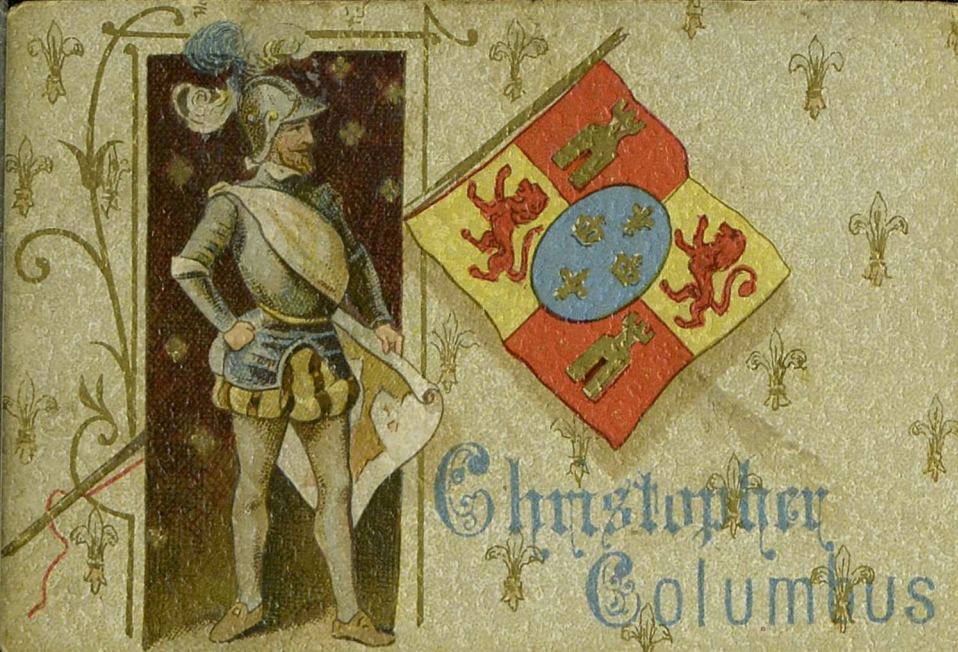




Christopher
Columbus

J. & J. COLMAN

Mustard, Starch, Blue & Corn Flour



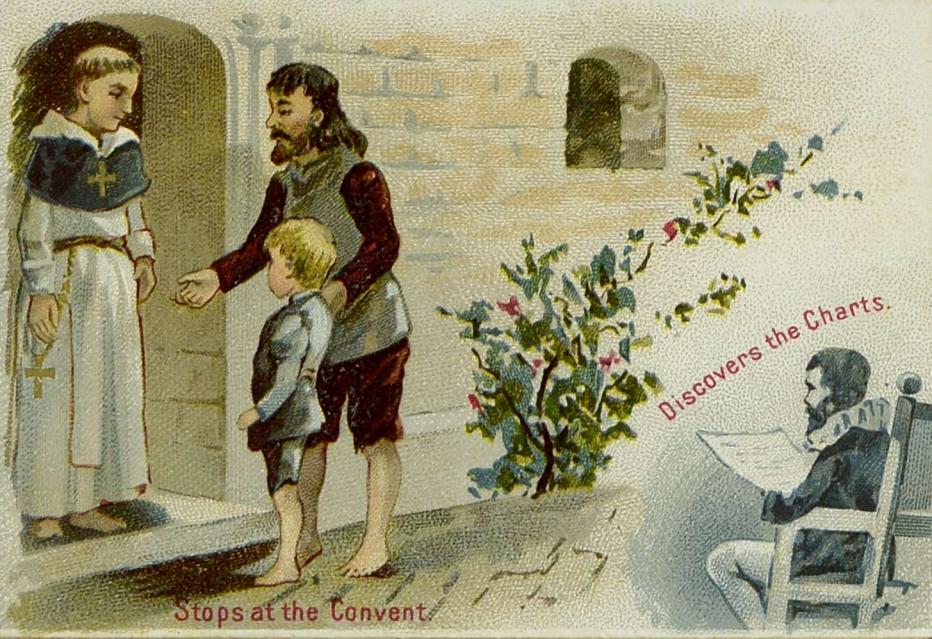
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The Life of Christopher Columbus.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS was born about the year 1446 in the city of Genoa. He was the son of a wool carder, and had two brothers. While quite young, he was sent to the great school at Pavia, and as he hoped one day to be a sailor, he did his best to learn all he could about geography, astronomy, and other sciences, which would be useful to him in that profession. When he was fourteen, his great wish was fulfilled, and he went to sea. He made several voyages in the Mediterranean, which swarmed with pirates, and

he had many desperate fights with them. After ten years seafaring he settled down in Lisbon, and married the daughter of an Italian navigator. Soon after his marriage, he discovered an old chest containing charts and papers which had belonged to his wife's father, and the knowledge he gained from these, together with the result of his own study and enquiries, led him to believe that if he sailed far enough to westward he could reach the east coast of Asia, and perhaps discover some new lands on his passage. When his plans were ready, he laid them before the King of Portugal, who listened to all he had to propose, and then, instead of giving Columbus the help he needed, made secret use of the knowledge he had gained from him, and sent a ship to try to discover the course



Stops at the Convent

Discovers the Charts.

thought that Columbus had good reasons for his hopes, the Prior wrote to the Queen, with whom he was well acquainted, and advised her to give Columbus the means for his expedition, as he feared he would otherwise seek help from the King of France, and in that case Spain would lose the glory of the discovery. In reply to this letter the Queen summoned Columbus to appear at Court, and hearing he was very poor she provided him with a sum of money for a suitable outfit. He arrived there just at the time that Granada was surrendered by the Moors, and, amidst all the excitement and rejoicings of victory, both he and his plans seemed to be entirely overlooked. At last, however, Columbus was heard ; but perhaps re-



Approaching Land

Receives his Commission

money. So Columbus was recalled, his terms agreed to, he received his commission from the King; and on April 17, 1492, a royal order was sent to Palos to fit out two small vessels for the expedition, Martin Pinzon fitting out a third at his own expense. But it was with difficulty that men could be induced to take service on the ships, as the expedition seemed a dangerous one; however, after a considerable delay, three small ships, which were no larger than those used in our rivers, and whose combined crews numbered only 120 men, set sail on Friday, August 3, 1492, in search of a new world.

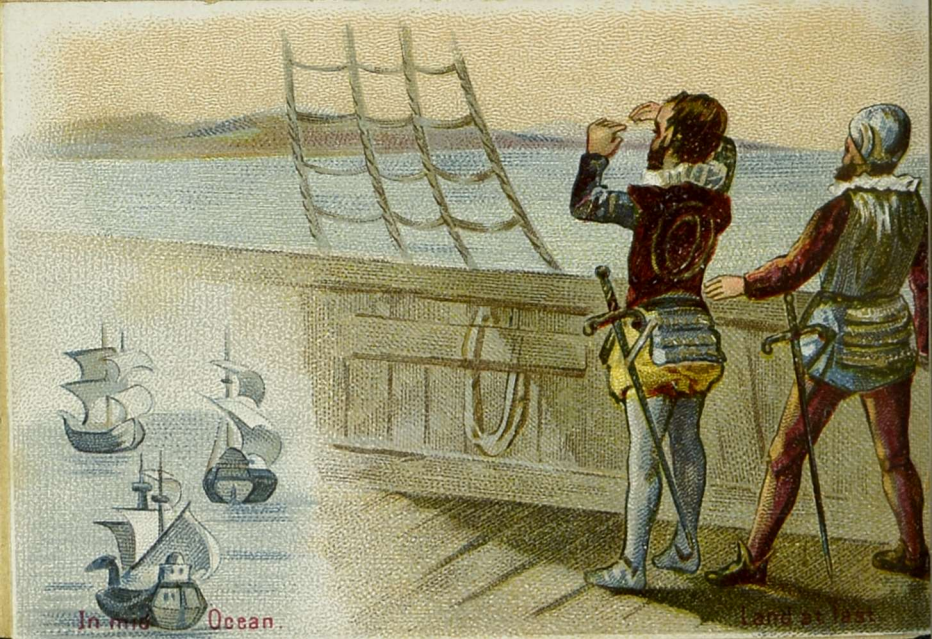
The explorers met with some slight mishaps at the commencement of the voyage, and these made

the sailors still more dissatisfied, but their apathy grew into actual fear as they passed the island of Teneriffe and saw the flames coming out of the volcano there. They looked upon it as a bad omen, and when at last the Canary Islands faded from their sight, they broke out in loud lamentations at leaving behind them the last point of the then known land.

Their fears increased with the distance they travelled, and so Columbus, in order to pacify his crew, kept two reckonings. In his private book the real distance was noted, and a shorter one in the book which was open to the crew. But four days after they lost sight of land, the needle of the compass began to waver, and this increased the

terror of the crew, and not without reason, for they wondered how they should find their way across the pathless ocean without the guide on which they had always depended. Columbus endeavoured to explain the mystery, and, in spite of this disturbing occurrence, sailed steadily onwards. Day after day, and week after week passed on, the crew being alternately hopeful and despondent. Several times they saw herons and other birds flying about, and hailed these as signs of approaching land, but each time their hopes were disappointed, their discontent grew, and plots were hatched against the Admiral. He was fully aware of this, but sure that he should gain his object, he calmly persevered in his course.

At last one evening when they had travelled over 2,000 miles from any known land, and the sun was setting over a shoreless sea, the men mutinied. They rushed into Columbus' private cabin and crowded upon him, brandishing their knives and cutlasses, and declared that unless he gave immediate orders to return homewards they would kill him and throw his body overboard, and then get back as best they could without him. Columbus, feeling that all his power lay in his superior knowledge, and conscious that the realization of the hope of his life was at stake, remained calm and dignified whilst they stormed and threatened. He knew that all depended on his gaining time, and he endeavoured, partly by threats and partly by promises, to pacify



In the Ocean.

Land at last

thoughts of returning homeward were entirely dismissed. They still sped steadily westward, and at sunset every man was on the alert, each hoping to be the first to see the new land.

Columbus again kept his solitary watch during the night, but with feelings of joy and deep thankfulness, waiting for what he knew must shortly appear. About 10 o'clock his labours were rewarded, for far in the distance he perceived a light, and, pointing it out to one of the sailors, the good news spread like wildfire from man to man. Two hours after a gun was fired from one of the ships, this was the signal for land. It was hailed with joy too deep for words, and those men, who but a few hours ago had threatened Columbus' life, were now ready to follow wherever he might choose to lead.

When the sun rose next morning, a beautiful and finely wooded island lay in view of the three ships.

Columbus was the first to set foot on the new land, and, after kneeling down and kissing the earth, he took possession of it in the name of Spain, calling the island San Salvador; and, as he was under the impression that he had landed on the West Coast of India instead of on one of the islands between North and South America, the whole group of islands bears the name of West Indies, and the natives are called West Indians to this day.

After remaining on this island nearly three months and discovering several others, Columbus left part of his crew behind to found a colony, and started back for Spain on January 2, 1493. After

many troubles and dangers, he reached Palos, the port from which he had sailed.

When the news of his arrival reached the King and Queen, he at once received orders to go to Court. He was magnificently received, and every mark of royal favor was bestowed on him. But the courtiers soon grew jealous of the favor shown to Columbus, and said that after all he had done no very wonderful thing, but only been a little more venturesome than other people. He of course heard of these unjust remarks, and one day, as he was sitting at breakfast with a good many of his detractors, he took up an egg and asked if any of them could make it stand firm on end. Each guest took the egg and tried, but all in vain, it would roll on its side again. At last, Columbus

Death of Columbus



Sets foot on the New Land

asked for the egg, and, breaking in the shell at one end, stood it firmly on the table. The guests all cried out, "Why anyone could have done that." "Just so," replied Columbus, "and anyone can go to the New World now that I have shown them the way." Columbus went on three more voyages after this, but the hatred and jealousy of his enemies became so strong that they set the king against him, and he was treated with great injustice and ingratitude. On one occasion he was brought back a prisoner laden with chains from one of the islands he had discovered, and over which he should have ruled as Governor.

On his arrival the King ordered the fetters to be removed, but to his dying day Columbus kept them in his room as a memorial of human ingratitude.

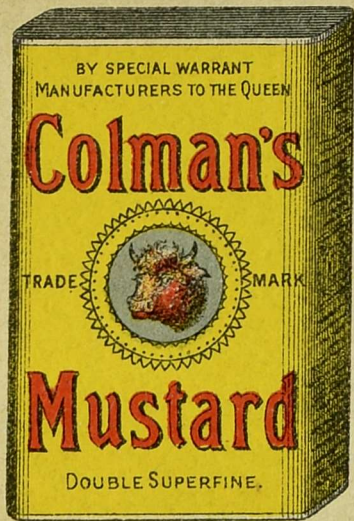
He died on August 20, 1506, after his fourth voyage, friendless, and in poverty, and experiencing with bitterness that no trust is to be placed in the favor of princes.

His remains now lie in the Cathedral Church of the Havana, but they have been often removed. He was first buried at Valladolid, and then in the Carthusian monastery near Seville, and it was here that the King caused this memorable inscription to be placed over his grave—"Columbus found a New World for Spain."

T E. M.

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