

Isabella of Spain (1474-1504), from whom, after much trouble, he got three small ships with a crew of one hundred and twenty men; he was raised to the rank of admiral and to that of viceroy of the countries he should obtain for Spain.

On the 3rd of August 1492, Columbus left the harbour of Palos, directing his way to the Canary Isles, from whence he steered westwards on the 6th of September. After a short time he thought he saw land, but instead it was an immense mass of seaweed that formed a kind of vast island between the Canary Isles and the West Indies, in which his ships became entangled.

After many struggles with the elements and with the mutinous spirit of his crew, the admiral landed on an islet, the 12th October 1492, which he named San Salvador, or Holy Redeemer, because it saved him and his crew from prolonged dangers and sufferings. After a short respite, his ships again set sail, and Columbus landed, on the 27th October, in Cuba, and on the 6th December in Hispaniola, now called Hayti. But in neither of these islands did he find the luxuries of Cathay, nor could those red-skinned inhabitants, who entirely neglected agriculture, be the same people that exported so many precious goods for European consumption. He therefore thought he had but discovered some islands lying eastward of Cathay, and in order to be better able to pursue his explorations he determined to return to Spain in quest of more men and ships. There he left a few Spaniards, and took with him some of the aborigines, with also some parrots, stones, plants, as well as some of the arms and implements of these islanders, sailed from Hayti for Spain on the 4th January 1493, and reached Palos on the 15th March.

For his second voyage he procured from Isabella and Ferdinand seventeen ships with fifteen hundred persons, including sailors, soldiers, priests, and workmen, the Spanish