the colonists were of two kinds, traders whose business was to buy furs of the Indians, and missionaries who were ready to endure any hardships to convert the Indians to Christianity. Champlain alone belonged to neither of these groups. He made it his life work from a sense of duty to the colony for which he was so largely responsible.



Statue of Samuel de Champlain in Isle La Motte, Vermont

The Father of New France. — Samuel de Champlain continued to govern the colony until Christmas day in the year 1635, when he died, twenty-seven years after he had founded Quebec. He was one of the world's great men, courageous and unselfish. He freely gave himself to those who needed his protection. He was at once brave and bold, patient and gentle, and he has richly earned his title of "The Father of New France."

Chapter 19

Henry Hudson

1565–1611 England

This is the story of the man who started New York, the greatest city in all America. It all happened three hundred years ago, at a time when Sir Walter Raleigh was still in prison, and when the Little Red Princess of the Forest, way down in Virginia, was saving the life of Captain John Smith. And this is the way it happened:

In a little English village there lived a boy named Henry Hudson. This boy, like so many other English lads, loved the sea, and he always wanted to be a sailor. There were many games that Henry could play, but he was never really happy except when he was out on the ocean sailing his boat, and learning how to keep it safe in the wind and storm. He used to watch the rough fishermen as they steered their boats and cared for their sails in the rough weather, and soon there was nothing about a boat that the young Henry did not know just as well as a man.



Henry Hudson, unknown artist

Well, while Henry was still a boy, he went to sea to learn more about the great ocean. He did not run away secretly, but he went to the captain of a vessel and told him that he would work as a sailor for a few years without any pay, so that he could learn all about boats. The captain looked the young Henry over from head to foot, and he thought to himself, "Here is a fine, strong lad. He will make a good sailor." So he said to Henry, "You stay with me until you are twenty-one, and I will teach you everything about a ship and make a good sailor out of you."

So Henry Hudson stayed with the captain, and every day he learned more about the ways of the sea and how to

handle a boat. He studied in books, too, and soon knew all about the seas of the world, and all the countries that any white man had ever visited. He was now a captain of a ship himself, and everybody was glad to sail on his boat, because they knew that Henry Hudson was a brave sailor, and was not afraid even in the roughest sea.

In those days there were great companies who sent out ships to all parts of the world to trade with the different nations. In England there was a company of this kind, called the Muscovy Company. Now, this company heard about the wise captain, Henry Hudson, and they wanted him to sail a ship for them and find out new countries, and sell English goods to the strange people he met in the new lands; so Hudson made several voyages for them. He sailed far north, and every day the weather got colder and colder; for, as everybody knows, if you go south it gets warmer, and if you go north it gets colder. Well, after a while it got so cold that the sailors almost froze. The ropes of the ships and even the sails were covered with ice, and in the sea the sailors saw great floating mountains of frozen snow. Now, these mountains are called icebergs, and they are very beautiful, especially when the sun shines upon them, and the white snow glistens, and the clear ice turns a wonderful shade of green.

But the icebergs, although very beautiful, are also very dangerous. They float around in the sea, and if they strike a ship, then that ship is broken to pieces the way a nut is crushed in a nut-cracker. So every day the voyage in the north became more dangerous, and some of Hudson's men wanted to go home; but their captain would not return. "I will not go back," he said, "until I have done what I was sent to do," and he kept on his voyage. So when Henry Hudson reached England, he had sailed further north than any man had sailed in all the world up to that time.

Now, when the people of Europe heard of how Hudson had sailed further north than anybody in all the world, they all wanted him to sail their ships. Holland, at this time, was a country of sailors, and here, too, was a company like the Muscovy Company, only it was called the Dutch East India Company. Well, the men who owned this company were always looking for brave captains; so, when they heard of Henry Hudson, they sent for him and said, "We are all Dutchmen and you are an Englishman; but, as you are a brave and a wise sailor, we want you to sail our ships for us." And they gave him money, and sent him off in a ship called the Half Moon, with twenty sailors, some of them Englishmen and some Dutchmen; and thus it was that the bold Englishman, Henry Hudson, sailed for the Dutch.

Again Hudson sailed towards the north, but this time it was colder even than before, and the sea was so full of ice that his sailors grew afraid, even more afraid than his first sailors had been. You see the ice was really very, very dangerous. If a boat got shut in the ice, you could not move it, no matter how hard you tried; and if it got caught between two great icebergs, it was squeezed until its masts and sides were broken to pieces. So I am not surprised that the sailors grew frightened, for I should have been frightened if I were there, and I think you would have been frightened too. And they were frightened. They said they would throw Hudson overboard unless he steered south; so Hudson had to tell the pilot to turn the boat, and he sailed south along the coast of America.

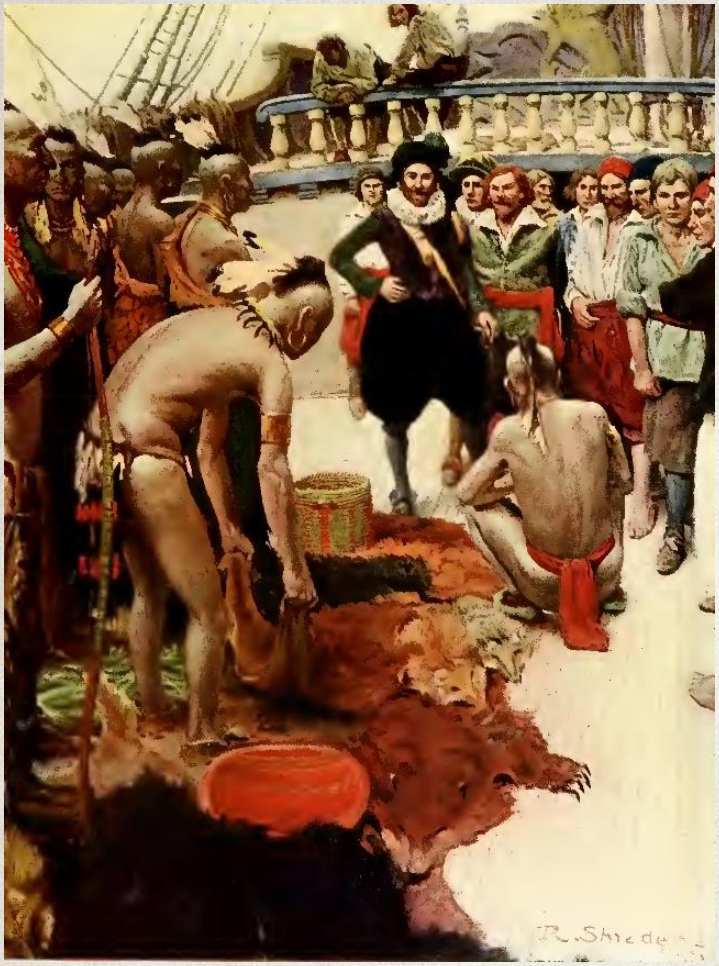
Now, I have told you before how in those days all sailors believed in a short cut between the Atlantic Ocean and the Pacific Ocean; so it is not strange that Hudson believed in this short cut, too, and wanted to find it. Besides, Captain Smith, who was a friend of Hudson, had told him that there was such a short cut. The name that was given to this short cut was the Northwest Passage,

although nobody had ever seen it, and, in truth, there wasn't any to see. Well, as Hudson was sailing along the coast, he came to a great stream, which he thought must be the great Northwest Passage that all brave sailors were in search of; so he turned his boat and sailed up the river, which was really the Hudson River, the river that flows through the State of New York, and does not go anywhere near the Pacific Ocean. The water was clear and fresh, and the longer Hudson sailed, the shallower it became, until, after he had gone about a hundred miles, his boat could go no further, so he had to turn around once more and sail back. His men landed on the beautiful green banks of the river and rested from their hard journey.



Henrik Hudson Entering New York Harbor, Edward Moran

So it was that the Hudson River was found by Henry Hudson, and the great city of New York was founded by Dutchmen. You see, though Henry Hudson was born in England, he sailed for the Dutch, and that gave the Dutch the right to all the land he found. Well, they liked this river, these home-loving Dutchmen, and they liked, too, its beautiful harbor, so they sent out from Holland ships with people to build houses and forts and trading stores for the Indians. Here they also gave the Indians hatchets and knives and little glass beads of many colors, and got from the red men soft, beautiful furs; and soon there was a little village here, which the Dutch called New Amsterdam, after their own city of Amsterdam in Holland. For over fifty years they held this little city, and then the English came and took it from them, and called it New York. And this is its name to-day, the name of the greatest city in all America, the city built upon the land which Henry Hudson found.



Henry Hudson got many furs from the Indians and made them all his friends.

Let us return to Henry Hudson. He soon saw that this beautiful stream was nothing but a river, and not a short cut to the Pacific at all. He was sorry, of course; but anyway, he did a great deal. He got many furs from the Indians and made them all his friends. You see the Indians liked Hudson because he was good to them. He did not treat them cruelly as the Spaniards had done, and he did not try to rob them, or murder them, or make slaves of them; and the Indians never forgot this kindness, and from that time on they were friendly to all the Dutch who came to that part of the country.

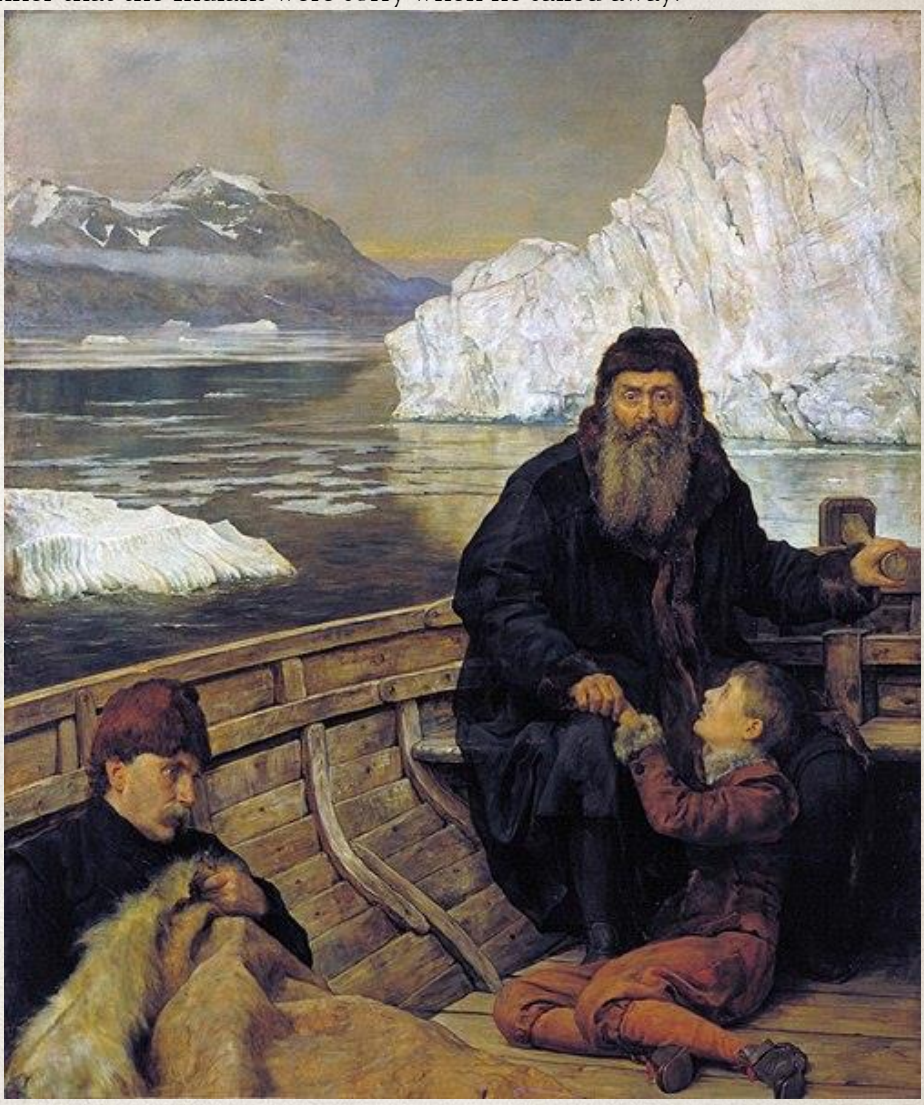
At first the Indians did not know what to say or do to Hudson and the white men. Like the other Indians of our stories, they had never seen a ship or a white man before. Some of them thought that the ship was a great fish or an animal, and still others believed that it was a strange, new house that floated on the water. As for Hudson, they thought he was the Manitou, or Great Spirit, who was the god of the Indians, and they worshipped him in a very queer way. Gathering in a great circle, they danced around him all their queer Indian dances, because, being a great spirit, they thought that their dancing would please him.

Then Henry Hudson gave the Indians axes and shoes and stockings, but the red men did not know what to do with the gifts. They thought the heads of the axes and the shoes must be ornaments to be worn about the neck, and the stockings they used to put tobacco in and they hung them at their belts. Now, I think that shoes and stockings were very foolish gifts to make to the Indians, because everybody knows that they always wear moccasins; but the axes were a very sensible present. The Indians were pleased with these axes. They cut down trees and chopped wood for their fires, much more easily than before, when they had used their big hunting knives.

Well, the Indians certainly did like Hudson and Hudson liked the Indians; so one day the chief invited him in to dinner. It would not have been polite to refuse this invitation. You see, Hudson could not say that he had a "previous engagement," which is the way some people have of making excuses when they do not want to go anywhere. Anyway, Hudson really wanted to go. When he came to the wigwam, he found the chief seated on a mat on the ground. Hudson looked around for

a chair; but, as there was none, he sat down on a mat too, and waited for what would come next. Then the food was served. It was in two big wooden bowls and of only one kind—a sort of stew, made up of pigeons and dog cooked together. Now, a dog isn't a very good thing to eat, at least we don't think it is; but the Indians thought this a very fine feast. Well, Hudson was polite, and he had such a good time at the dinner that the Indians were sorry when he sailed away.

I think that Henry Hudson wanted to come back again to the friendly Indians; but when he reached Europe, the English kept his vessel and made him stay in England. Hudson wanted to sail again for the Dutch, but his own people said, "No; you must sail for us. You must not find new lands for any country but England."



The Last Voyage of Henry Hudson, John Collier

So the next year the brave Hudson sailed once more, and this time he sailed on an English ship. He took with him his own son, a young lad, and a man named Henry Green, and also a good many sailors. You will hear of this Henry Green again before this story is ended.

Far north Hudson steered the little vessel, and soon he came to a great bay which no white man had ever seen before, and which was afterwards called Hudson's Bay, because Hudson found it. Here it was very cold indeed, and every day it grew colder. The ice froze around the vessel, and for eight months the little ship could not move an inch. Food got scarce, and then, as always happens, the men were afraid of starving and longed to get home. As soon as the ice began to melt even a little, they begged Hudson to go back to England. "Do not stay in this cold land," they said, "where we shall surely freeze and starve to death." But Hudson would not do this. He believed that at last he was in the Northwest Passage, and would soon find the Pacific Ocean.



Bust of Henry Hudson in Jersey City Heights, NJ

"Be brave," he said, "for this ship shall not return to England until I find out about this bay." Perhaps these words of Hudson would have kept the men quiet if it had not been for the wicked Henry Green. Hudson had always been friendly to Green, but this wicked man was not grateful. Night and day he talked to the men until he got them to turn against their good captain. And they did turn against him in this way.

Hand and foot both Henry Hudson and his son were tied so tight that they could not get loose, and then, with seven sick men, they were put in a little boat and turned adrift in the great sea, while the wicked Henry Green and the other men sailed home to England. When they reached home, I am glad to say, these wicked men were all punished. They were put in prison, and a ship was sent to Hudson Bay to look for the brave Henry Hudson; but he was not found, and to this day no one knows what became of the little boat and of good Captain Hudson.

So I suppose that, left alone without food, he died there in the great, frozen sea. But who knows? There were many simple Dutch people who lived near New York, in the Catskill Mountains, who never believed that Hudson was dead. Whenever it thundered in the hills, these old men used to say, "Henry Hudson and his men are playing ninepins in the mountains."

Chapter 20

Pierre Radisson

1636–1710 France
(Abridged from the Original)

It was at the trading post of Three Rivers on the St. Lawrence River, the year 1662, and the time, early in the morning, when the wood thrush had just begun his call. Strange things happened then, but these were frontier days when strange things used to happen, so do not be surprised when you learn what befell Pierre Radisson, son of a French emigrant to Canada, and then a youth of about seventeen years of age.

With two companions, young Pierre had gone out from the stockade to shoot ducks on Lake St. Peter, not far from this first home of the French emigrants to Canada.

The sportsmen were all young, for only young boys would have left the shelter of the fortification at this time, as all the Canadians knew that the dreaded Iroquois had been lying in ambush around the little settlement of Three Rivers, day and night, for a whole year. In fact, not a week passed but that some settler was set upon in the fields and left dead by the terrible redskins. Farmers had flocked to the little fortification and would only venture back to their broad acres when armed with a musket.

But these were only boys, and, like all boys, they went along, boasting how they would fight when the Indians came. One kept near the edge of the forest, on the lookout for the Iroquois, while the others kept to the water in quest of game. They had gone along in this manner for about three miles, when they met a fellow who was tending sheep.

"Keep out from the foot of the hills!" he called to them. "The Iroquois are there! I saw about a hundred heads rising out of the bushes about an hour ago."

The boys loaded their pistols and primed their muskets.

In a short time they shot some ducks, and this seemed to satisfy one of the young men.

"I have had enough," said he. "I am going back to the stockade where I can be safe."

"And I will go with you," said the second.

But young Radisson laughed at them.

"If you are afraid to go forward," said he, "I will go ahead by myself."

So the wild youth went onward, shooting game at many places, until, at length, he had a large number of geese, ducks, and teal. There were more than he could possibly carry, so, hiding in a hollow tree the game that he could not bring back, he began trudging towards Three Rivers. Wading swollen brooks and scrambling over fallen trees, he finally caught sight of the town chapel, glimmering in the sunlight against the darkening horizon above the river. He had reached the place where his comrades had left him, so he sat down to rest himself.

The shepherd had driven his sheep back to Three Rivers and there was no one near. The river came lapping through the rushes. There was a clacking of ducks as they came swooping down to their marsh nests and Radisson felt strangely lonely. He noticed, too, that his pistols were water-soaked. Emptying the charges, he reloaded, then crept back to reconnoiter the woodland. Great flocks of ducks were swimming on the river, so he determined to have one more shot before he returned to the fort, now within easy hail.

Young Pierre crept through the grass towards the game, but he suddenly stopped, for, before him was a sight that rooted him to the ground with horror. Just as they had fallen lay his comrades of the morning. They were lying face upward among the rushes.

Radisson was too far away from the woods to get back to them, so, stooping down, he tried to reach a hiding place in the marsh. As he bent over, half a hundred tufted heads rose from the high grass, and beady eyes looked to see which way he might go. They were behind him, before him, on all sides of him—his only hope was a dash for the cane-grown river, where he might hide himself until darkness would give him a chance to rush to the fort.

Slipping a bullet and some powder into his musket as he ran, and ramming it down, young Pierre dashed through the brushwood for a place of safety. Crash! A score of guns roared from the forest. He turned, and fired back, but before he could reload, an Iroquois brave was upon him; he was thrown upon his back, was disarmed, his hands were bound behind him with deer thongs, and he was dragged into the woods. Half drawn, half driven, he was taken to the shore where a flotilla of canoes was hidden. Fires were kindled, and, upon forked sticks driven into the ground, the redskins boiled a kettle of water for the evening meal.

The Iroquois admired bravery in any man, and they now evinced a certain affection for this young Frenchman, for, in defiance of danger, they had seen him go hunting alone. When attacked, he had fired back at enough enemies to have terrified any ordinary Canadian. This they liked, so his clothing was returned to him, they daubed his cheeks with war paint, shaved his head in the manner of the redskinned braves, and, when they saw that their stewed dog turned him faint, they boiled him some meat in clean water and gave him some meal, browned upon burning sand. That night he slept beneath a blanket, between two warriors.

In the morning the Indians embarked in thirty-seven canoes. By sunset they were among the islands at the mouth of the river Richelieu, where were great clouds of wild-ducks, which darkened the air at their approach.

Young Pierre bore up bravely, determined to remain with his captors until an opportunity to escape presented itself. The red men treated him kindly, saying: “Chagon! Chagon! Be merry! Cheer up!” He was given a paddle and was told to row, which he did right willingly. Another band of warriors was met with on the river, and the prisoner was forced to show himself as a trophy of victory and to sing songs for his captors, which he did to the best of his ability.

Pierre was now a thorough savage. He was given a tin looking-glass by which the Indians used to signal by the sun, and also a hunting knife. The Iroquois neared Lake Champlain where the river became so turbulent that they were forced to land and make a portage. Young Radisson hurried over the rocks, helping the older warriors to carry their packs. As night came on, he was the first to cut wood for the campfire.

It was now about a week since the redmen had left Lake St. Peter and they entered the gray

waste of Lake Champlain. Paddling down its entire length, they entered the waters of beautiful Lake George, and, beaching the canoes upon its western bank, abandoned them: the warriors striking out through the forest for the country of the Iroquois. For two days they thus journeyed from the lake, when they were met by several women, who loaded themselves down with the luggage of the party, and accompanied the victorious braves to the village. Here the whole tribe marched out to meet them, singing, firing guns, shouting a welcome, dancing a war-dance of joy.

It was now time for young Pierre to run the gauntlet. Sometimes the white prisoners were slowly led along with trussed arms and shackled feet, so that they could not fail to be killed before they reached the end of the line. With Radisson it was different. He was stripped free and was told to run so fast that his tormentors could not hit him. He did this and reached the end of the human lane unscathed.

As the white boy dashed free of the line of his tormentors, a captive Huron woman, who had been adopted by the tribe, caught him and led him to her cabin, where she fed and clothed him. But soon a band of braves marched to her door, demanded his surrender, and took him to the Council Lodge of the Iroquois for judgment.

Radisson was led into a huge cabin, where several old men sat solemnly around a central fire, smoking their calumets, or peace pipes. He was ordered to sit down. A coal of fire was then put into the bowl of the great Council Pipe and it was passed reverently around the assemblage. The old Huron woman now entered, waved her arms aloft, and begged for the life of the young man. As she made her appeal, the old men smoked on silently with deep, guttural "ho-ho's" meaning "Yes—yes. We are much pleased." So she was granted permission to adopt Radisson as a son. The nerve and courage of the young French boy had thus saved his life. He must bide his time—by and by, he would have an opportunity to escape.

It was soon Autumn, the period of the hunt, so young Pierre set out into the forest with three Iroquois in order to lay in a supply of meat for the winter months. One night, as the woodland rovers were returning to their wigwams, there came the sound of some one singing through the leafy thicket, and a man approached. He was an Algonquin brave, a captive among the Iroquois, and he told them that he had been on the track of bear since day-break. He was welcomed to the camp-fire, and, when he learned that Radisson was from Three Rivers, he immediately grew friendly with the captive white boy.

That evening, when the camp-fire was roaring and crackling so that the Iroquois could not hear what he said, the Indian told Radisson that he had been a captive for two years and that he longed to make his escape.

"Hist! Boy!" said he. "Do you love the French?"

Pierre looked around cautiously.

"Do you love the Algonquins?" he replied.

"As I do my own mother," was the answer. Then, leaning closer, the warrior whispered: "Brother—white man—let us escape! The Three Rivers, it is not so far off! Will you live like a dog in bondage, or will you have your liberty with the French?" Then he lowered his voice. "Let us kill all three of these Iroquois to-night, when they are asleep, and then let us paddle away, up Lake Champlain, again to the country of our own people."

Radisson's face grew pale beneath his war paint. He hesitated to answer, and, as he looked about

him, the suspicious Iroquois cried out:

"Why so much whispering?"

"We are telling hunting stories," answered the Algonquin, smiling.

This seemed to satisfy the Iroquois, for, wearied by the day's hunt, they soon dozed off in sleep and were snoring heavily: their feet to the glowing embers. Their guns were stacked carelessly against a tree. It was the time for action.

The French boy was terrified lest the Algonquin should carry out his threat, and so pretended to be asleep. Rising noiselessly, the captive redskin crept up to the fire and eyed the three sleeping Mohawks with no kindly glance. The redmen slept heavily on, while the cry of a whip-poor-will sounded ominously from the black and gloomy forest.

The crafty Algonquin stepped, like a cat, over the sleeping forms of the braves, took possession of their firearms, and then walked to where Radisson was lying. The French boy rose uneasily. As he did so, the Indian thrust a tomahawk into one of his hands, pointing, with a menacing gesture, to the three Iroquois. Radisson's hand shook like a leaf.

But the captive red man's hand did not shake, and, lifting his hatchet, he made an end to the sleeping Iroquois.

Hurray! Radisson was free!

The Algonquin did not waste precious moments; but, hastily, packing up all their possessions, they placed them in the canoe, took to the water, and slipped away towards Lake Champlain.

"I was sorry to have been in such an encounter," writes Radisson. "But it was too late to repent."

The fugitives were a long way from Three Rivers, on the St. Lawrence, and they knew that many roving Iroquois were hunting in the country between them and the French settlement. They must go carefully, be perpetually on their guard, and then—they would be among their own people again! Only, caution! caution! And never a sound at any time!

Traveling only at night, and hiding during the day, the fugitives crossed Lake Champlain, entered the Richelieu, and, after many portages, finally swept out upon the wide surface of Lake St. Peter, in the St. Lawrence. They paddled hard and were soon within a day's journey of Three Rivers, yet they were in greater danger then than at any time in the hazardous trip, as the Iroquois had infested this part of the St. Lawrence for more than a year, and often lay hidden in the rush-grown marshes and the wooded islands, waiting for some unsuspecting French Canadian to pass by. It was four o'clock in the morning when the Algonquin and white boy reached the side of Lake St. Peter. They cooked their breakfast, covered the fire, and lay down to sleep.

At six o'clock, the Algonquin shook Pierre by the shoulder, urging him to cross the lake to the Three Rivers side.

"The Iroquois are lurking about here," the French boy answered. "I am afraid to go. Let us wait until dark. Then, all will be well."

"No, no," answered the brave. "Let us paddle forward. We are past fear."

Radisson consented to take a chance at getting to the stockade, although his judgment told him to wait until dark. So the canoe was pushed out from the rushes, and, with strong strokes, the flimsy boat was driven towards the north shore. They were half way across, when Pierre called out: "I see shadows on the water ahead."

The Indian, who was in the stern, stood up, saying:

"It is but the shadow of a flying bird. There is no danger."

So they kept on; but, as they progressed, the shadows multiplied, for they were the reflections of many Iroquois, hidden among the rushes. The fugitives now saw them, and, heading their canoe for the south shore, fled for their lives.

On, on they went; but, on, on, came the Iroquois, nearer and nearer. There was a crash of musketry and the bottom of the canoe was punctured by a ball. The Algonquin fell dead, while the canoe gradually filled with water, settled, and sank, with the young Frenchman clinging to the side. Now a firm hand seized him, and he was hauled into one of the canoes of the Iroquois.

The victors set up a shrill yelp of triumph. Then they went ashore and kindled a great fire. Radisson was bound, roped around the waist, and thrown down upon the ground, where he lay with other captives: two Frenchmen, one white woman, and twenty Hurons.

In seventeen canoes, the Iroquois now paddled up the Richelieu River for their own country, frequently landing to camp and cook.

When they reached the village, Radisson was greeted with shouts of rage by the friends of the murdered Mohawks. Suddenly there broke from the throng of onlookers the Iroquois family that had adopted young Pierre. Pushing through the crowd of torturers, the mother caught Radisson by the hair, crying out: "Orimba! Orimba!" She then shoved him to her husband, who led the trembling young Frenchman to their own lodge.

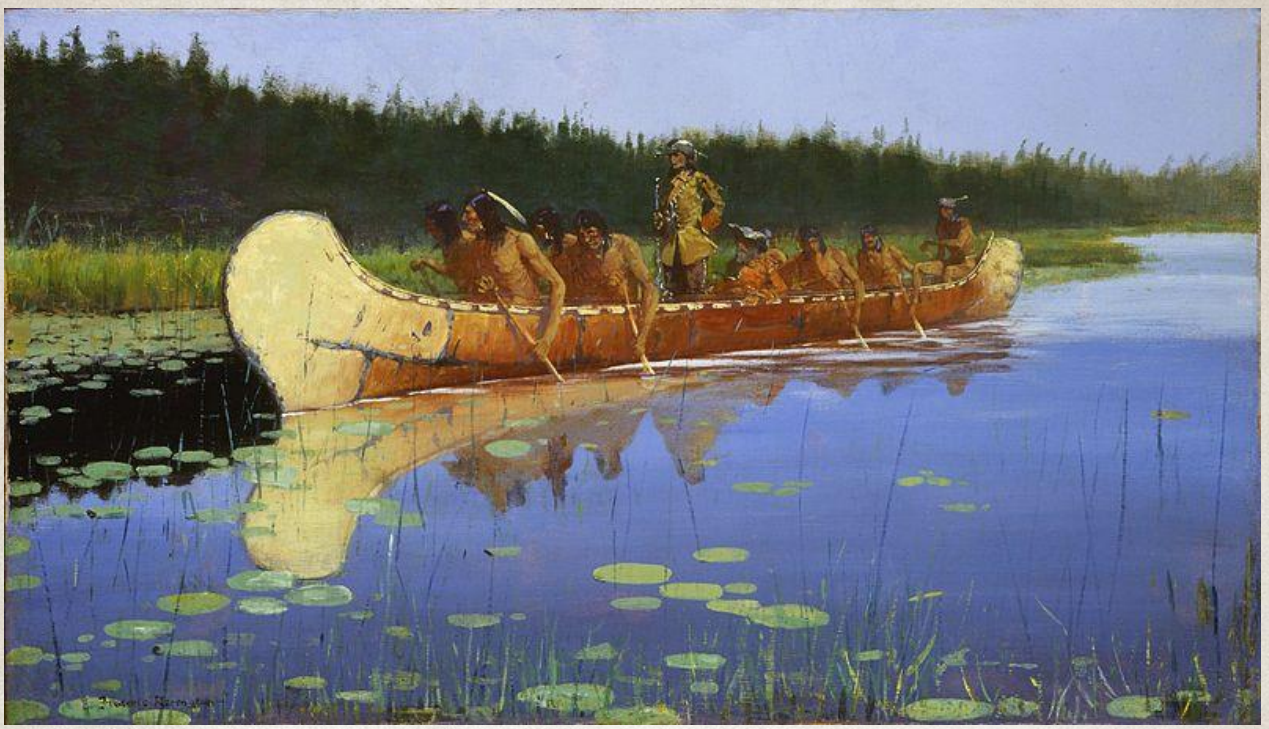
"Thou fool," cried the old chief, turning wrathfully upon the young man. "Thou wast my son! Thou lovest us not, although we saved thy life! Wouldst kill me, too?" Then he shoved him to a mat upon the ground, saying: "Chagon—now be merry! It is a fine business you've gotten yourself into, to be sure."

Radisson sank to the ground, trembling with fear, and endeavored to eat something. He was relating his adventures when there was a roar of anger from the Iroquois outside, and, a moment later, he was seized and carried back to the other prisoners. We will draw a veil over what now befell him.

After three days of misery the half-dead Frenchman was brought before the council of the Mohawk Chiefs. Sachem after sachem rose and spoke. The question to be decided was, could the Mohawks afford to offend the great Iroquois chief who was the French youth's friend? This chieftain wished to have the young man's life spared. Would they do so?

After much talk and passing of the peace-pipe, it was decided that the young man could go free. The captive's bonds were cut, he was allowed to leave the council chamber, and, although unable to walk, was carried to the lodge of his deliverer. For the second time his life had been saved.

This young Frenchman, Radisson, went on to do many things, including the discovery of the Great Northwest. When a captive among the Mohawks, he had cherished boyish dreams of discovering many wild nations; and, when his brother-in-law, Groseillers, asked him to take a journey with him far to the westward, he only too readily acquiesced. Late one night in June, Groseillers and he stole out from Three Rivers, accompanied by Algonquin guides. They went as far as Green Bay, spent the winter there, then, when the Spring sun warmed the land, they traveled westward, passed across what is now the State of Wisconsin, and reached a "mighty river rushing profound and comparable to the St. Lawrence." It was the upper Mississippi, now seen for the first time by white men.



Radisson and Groseilliers, Frederic Remington

The Spring of 1679 found the explorers still among the prairie tribes of the Mississippi, and from them Radisson learned of the Sioux, a warlike nation to the West, who had no fixed abode, but lived by the chase and were at constant war with another tribe to the north, the Crees.

The two Frenchmen pressed westward, circled over the territory now known as Wisconsin, eastern Iowa and Nebraska, South Dakota, and Montana, and back over North Dakota and Minnesota to the north shore of Lake Superior.

Then Radisson made a snow-shoe trip towards Hudson's Bay and back again, living on moose meat and the flesh of beaver and caribou. Finally, after adventures exciting and hair-raising, he and Groseillers found their way to Three Rivers.

Although Radisson was not yet twenty-eight years of age, his explorations into the Great Northwest had won him both fame and fortune.

So this is the way that he spent his life. Voyaging, trapping, trading, he covered all this great, wild country, paddled up her rivers, fished in her lakes, smoked the pipe of peace in her settlements. In ten years' time he brought half a million dollars' worth of furs to an English trading company which employed him.

Yet, with all his explorations, all his adventures, all his trading, as he grew old, he remained as poor as one of the couriers de bois who used to paddle him up the streams of New France. Until the year 1710 he drew an allowance of £50 a year ($250) from the English Hudson Bay Trading Company, then payments seemed to have stopped. Radisson had a wife and four children to support, but what happened to him, or to them, is unknown to history.

Somewhere in the vast country of New France the life of this daring adventurer went out. And somewhere in that vast possession lies the body of this, the first white man to explore the Great

Northwest. Oblivion hides all record of his death, and only the cry of the moose-bird, harsh, discordant—the true call of the wilderness—echoes over the unknown spot where lie, no doubt, the bones of this trickster of the Mohawks and explorer of the wastes of New France.

Memorial tablets have been erected in many cities to commemorate La Salle, Champlain, and other discoverers. Radisson has no monument, save the memory of a valiant man-of-the-woods, reverently held in the hearts of all those who love the hemlock forests, the paddle, the pack, and the magnetic call of the wilderness.

Chapter 21

Rene-Robert Cavalier, Sieur de la Salle

1643–1687 France

Joliet no sooner told the story of his expedition than a gentleman of Normandy living in Canada resolved to undertake a journey to the mouth of the Mississippi, and to the Pacific. This man was Robert Cavalier de la Salle, and in August, 1679, he left Canada equipped for a voyage down the Mississippi; but, being detained by the loss of his vessel and an attack of the Iroquois upon the Illinois, who were the friends of the French, it was two years after that date, 1681, before he found himself actually on his way.



Rene Robert Cavelier de la Salle,
Albert Ferland

They left by the way of the Chicago River, which they travelled down in sledges, the river being frozen over, and even when they reached the Mississippi they were detained some days by the ice; but at last they were able to begin the descent, and, like the former expedition, passed many days before they came to an Indian village that was inhabited.

The first notice they had of their approach to a settlement came from the drums and war-cries of the people who had assembled on the bank. La Salle immediately landed on the other side of the river; and, setting his men to work, they soon had a fort built, and were prepared to defend themselves. The Indians, seeing this, changed their tactics, and sent some messengers across the river in a canoe. La Salle went down to the shore carrying the calumet, which was received by the savages with respect, and friendly feeling was at once established.

The Frenchmen were very glad of this, as during the three days they spent there they learned many things about the Indians farther



La Salle's Expedition to Louisiana in 1684, Théodore Gudin

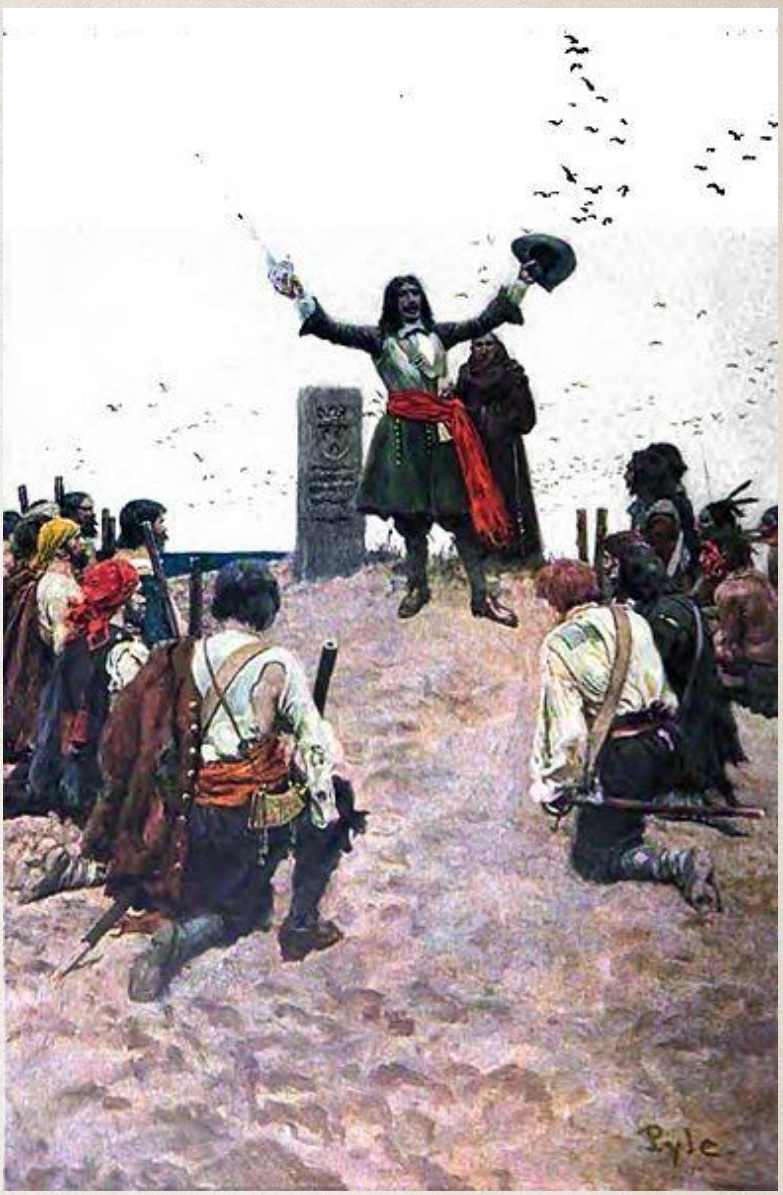
down the river, and were also well supplied with food for their journey; for this village was situated in the midst of orchards and fields, and the people were very intelligent and courteous, having pleasant manners, and being liberal and hospitable. La Salle planted a cross bearing the arms of France, and parted from his new friends with many expressions of gratitude. The Indians sent with him some interpreters, who introduced him to a friendly tribe some distance farther down, and La Salle found these Indians also very intelligent and hospitable. He describes their houses as being built of mud and straw, with cane roofs, and furnished with bedsteads, tables, etc. They also had temples where their chiefs were buried, and wore white clothing spun from the bark of a tree. These were very different habits from those that La Salle had seen among the Indians in the north, and he concluded that he must be nearing the end of his journey.

This proved to be true, for two weeks after he found the river dividing into three branches; he took one branch and two of his men the others, and in a short time they found that the water was salt, and knew that they had reached the mouth of the river; a little farther on they saw the sea, and found that they had reached the Gulf of Mexico by the way of the Mississippi.

On April 9, 1682, a cross was raised, upon which were inscribed the arms of France; then, after a religious ceremony, La Salle took possession of the Mississippi and all its branches, together with

all the lands bordering them, in the name of the king of France. A few days after he turned his face homeward; but, being detained by sickness, did not reach Quebec until the next year. However, he had sent the accounts of his voyage on before him, and these had been forwarded to France; and, after some delay, a new expedition left France, whither La Salle had gone; the object of this expedition was to found a colony at the mouth of the Mississippi.

All might have gone well, had it not been for the jealousy of Beaujeu, the captain of the fleet, who refused to follow La Salle's advice about landing. As they coasted along the Gulf, from their ignorance of the coast, they passed the mouth of the Mississippi, and went farther westward than they had meant to. La Salle wished to turn back and search for the mouth of the river, but Beaujeu refused to do this, and insisted upon entering Matagorda Bay in Texas. Here La Salle was obliged to have his stores landed; and, as soon as this was done, Beaujeu sailed back to France again, caring little what became of his fellow-voyagers.



La Salle Christening the country "Louisiana", Howard Pyle

But La Salle was not to be disheartened by such a mishap as this. He cheered the hearts of his men by his hopeful words, and they set about establishing the colony at once. They found the climate agreeable, and the natives friendly and willing to trade; they belonged to the same race as those on the Mississippi, and, like them, lived in large villages, and had comfortably furnished houses. La Salle had no fear in leaving his colony among these well-disposed natives; and, as soon as it was possible, he left his company and went in search of the Mississippi, which he had hopes of finding without difficulty.

But the river was farther off than he knew, and he was an utter stranger to the country; and, although he turned again and again, two years passed and he had not yet seen its shining waters. At last he determined to take half the colony and find his way to Canada, where he might obtain

supplies, as they had received nothing from France since their arrival, owing to the bad report of La Salle that Beaujeu had taken back.

Canada was two thousand miles away, but there were friends there, and the brave leader could not bear to see his countrymen suffering when it might be possible to bring them help. The little party of twenty was not very well equipped for a long journey through a strange country. They had to make clothing of the sails of one of the vessels; their shoes were of buffalo-hide and deer-skin; they had to make boats of skin to cross the swollen rivers, and they depended for food upon the game they could find. And so their progress was very slow, and it took them two months to reach Trinity River.



Statue of René-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, by Jacques de Comte Lalaing, in Lincoln Park, Chicago

But hardship was not the only thing that La Salle had to bear on this wearying march. Part of the men became dissatisfied with him, and rebelled against his authority. They killed his nephew and a faithful Indian servant while they were absent from the camp on a hunting-expedition, and when La Salle appeared and asked where his nephew was, one of the murderers raised his gun and shot their leader dead.

La Salle was one of the bravest and noblest of the French explorers. If he had been allowed to carry out his plans, France would have been stronger and richer in America than it was ever her fortune to become. It was ten years after his death before any other attempt was made to settle the Mississippi Valley.

To La Salle belongs the honor of being the first European to sail from the upper part of the Mississippi down to the Gulf of Mexico, and it was he who started that spirit of adventure which led to so many Frenchmen devoting their lives to the exploration of the great river and its many branches, thus making the western part of the country familiar to the Europeans, and laying the foundations of the French power in the valley of the Mississippi; and laying, at the same time, the foundations of that firm and lasting friendship with the Indians which was the strongest safe-guard of the French in America; for all the tribes along the great river and on the shores of the northern lakes grew to love and reverence the French name.

They looked upon them as brothers, for they came to their humble villages and led the same simple lives that they themselves led. They hunted and fished with them, wore the same kind of clothing, and slept contentedly in their rude wigwams. They talked with them in their own language, and called their lakes and streams by their poetical Indian names. They even married the daughters of their race, and the kindly French priests knew no difference between white man and red man, but ministered to all alike. The Indians freely entered the little chapels that were scattered up and down along the river, and lovingly hung the cross with flowers; and little Indian children were brought there to be baptized, just as the little French children were, and all was peace and harmony.

And the calumet never passed from chief to chief but as a sign of peace, and of the abiding friendship which began when Marquette was greeted by the Illinois chief with hands raised toward heaven, as if calling down the blessing of the Great Spirit upon the meeting.

Chapter 22

Father Jacques Marquette

1637–1675 France

Many, many years ago, two Frenchmen, traveling through a new, wild forest country, came upon a cross that was all covered with flowers. There were no white men in all this country, and so the Frenchmen wondered who had put the cross there, and who had placed the flowers on it; but later they learned that the Indians in this part of the country had laid the flowers on the cross. Then the Frenchmen knew that these Indians were friends, because everywhere the French went they carried the cross, and taught the Indians, who loved them, to place flowers on it.



Father Jacques Marquette preaching to Native Americans, Wilhelm Lamprecht

Now, these two Frenchmen were very good men. They treated the Indians kindly, and the Indians, who liked to be treated kindly, were also good to the Frenchmen. There is a very good lesson in all this. If you want people to be good to you, then you must always be kind to them.

Now, all the Frenchmen who came to America knew this, and from the first they were kind to the Indians. The Spaniards had been very harsh. They had killed the red men or made slaves of them, and sometimes the Indians had been cruelly beaten until they died. They had been tortured, too; hung up by their fingers and toes; roasted over a hot fire; starved, and even chased with great, fierce blood-hounds. So I am not surprised that the Indians did not love the Spaniards.

Now, the English and Dutch who came to America were not quite so cruel as the Spaniards, but sometimes they, too, treated the Indians harshly. For a very little wrong they would shoot an Indian or burn down a whole Indian village. Besides, they were very proud, and thought that the red men were only savages, and they did not want to have anything to do with them; and this, I

may tell you, is a very bad way to act and think, if you want people to like you and help you.

The Frenchmen who came to America acted much more wisely. They really loved the Indians, and often lived with them in their poor little villages. Some of the Frenchmen had been great lords in their own country. They had had beautiful castles, with fine, big rooms, and gold and silver and wonderful carpets. They had had many servants to wait on them, and everything in the world that they wanted. Yet these very men were not too proud to sleep on the ground in the hut of an Indian, or share with him a meal of corn and dried meat. They hunted with the Indians; they fished with them, they smoked their pipes with them, and Indians and Frenchmen sat around the roaring campfire and talked together, or looked up in silence at the bright little stars. Wherever the Frenchmen went, they put up little chapels, and here Frenchmen and Indians kneeled down side by side and prayed to the good God. The French priest would baptize the little red children, and when they grew old enough to understand, he would teach them about God and the Bible.



Father Jacques Marquette preaching to Native Americans,
Wilhelm Lamprecht

Some of the Indians became Christians, and hung flowers on the little crosses which the Frenchmen built all over the country. And so it was that when our two Frenchmen saw the flowers on the cross, they rejoiced and were glad, because they knew that even in this wild country, far away from all white men, they were with friends.

Now, these men were not only very good, but they were also very brave. One of them was named Louis Joliet. He had been sent by the King of France to find out some good way to the Pacific Ocean. The other was Father Marquette, a French priest, as brave a man as any soldier. This Father Marquette had lived with the Indians many, many years. He knew their languages and all their customs, and the Indians loved him and called him their friend.

Well, it was not an easy thing that these brave Frenchmen were trying to do. No white man had

ever been in all this country before. It was much pleasanter staying in Quebec, the city which good Champlain, the Father of New France, had founded; but Joliet and good Father Marquette were not afraid of danger. They sailed down the St. Lawrence River into the Great Lakes, and then on and on and on, day after day, and day after day, until at last they reached Lake Michigan. I think this part of their journey must have been the most pleasant. The weather was warm, the Indians they met were friendly, and now and then they would come across some Frenchman who was living out in the wild country, trapping animals for their furs or trading with the Indians; and sometimes they would meet a good French priest, who had come this great way to teach the Indians about God.

Well, at last they left the last Frenchman and the last wooden cross, and started down a narrow but beautiful river that they believed flowed into the Mississippi. The little river was so choked with rice that grew wild along its banks that the boats found it hard to move. Here their guides left them, and then for a week they drifted slowly, slowly down the river, till at last, with cries of joy, they came to the Mississippi.

Now, this Mississippi River is the greatest river in America, and one of the greatest rivers in all the world. It was the same river that De Soto had found so many, many years before, when the Indians had told him that its name was the Father of Waters. Now, you see, whatever country owned the Mississippi River, the great river that flowed from little streams all the way down to where it emptied into the great, great sea, that country would own all the land along its banks, and so would be the greatest country in America. This was why Joliet and Father Marquette wanted to sail all the way down the river, so that all the land on its banks might belong to France. Besides, they thought that perhaps it flowed into the Pacific Ocean. You see, Joliet and Father Marquette had no good maps, and they did not know, as you and I know, that the Mississippi River flowed not west into the Pacific Ocean, but south into the Gulf of Mexico.

When the two brave Frenchmen reached the Mississippi River, they were a little afraid of the Indians who lived along its banks. Perhaps these Indians would be their enemies and would kill



Father Marquette, Henry Farny

them; so they no longer left their canoes at night and slept on the banks about a roaring camp-fire. They feared that the sharp eyes of unfriendly Indians might see the smoke, and that they might come and cut off their scalps while they slept; so they tied their canoes to the shore and they rolled themselves up in blankets, so as to be ready to wake in a minute and paddle away. They also made one of their men stay awake all night to watch for the red men; but for eight days there was not an Indian in sight.

On the ninth day they saw a path leading up from the river, and they knew that this path must go to an Indian village. Joliet and Father Marquette did not know whether these Indians were friendly or not; but they were both brave men. Maybe their hearts beat a little faster, as they thought that, perhaps, the Indians would kill them; but, anyway, they did not show any fear as they walked up the path to the village. Well, after all, the Indians were friendly. The chief came forward with hands raised above his head, which was always a sign of friendship with the Indians. Then other red men waved the long pipe of peace, which was the same as though they had said, "Let us be friends, oh, white men!" The two Frenchmen were invited to take dinner, and the chief told them stories about the Great River and about the other Indians that lived along its banks. And at last, when Joliet and Father Marquette said good-by, all the Indians went with them as far as the river, and the Indian chief gave them a present, which was better than gold, or silver, or diamonds, or rubies.

Now, I suppose you will want to know what was this present that was better than gold, or silver, or diamonds, or rubies. Well, I will tell you; it was a pipe. Not a stale old pipe, such as a man carries in his pocket, but the calumet, the pipe of peace. Wherever Joliet and Father Marquette went, all they had to do was to show this calumet, or pipe of peace, and every Indian knew that the great chief was the good friend of these white men; and many times this pipe saved the lives of the two brave Frenchmen.

Well, wherever they went, Joliet and Father Marquette showed the calumet of the great Indian chief, and then the other Indians were friendly too. And these two Frenchmen were so good and brave that the Indians liked them for their own sakes; so down the river they sailed, past big forests and beautiful, rolling prairies, until one day they saw a wide, yellow river that flowed into the Mississippi. This was the Missouri, a great, yellow, roaring river, and if they had time, I think the two Frenchmen would have sailed up it; but they could not stop. So day after day they sailed on down, down, down the Mississippi. I think that they must have had a good time of it, seeing a new country all the while; but they did not go the whole way. When they had gone many hundreds of miles, they were told stories of some very cruel Indians who lived in the south. The friendly Indians said to them, "If you fall into the hands of these bad Indians, they will surely tie you to a pole and burn you alive; and if you escape, perhaps the Spaniards will catch you, and they are as wicked as the others."

So Joliet and Father Marquette talked it over for a long time, and at last they thought it would be wiser to go back. Slowly they sailed up the Mississippi River, and then across the country to the Great Lakes, and back the same way they had come. On the way home they saw graceful, white swans, with long, beautiful necks, swimming on the little silver lakes, and in the dark, green forests were cattle, and goats, and beautiful brown deer, with wonderful spreading horns.

They started for home in July, but Marquette was taken sick, so that the journey was made very lowly. It was the end of September before they reached Green Bay, after an absence of four months.



Statue of Jacques Marquette in the National Statuary Hall Collection

During that time they had paddled their canoes more than seventy-five hundred miles.

Here Marquette rested, but Joliet continued on his way to Montreal. Just before arriving at that place, however, his canoe upset. Two of his men, and the Indian boy that had been presented to Marquette, were drowned and all the maps and papers describing their explorations were lost. Joliet himself reached Montreal in safety.

Father Marquette remained at Green Bay, too ill to travel farther. The hardship of the journey had been a severe strain upon his physical strength. It was a great trial for him to give up his missionary work, but during the winter that followed his return he wrote an account of the expedition.

In the spring of 1675 he attempted to carry out a long-cherished plan of preaching to some Indian tribes on the Illinois River. But after a very short time he became so exhausted that he had to give it up. Shortly after Easter he embarked in a canoe with five companions, hoping to get back to the little mission at St. Ignace which he had left about five years earlier. But before they had gone far in their Journey along the eastern shore of Lake Michigan, they had to land on account of Marquette's very weak condition. The Frenchmen built a shelter of bark for the dying man, and a few hours later he breathed his last.

His life as a missionary was one of singular beauty, and the part he took in the expedition down the Mississippi gives him a worthy place among explorers.

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