

later the group of Cape Verde Islands, and in 1462 Gilianez landed on the coast of Guinea, which was peopled by savages.

After the death of the *infante* Henry, voyages of exploration were no longer pursued with the same alacrity, yet the hopes of finding a new way to India, the land of boundless wealth, could not be so easily calmed, and king John II. (1481-95), wishing to add new splendour to his reign, sent the Portuguese commander Bartholomew de Diaz in search of the most southern part of Africa. Diaz, having reached this much coveted point, returned to Portugal in the year 1486, and John II., trusting that this discovery would soon lead to that of the route to Cathay, called the promontory the Cape of Good Hope.

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Among the seamen sailing under the Portuguese flag at this period soars above all the rest Christopher Columbus, born 1436 (?) at Genoa (?), who left his father's loom at the age of fourteen years and went to sea. He visited Iceland in 1477, and here he may have conceived the idea that the ardently desired India or Cathay could be more easily reached by crossing the Atlantic Ocean from east to west, as the trees, mostly of unknown species, which he saw brought to Iceland by the Gulf Stream, were an unquestionable proof of the existence of some western land, and in his opinion this land could not be any other than India. Later he had the opportunity of visiting the newly-discovered countries along the western coasts of Africa, and after hesitating a long while he presented himself to king John II. of Portugal, entreating this monarch to grant him ships to enable him to find a way to Cathay by a western route; but this sovereign, having already charged Diaz to explore the African coasts, refused Columbus any help. The Genoese thereupon entered the service of queen