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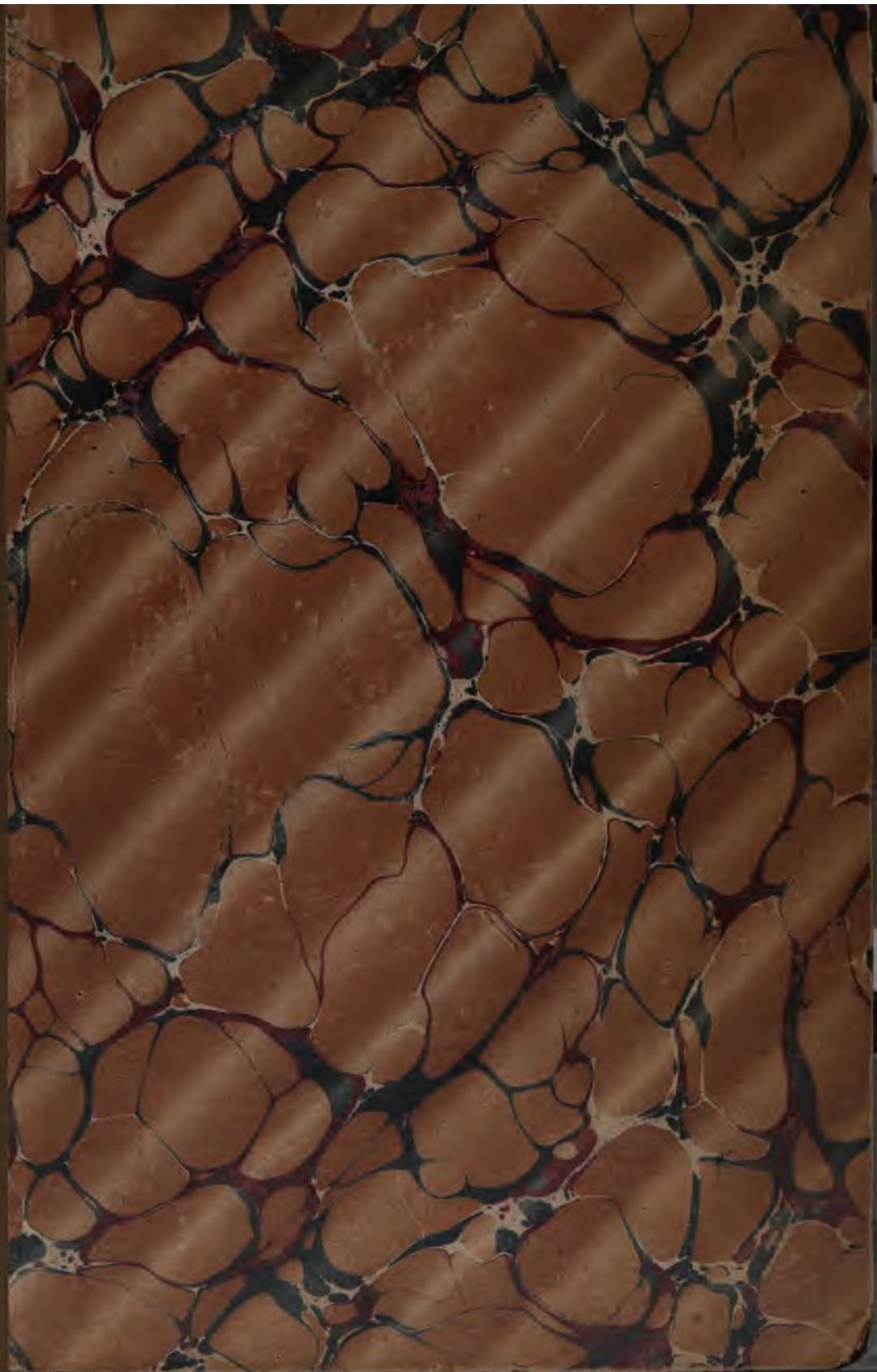
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First Four Voyages of Amerigo Vespucci
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Lettera di Amerigo Vespucci delle isole
nuovamente trovate in quattro suoi viaggi.

Data in Lisbona ad 4 di Settembre 1504.

varitch's facsimile translation of 1893.

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OF
AMERIGO VESPUCCI

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WITH

TRANSLATION, INTRODUCTION

A MAP, AND A FACSIMILE OF A DRAWING

BY STRADANUS

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PREFACE.

THE name of the Florentine is imperishably recorded in that of the New World. We all know that it was not he who invented the word America, and that no portion of the wrong inflicted on Columbus attaches to Vespucci. Formerly, however, it was not unusual to find him abused as a base supplanter who had maliciously stolen the glory of his fellow-countryman. That feeling has not wholly passed away even from the minds of those who ought to be exempt from prejudice. While acquitting Vespucci on the charge of theft, they raise a fresh indictment against him for forgery. It is to be hoped that the second accusation will be dropped in time like the first; and that the world will learn to speak of the Florentine in the words of Columbus "Amerigo Vespucci . . is a very worthy man; fortune has been adverse to him as to many others. His labours have not benefited him so much as justice would require." This testimony was written by Columbus to his son Diego in February, 1505, a date which is significant in connexion with the allegations made by Humboldt and others to the discredit of Vespucci. His "Four Voyages"—that is, his first four voyages to the New World, are described by himself as having taken place in 1497-98, 1499-1500, 1501, and 1503-04; the first two in the Spanish service, the other two in that of the King of Portugal. The impugnors of his veracity assert that the first voyage was made with Alonso de Hojeda in 1499, not in 1497, and that his account of it is wilfully falsified and garbled so that he might magnify himself by concealing the names of the men under whom he

sailed, and by giving an exaggerated idea of the work done. It would follow, as a matter of course, that the second voyage was wholly fictitious, and that the third and fourth ought to be called second and third. Then it is said that the "*Quatuor Navigationes*" was first published in 1507—an assumption to be corrected below—and that, consequently, Amerigo had no longer the fear of Columbus (dead in 1506) before his eyes when he uttered his fabricated narrative.

The fact is that Vespucci's first published *Epistola* contains a clear reference to three voyages which he had already made, two of them "*ex mandato serenissimi Hispaniarum regis*." As he wrote that letter before June, 1503, and as all bibliographers agree that it was printed (in a Latin form) three or four times in 1503 (although the first dated edition did not appear till 1504) and several times in 1504-5, Columbus must have been well aware of Vespucci's pretensions at the date (1505) when he recommended him as a worthy man who "has ever had a desire to do me pleasure." This circumstance suffices to upset a portion of the anti-Vesputian case. It gives absolute proof that in 1502-3 the facts and dates given in the book of 1507 had been publicly announced by or for Vespucci; and the absence of all contemporary denial enables us to accept his account as equally veracious with the narratives of other explorers. Confused and ill-written we must allow it to be; for although Vespucci had been educated by his own uncle as a fellow-pupil with Pier Soderini (the future head of the Florentine republic), he became in later days, probably through companionship with the Spanish and Portuguese seamen, almost unfit to handle a literary pen. The "*Lettera*" now reproduced gives ample evidence of that fact, being written in rude and ungrammatical language, jargonised by the admixture of Spanish or Portuguese words and idioms. Such as it is, however, we must regard it as the only genuine piece of sustained composition which Vespucci has left; the *Epistola* being extant only in a Latin version, and the well-written letters published by Italian editors in the last and the present century, being admittedly supposititious and modern.

The great interest which attaches to Vespucci's first voyage

lies in the probability that he sailed along the entire coast of the Mexican gulf as far as the point of Florida, and some distance up the shores of what is now Carolina. A side-light is thrown upon the subject by the map of the New World which appeared in the Latin Ptolemy of 1513, and which had been in the wood-engraver's hands six years earlier. That map, we have some reason to suspect, was derived from Vespucci's design. It is, in fact, called "the Admiral's map" by the editor of Ptolemy, and has, on the strength of that name, been assigned rather to Columbus or Cabral than to Vespucci. It gives to the continental shores behind and above Cuba a conformation which agrees tolerably with the actual outline of the coast from Central America to Florida; and only a very special pleader can persuade us that it is meant for anything else. Columbus, although he was a map-maker, did not possess sufficient knowledge to have designed that particular map; Cabral was a nobleman and soldier, who had neither the knowledge nor the skill required. Only Vespucci remains, and only in the narrative of his first voyage can we find any hint of such a course of exploration as would furnish the chartographer with the necessary details. As a commander of one of the ships in the Portuguese expedition of 1503-4, he would probably be regarded among foreigners as a Portuguese admiral.

The "Lettera" was printed, as the type indicates, by Gian Stefano di Carlo di Pavia at Florence not earlier than 1505, and not later than 1516. As a matter of demonstrable fact, it must have appeared in the former year. The substance has been familiar to the world since the publication of the Latin translation in 1507, but the Italian text seems to have virtually dropped out of sight from the time of its appearance down to the middle of the last century, when Bandini met with a single copy. Even now only five copies are recorded: one is in the British Museum, a second in the Biblioteca Palatina at Florence, a third belonged to Varnhagen and is perhaps now in Brazil, a fourth was in the Capponi library at the beginning of this century; and the fifth (from which the present reproduction is derived) is in the library which belonged to the late Charles Kalbfleisch of New York. Thus it has been practically inacces-

sible and unknown to the world; while the faulty Latin version frequently reprinted and translated since 1507 has, in its blunders, furnished the anti-Vesputians with arguments which a sight of the actual Italian original could have nullified.

Amerigo Vespucci is always said to have been born on the 9th March, 1451, but I suspect an error in the date. 1461 would harmonise better with his position as a student in 1476, when he wrote a boyish letter in Latin to his father. His uncle Giorgio Antonio Vespucci, a friend of Savonarola, was his tutor, and one of his fellow-pupils was that Pier or Pietro Soderini who became in 1502 the Gonfaloniere or Chief of the republic of Florence. He had friends likewise among the Medici, to whose expulsion from the city in 1502 Soderini owed his elevation to that dignity. Vespucci remembered them both in the after years, since he sent several letters to his patron, Lorenzo di Pier Francesco dei Medici (of which only one, the Latin *Epistola*, has survived) and addressed his "*Lettera*" to Soderini. He was despatched to Cadiz by Lorenzo di Pier in 1492, on business of the Medici banking-house, and he seems to have remained there trading or speculating on his own account after the object of the mission had been attained. He was employed by the Spanish sovereigns in 1496 to complete a contract which had been undertaken by the naval outfitter, Berardi (now dead), for the supply of some ships to the king. Ferdinand was engaged in a speculation of his own, and Vespucci took service on one of the four vessels which were sent out by the king for adventure in the New World, and which started from Cadiz on May 10th, 1497. His function was probably that of astronomer and cartographer, under the command of Vincente Yañez Pinzon and Juan Diaz de Solis, although he does not mention their names, but writes as if he were himself master of one of the ships. He returned to Cadiz on October 15th, 1498. The account of the voyage is anthropological rather than geographical. From the distances traversed and the latitudes specified (usually with exaggeration) he seems to have reached Honduras on the 4th July and thenceforward to have sailed along the coast—nearly always in sight of it—in a direction necessarily verging northward, for 870 leagues (as he computed, which would ordinarily be equal to 3480 miles, but

his leagues, like those of Columbus, were always meant to represent three miles) until he turned back in the August of the following year. Only two geographical names are mentioned in this long voyage: the province of Lariab and the island of Ity. Neither can be identified, but the former was perhaps in the region of Vera Cruz, and the latter cannot have been the island of Ha-iti, since it was reached in a seven days' voyage E.N.E. from the continental coast. It may have been Lucayo.

He went out again in an expedition of three ships led by Alonso de Hojeda, which started from Cadiz on May 16th, 1499. He reached Brazil on June 27th, and sailed along the northern coast line of South America as far as Venezuela; then proceeding northward from the islands of St. Margaret and Curaçao, followed his commanders to San Domingo. Vespucci stayed there for two months and a half, during which time he must have seen Columbus, to whom he alludes as being then on the island. He returned to Cadiz on September 8th.

Towards the close of 1500, Vespucci was induced to transfer his services to Dom Manoel of Portugal, and on May 10th, 1501, sailed in an expedition of three ships to the South American coast. On the 17th August he touched at Cape St. Roque, and then turned southwards, reaching Bahia on November 1st, and the harbour of Rio on January 1st, 1502. The object aimed at in this voyage seems to have been to find a south-western passage, as it had been in the two preceding to discover a north-west passage. When they failed somewhere in the latitude of La Plata, Vespucci struck out southwardly into the ocean until at 52 degrees S.L. he thought it time to return. On May 10th he reached Sierra Leone and arrived in Lisbon on September 7th. It was about the close of the year when he wrote the letter to Lorenzo di Pier Francesco dei Medici, which is so well known in its Latin form, the Italian original having perished. We know who was the translator—Fra Giovanni del Giocondo, of Verona, then residing in Paris—but we do not know how the original got into his hands, although Vespucci's reference to his friend Giuliano del Giocondo, at the beginning of his account of the third voyage, suggests an explanation. This Latin *Epistola* was printed several times in 1503 and 1504, the first edition

being probably the undated Paris one by Jehan Lambert. It circulated so widely, and became so well known, that the fame of Vespucci began to overshadow that of Columbus. The Florentine thus became accidentally the rival and supplanter of the Genoese, but had himself no part in shaping the circumstances. Neither he nor Columbus ever published a narrative by any personal exertion or desire. Each of them wrote letters which passed from the hands of their recipients into those which consigned them to the press. The *Epistola* is not an account of Vespucci's third voyage, as it is usually considered, but a sort of gossip, anthropological account of the savages he had seen in the New World, with a special reference to some portion of his third voyage. Ramusio regarded it as a summary of two voyages. It was probably Vespucci's intention at some time to publish his journal—which at that time he called his “*Tre Giornate*,” but, in 1504, after his return from the fourth voyage, “*Le Quattro Giornate*.” From the nature of his references to it, that journal must have been a much ampler and more exact record of his wanderings than we possess otherwise, and was apparently illustrated with charts and drawings. We venture to express a hope that the manuscript may yet be found in some Spanish hiding place.

On the 10th of May (or June), 1503, he sailed again from Lisbon, and was very unsuccessful, but left twenty-four men with provisions in a fort at Cape Frio (near Rio Janeiro), and returned to Lisbon, which he reached on June 18th, 1504. This was far from being the last of his American voyages, but it was the last he had accomplished, when, on September 4th of that year, he wrote the long “*Lettera*” here reproduced, giving an account of his four expeditions. In its printed form, it is addressed to an individual of high rank in Florence concerned in the government of the State, whom he reminds of their early association as pupils under Fra Giorgio Vespucci. This individual, to whom he forwarded his letter by the hands of Benvenuto di Domenico Benvenuti, is clearly revealed by that circumstantial evidence as Pier Soderini, the anti-Medicean Gonfaloniere of Florence. The autograph letter must naturally have borne his name; why this is omitted in the printed book can only be guessed at. The publisher was

apparently Pietro Pacini di Pescia, an adherent of the Medici party, and therefore adverse to Soderini. None of the books which were issued by him during the reign of Soderini contained any of the formal dedications to the Gonfaloniere which were used by other contemporary publishers at Florence, and it was probably he who suppressed Soderini's name. The letter got into his hands, perhaps, in the form of a copy made by Benvenuti. Gian Stefano di Pavia, mentioned above, who set it in type, was Pacini's printer from 1505 to 1513, but was not in the habit of setting down his own name till the latter year. His imprint appears for the first time, along with Pacini's name, in the "*Giostra di Giuliano dei Medici*," which came out in 1513 after Soderini's death and the restoration of the Medici; but three of the books produced by Pacini in 1505 are in Gian Stefano's types, identical with those of the "*Lettera*." Gian Stefano used the same types still in 1516 when he printed Corsali's letter about East India, but the woodcut design on the title of Vespucci's *Lettera* belonged to Pacini and had been used by him as far back as 1493. The honorific title with which Vespucci addresses Soderini throughout the *Lettera* is *Vostra Magnificentia*, everywhere except in the first instance abbreviated into *Vostra Mag.* or *V. M.* This is a point to be noted, in connexion with the following circumstances.

One of the members of the St. Dié gymnasium (or college) was Jean Basin de Sendacour, who in 1503 was in Paris and conveyed thence a copy of Vespucci's *Epistola* to his friends at St. Dié, chief among whom were Gautrin Lud, Nicolas Lud, Philesius (Ringmann) and Hylacomylus (Waldseemüller), men who were busy in reviving the scientific literature of the ancients. It was probably he, or Philesius, who had the good fortune to obtain a copy of the "*Lettera*" some time before 1507. One of them translated it, or got it translated, into French; and from the French version a Latin translation was made, as Lud stated, by Basin. The translator into French was of course ignorant of the name of the potentate to whom the original was addressed, since the *Lettera* bore no indication of it; and the Latiniser, receiving the letter along with some maps from his sovereign, Duke René of Lorraine, King of Sicily and Jerusalem, was misled into the

blunder of supposing that *V. M.* and *Vostre Mag.* stood for *Vostre Majesté* and were addressed to René. It is singular that his eyes were not opened by the allusion to "our school-companionship under Fra Giorgio," since any such association in boyhood between the Florentine seaman and the sovereign prince of Lorraine would have been an impossibility. The letter was printed thus in Latin, with a factitious address to René, at the end of the *Cosmographiæ Introductio*, by Waldseemüller on the 25th April, 1507. Numerous reprints followed, and thus Vespucci's narrative was made known to the world through a second-hand Latin translation disfigured with several blunders and omissions, and beginning with an initial falsification; while the original passed completely into oblivion. The rarity of the latter may have arisen from an early attempt by Vespucci's friends to suppress any token of what might seem a deviation from loyalty to his patrons the Medici. The copy which had reached Lorraine in a French guise served to arouse the admiration of Waldseemüller so strongly that, in the text of the *Cosmographia*, he declared that the New World (instead of being called simply *Mundus Novus* as Vespucci had proposed) ought to bear the name of America, and his words have prevailed for all time. Yet Vespucci's own text was unknown, even at Vicenza and Milan within a couple of years after it was printed. The famous *Paesi nuovamente ritrovati* (a compendious collection of voyagers' narratives) printed in 1507, 1508, 1512, 1517, 1519, and 1521, comprises the matter of the *Epistola* and the *Lettera*, not in their original form, but in retranslations from the Latin.

It is well therefore that the *New World* for which Vespucci proposed this name, and to which others gave his own, should receive a true reproduction of his text, so that he may no longer be held responsible for the errors of the Lorrainers. The present publication is intended to supply that want. The text is given in facsimile by a process which ensures its correctness, and the translation is made with literal exactness. The work has not been done before so completely: there are errors even in Varnhagen's edition of the text, and his translation, while not sufficiently literal, is also marked by several faults.

**Lettera di Amerigo vespucci
delle isole nuouamente
trouate in quattro
suoi viaggi.**





MAGNIFICe do
mine. Dipoi del
la humile reue-
rentia & debite recômeda-
tioni &c. Potra essere che
uostza Magnificencia sumara
uigliera della mia temerita/
et usada uostza sauidoria / ch
tâto absurdamête lo mimuo-
ua a scriuere a uostza Mag.
la p'sente lettera tâto plissa:
sappiendo che di cōtinuo uo-
stza Mag. sta occupata nell
altri consigli & negotii sopra
el buon reggimêto di cōtessa

excessa Repub. Et mi terra nō solo presumtuoso / sed etiam
perorioso / in pormi a scriuere cose nō conuenienti a uostzo
stato / ne dilectuoli / & cō barbaro stilo scripte / & fuora do-
gni ordine di humanita: ma la cōfidenzia mia che tengo nel
le uostre uirtù & nella uerita del mio scriuere / che son cose nō
si trouano scripte ne p li antichi ne p moderni scriptori / co-
me nel poesso conoscerà V.M. m'ha essere usato. La causa prin-
cipale ch' m'osse a scriuerui / fu p ruogho del p'sente aporrato-
re / che si dice Benuenuto Benuenuti nostro fiorêtino / molto
seruitore secōdo che si dimostra / di uostza Mag. & molto ami-
co mio: el quale trouandosi qui in questa citra di Lisbona / mi
prego che io facessi parte a uostza Mag. delle cose per me uiste
in diuerse plaghe del mondo / per uirtu di quattro niaggi che
ho fatti in discoprire nuoue terre: edua per mando del Re di
Castiglia don Ferrâdo Re. vi. per el gran golfo del mare ocea-
no uerso l'occidente: et laltre due p mandato del poderoso Re
don Manouello Re di Portogallo / uerso l'austro: Dicendomi
che uostza Mag. ne piglierebbe piacere / & che in q'sto speraua
seruirui: il perche m'indisposi a farlo: pche m'irendo certo ch' uo-
stza Mag. m'itene nel numero de suoi seruidori / ricordâdomi
come nel tempo della nostra giouentu ui ero amico / & hora
seruidore: & andando a udire e principi di grâmatica sotto
la buona uita & doctrina del uenerabile religioso frate di. S.
Marco fra Giorgio Antonio Vespucci: e consigli & doctrina
del quale piaceſſe a Dio che io haueſſi seguitato: che come dice

el petrarcha / lo facei altro huomo da quel chio sono. Quo-
modocunq; sir / non midolgho: perche sempre mi sono dile-
etato in cose uirtuose: et anchora che queste mia pattagne nō
siano conuenienti alle uirtu uostre / uidito come dire Plinio
a Mecenate / Voi solauate in alcun tēpo pigliare piacere del-
le mie ciuile: anchora che uostra Mag. stia del continuo occu-
pata ne publici negotii / alchuna hora piglierete di scampo di
consumare un poco di tempo nelle cose ridicole / o dilectuo-
li: et come il finocchio si constuma dare in clima delle dilecte-
uoli uiuande p disporle a miglior digestione / cosi potrete p
di scampo di tante uostre occupationi mādare a leggere questa
mia lettera: perche ui apartino alcun tanto della continua cu-
ra & assiduo pensamēto delle cose publiche: et se sarò plisso /
ueniam peto Mag. signor mio . Vostra Mag. saprà / come el
mortuo della uenuta mia in questo regno di Spagna fu p tra-
ctare mercatantie: & come seguissi in q̄sto proposito circa di
quattro anni: ne quali uiddi & conobbi edisuariari mouimēti
della fortuna: & come promutaua questi beni caduci & transi-
torii: & come un tēpo tiene lhuomo nella sommita della ruo-
ta: & altro tēpo lo ributta da se / & lo priua de beni che si pos-
sono dire imprestati: di modo che conosciuto el continuo tra-
uaglio che lhuomo pone in conquerirgli / con sottometerli
a tanti disagi & pericoli / deliberai lasciarmi della mercantia
& porre el mio fine in cosa piu laudabile & ferma: che fu che
mi disposi dandare a uedere parte del mondo / & le sue mara-
uiglie: & a questo mi si offerse tempo & luogo molto oportu-
no: che fu / chel Re don Ferrando di Castiglia hauēdo a man-
dare quattro nauti a discoprire nuoue terre uerso loccidente /
fui electo per sua alteza che io fussi in essa floca per adiutare
a discoprire: et partimo del porto di Calis adf. 16. di maggio
1497. et pigliamo nostro cāmino per el gran golfo del mare
oceano: nelqual uiaggio stēmo 18. mesi: & discoprimo molta
terra ferma & infinite isole: & gran parte di esse habitate: che
dalli antichi scriptori nō seneparla di esse: credo pche nō nheb-
bono notizia: che se ben mi ricordo / in alcuno ho lecto / che
teneua che q̄sto mare oceano era mare senza gente: et di que-
sta opinione fu Dante nostro poeta nel. xxvi. capitolo dello
inferno / done finge la morte di Vlyxe: nelqual uiaggio uidi
cose di molta marauiglia / come Inrēdera uostra Mag. Come
diso pra dixi / partimo del porto di Calis quattro nauti di con-
a. ii.

ferma: & cominciámo nostra navigatione dritti alle isole fortunate / che oggi' fidicono la gran Canaria / che sono situate nel mare oceano nel fine dello occidente habitato / poste nel terzo clyma: sopra lequali alza el polo del Septentrione fuora delloro orizzonte 27. gradi & mezo: & distáno da questa citra di Lisbona 280. leghe / per el uento infra mezo di / & libeccio: doue citenêmo octo di / prouedendoci dacqua & legne & di altre cose necessarie: et di qui / fatte nostre orationi / cileuámo & dêmo le uele al uêto / cominciádo nostre navigationi pel ponente / pigliando una quarta di libeccio: & tâto nauicámo / ch' al capo di 37. giorni fumo a tenere una terra / ch' la giudicámo essere terra ferma: laquale dista dalle isole di Canaria piu allo occidente a circha di mille leghe fuora dello habitato drento della torrida zona: perche trouámo el polo del septentrione alzare fuora del suo orizzonte 16. gradi / & piu occidêtale che le isole di Canaria / secôdo che mostrauano enostri instrumenti 74. gradi: nelquale anchorámo con nostre nauti ad una legha & mezo di terra: & buttámo fuora nostri battelli / & stipati di gente & darne: fumo alla uolta della terra / & prima che giugnêsimo ad ep'sa / hauêmo uista di molte gête che andauano alungho della spiaggia: di che ci rallegrámo molto: & la trouámo essere gente di snuda: mostro rono hauer paura di noi: credo pche ci uiddono uestiti / & daltra statura: tutti si ritirasse: no ad un monte / & cõ quâti segnali facêmo loro di pace & di amista / nõ uollon uenire a ragionamêto con esso noi: di modo che gla uenêdo la nocte & pche le naue stauano surte i luogo pericoloso / per stare in costa braua & senza abrígo / accordámo laltro giorno leuarci di qui / & andare a cercare dalcun porto / o insenata / doue assicurássimo nostre nauti: & nauigámo per el maestreale / che cosí sicorreua la costa sempre a uista di terra / di continuo uiagglo ueggêdo gente per la spiaggia: tanto ch' di poi nauigati dua giorni / trouámo assai sicuro luogo p le nauti / & surgêmo a meza legha di terra / doue uedêmo moltissima gente: & questo giorno medesimo fumo a terra co battelli / & saltámo i terra ben 40. huomini bene a ordine: & le genti di terra tuttauia simostrauano schisi di nostra conuersatione: et nõ potauamo tanto assicurarli che uenissino a parlare cõ noi: et questo giorno tanto trauagliámo con dar loro delle cose nostre / come furono sonagli & specchi / cente / spalline & altre frasche / che alcuni di loro si assicurorono & uen-

nono a tractare con noi: et facto cō loro buona amista / uenen-
do la nocte / ci dispedimo di loro / & tornamoci alle nau: et l'al-
tro giorno come salì l'alba / uedēmo che alla spiaggia stauano
l'infinita genti / & haueuano con loro le loro donne & figliuoli:
fumo a terra / & trouāmo che tutte uenivano caricate di loro
mantenimenti / che son rali / quali in suo luogo fidra: et pri-
ma che giugnessimo in terra / molti di loro sigittorono a nuo-
to / & diuennero a riceuere un tiro di balestro nel mare / che so-
no grandissimi notatori / con tanta sicurtà / come se hauessino
con esso noi tractato lungo tempo: et di questa loro sicurtà pi-
gliāmo piacere. Quanto di lor uita & costumi conoscēmo / fu
che del tutto uanno disnudi / si li huomini come le dōne / sen-
za coprire uergogna nessuna / nō altrimenti che come saliron
del uentre di lor madri. Sono di mediana statura / molto ben
proporcionati: le lor carni sono di colore che pende in rosso co-
me pelo di lion: et credo ch' se gliandassino uestiti / farebbon
bianchi come noi: nō tenghono pel corpo pelo alcuno / saluo
che sono di lunghi capelli & neri / & maxime le dōne / che le
rendon formose: nō sono di uolto molto belli / pche tengono
el uiso largo / che uogliono parere altartaro: nō si lasciano cresce-
re pelo nessuno nelle ciglia / ne ne coperchi delli occhi / ne in
altra parte / saluo che quelli del capo: che tengono opelt p brus-
ta cosa: sono molto leggiere delle loro persone nello andare &
nel correre / si li huomini come le dōne: che nō tiene in conto
na donna correre una legua / ò due / che molte uolte le uedē-
mo: et in q̃sto leuon uantaggio grandissimo da noi christiani:
nuotano fuora dogni credere / & mi gl'ior le dōne che gli huo-
mini: pche li habbiamo trouati & uisti molte uolte due leghe
drento in mare senza appoggio alcuno andare notando. Le lo-
ro armi sono archi & saette molto ben fabricati / saluo ch' non
tengon ferro / ne altro genere di metallo forte: et in luogo del
ferro pongono denti di animali / ò di pesci / ò un fuscello di le-
gno forte arsicciato nella punca: sono tiratori certi / che doue
uogliono / danno: et in alcuna parte usano questi archi le dō-
ne: altre arme tenghono / come lance tostate / & altri bastoni
con capocchie benissimo lauorati. V sono di guerra infra loro
con gente che non sono di lor lingua molto crudelmente / sen-
za perdonare la uita a nessuno / se non per maggior pena.

Quando uanno alla guerra / leuon con loro le donne loro: nō
perche guerreggino / ma perche leuon lor drieto el manteni-
mento: che lleua una donna addosso una caricha / che non la
leuera uno huomo / trenta / o quaranta leghe: che molte uolte
le uedēmo. Nō costumano Capitano alchuno / ne uanno con
ordine / che ognuno e/ signore di se: et la causa delle lor guer-
re nō e/ per cupidita di regnare: ne di allarghare etermini lo-
ro / ne per coditia disordinata / saluo che per una anticha ini-
mista / che per tempi passati e/ futa infra loro: et domandati
perche guerreggiuano / non disapeuono dare altra ragione /
senō che lo faccuan p uendicare la morte del loro antepassati /
o de loro padri: questi non tenghono ne Re / ne Signore / ne
ubidiscono ad alcuno / che uiuono in lor propria liberta: & co-
me simouono per ire alla guerra e/ che quando enimici hāno
motto loro / o preso alchuni di loro / fileua el suo parente piu
uocchio / & ua predicando per le strade che uadin con lui a uen-
dicare la morte di quel tal parente suo: et cosi simouono per
compassione: nō usono iustitia / ne castigano el mal factore: ne
el padre ne la madre nō castigano e figliuoli / & p marauiglia
o nō mai uedēmo far questione infra loro: mostronsi semplici
nel parlare / & sono molto malitiosi & acuti in quello che loro
cuple: parlano poco / & cō bassa uoce: usono emedefimi accenti
come noi / pche formano le parole o nel palato / o ne denti / o
nelle labbra: saluo che usano altri nomi alle cose. Molte sono le
diuersita delle lingue / che di 100. in 100. leghe trouāmo muta-
mento di lingua / che nō sintendano luna con l'altra. El modo
del lor uiuere e/ molto barbaro / perche nō mangiano a hore
certe / & tante uolte quante uogliono / et non si da loro molto
che la uoglia uengha loro piu a meza nocte ch di giorno / che
a tute hore mangiano: ellor mangiare e/ nel suolo senza tona-
gla / o altro panno alcuno / perche tengono le lor uluande o
in bacini di terra che lor fanno / o in meze zucche: dormono in
certe rete fatte di bambacia molto grande sospese nell'aria: et
ancora che qsto lor dormire pala male / dico ch e/ dolce dormi-
re in epse: & miglior dormuamo in epse che ne coltroni. Son
gente pultra & netta de lor corpi / per tātō continouar lauari
come fanno: quando uaziano con riuerentia el uentre / fanno
ogni cosa per non essere ueduti: & tanto quanto in quello sono

netti & schiffi / nel fare acqua sono altrettanto sporci & ſeza uer
gogna: p  rche ſtando / parlando con noi ſenza uolgerſi / o uer
gognarſi laſciano tre tal brutteza / che in queſto non tengho /
no uergogna alchuna: non uſano infra loro matrimoni: cia
ſchuno piglia quante donne uole: et quando le uole repu
diare / le repudia / ſenza che gli ſia tenuto ad ingiuria / o alla
donna uergogna / che in queſto tanta libert   tiene la donna
quanto l'huomo: non ſono molto gelofi / & fuora di miſura lu
xurioſi / & molto piu le donne che gli huomini / che ſi laſcia per
honeſta dirui l'artificio che le fanno per contar lor diſordina
ta luxuria: ſono d  ne molto generatiue / & nelle loro pregnenze
non ſonno trauaglio alchuno: eloro parti ſon tanto leggiere
che parturito dun di / uanno fuora per tutto / & maxime a la
uarſi a fiumi / & ſtanno ſane come peſci: ſono tanto diſamora
te & erude / che ſe ſi adirono con lor mariti / ſubito fanno uno
artificio con che ſamazzano la creatura nel uentre / & ſi ſcon
ciano / & aqueſta cagione amazano infinite creature: ſon don
ne di gent  l corpo molto ben proportionate / che non ſi uede
neloro corpi coſa / o membro mal facto: et anchora che del tut
to uadino diſunde / ſono donne in carne / & della uergogna lo
ro non ſi uede quella parte che puo imaginare chi non l'ha ue
dute / che tutto incuoprono c   le coſcie / ſaluo quella parte / ad
che natura non prouidde / che e / honeſtamente parlando / el
peſtignone. In c  cluſione n   tenghon uergona delle loro uer
gogne / non altrimenti che noi teghiamo moſtrare el naſo &
la bocca: p   marauiglia uedrete le poppe cadute ad una don
na / o p   molto partorire el uentre caduto / o altre grinze / che
tutte paion ch   mai parturiſſino: moſtrauanſi molto deſidero
ſe di congiugnerſi con noi chriſtiani. In queſte gente n   cono
ſc  mo che teneſſino legge alchuna / ne ſi poſſon dire Mori / ne
Giudei / & p  gior ch   Gentili: perche n   ued  mo ch   faceſſino
ſacrificio alchuno: nec etiam non teneuono caſa di oratione:
la loro ulta giudico eſſere Epicurca: le loro habitationi ſono in
comunite: & le loro caſe fatte ad uſo di cap  ne / ma fortemen
te fatte / & fabricate con grandiffimi arbori / & coperte di fo
glie di palme / ſicure delle tempeſte & de uenti: & in alcuni luo
ghi di rara largheza & lungheza / che in una ſola caſa trou  mo
che ſtauano 600. anime: & populatione ued  mo ſolo di tredici

case / doue stauano quattro mila anime: di octo in dieci anni
murano le populationi: & domádato perche lo faceuano: per
causa del suolo che di gia per sudicizia staua infecto & corrotto
& che causaua dolentia ne corpi loro / che ci parue buona ragio
ne: le loro riccheze sono penne di uccelli di piu colori / o pa
ternostri che fanno dossi di pesci / o in pietre biáche / o uerdi
le quali simettono ple gote & ple labbra & orecchi: & daltre mol
te cose ch' noi i cosa alcuna nō le stimiamo: non usano cómer
cio / ne comperano / ne uendono. In conclusion e uiuono / &
sicontentano con quello che da loro natura. Le riccheze che in
questa nostra Europa & in altre parti usiamo / come oro / gioie
perle & altre diuitie / non le tenghono in cosa nessuna: et an
chora che nelle loro terre lhabbino / non trauagliano per ha
uerle / ne le stimano. Sono liberali nel dare / che per marau
iglia ui insegnano cosa alcuna: et per contrario liberali nel
domandare / quando si mostrano uostri amici: per el mag
giore segno di amista / che ui dimostrano / e / che ui danno
le donne loro / & le loro figliuole / & si tiene per grandemen
te honorato / quando un padre / o una madre traendoui una
sua figliuola / anchora che sia moza uergine / dormiate con
lei: et in questo usono ogni termine di amista. Quando muo
lono / usono uarii modi di exequie / & alcuni gl'interrano
con acqua & lor uiuande alchapo / pensando che habbino a
mangiar: non tenghono / ne usono cerimonie di lumi / ne di
piangere. In alcuni altri luoghi usono el piu barbaro & inhu
mano interramento: che e / che quando uno dolente / o in
fermo sta quasi che nello ultimo passo della morte / esui pa
renti lo leuano in uno grande boscho / & corichano una di
quelle loro reti / doue dormono / ad dua arbori / & di poi lo
mettono in epa / & li danzano intorno tucto un giorno: et
uenendo la nocte / gli ponghono al capezzale acqua con altre
uiuande / che si possa mantenere quattro / o sei giorni: & di poi
lo lasciano solo / & tornonsi alla populatione: et se lo infer
mo si adiuua per se medesimo / & mangia / & bee / & uiua / si
torna alla populatione / & lo riceuono esui con cerimonias
ma pochi sono quelli che schampano: senza che piu sieno uisi
tati / simuiono / & quello e / la loro sepultura: et altri molti co
stumi tenghono / che per prolixita non si dicono. Vsono nel
le loro infermitadi uarii modi di medicine / tanto differenti

dalle nostre / che ci marauigliauamo come nessuno scampaua
che molte uolte uiddi / ch' ad uno infermo di febre quãdo la te
neua in augumẽto / lo bagnauano cõ molta acqua fredda dal
capo al pie: di poi gli faceuano un gran fuoco attorno / faccen
do: uolgere & riuolgere altre due hore tãto che lo causauano
& lo sciauano dormire / & molti sanauano: con questo usano
molto la dieta / che stino tre di senza m`giare / & cos` elcauarsi
sangue / ma nõ del braccio / saluo delle coscie & de lombi & del
le polpe delle gambe: alsi prouocano el uomito con loro herbe
che simettono nella bocca: & altri molti rimedii usano / che fa
rebbe lungho a contargli: peochano molto nella flegma & nel
sangue a causa delle loro uiuande / che el forte sono radici di
herbe & fructe & pesci: nõ tengono semente di grano / ne daltre
biade: & alloro comune uso & m`giare usano una radice duno
arборе / dellaquale fanno farina & assai buona / & la chiamano
luca / & altre che la chiamano Cazabi / & altre ignami: man
gion poca carne / saluo che carne di huomo: che sapra uostra
Magnificẽtia / che in questo sono tanto inhumani / che tra
passano ogni bestial costume: perche simangiono tutti eloro ni
mici che amazzano / o pigliano / si femine come maschi / con
tanta effertita / che a dirlo pare cosa brutta: quãto plu a uederlo
come mi accade infinitissime uolte / & i molte parti uerderlo
& simarauigliorono udendo dire a noi che nõ ci mangiamo
enostri nimici: et questo credalo per certo uostra Mag. son tãto
gli altri loro barbari costumi / che el facto al dire uien meno: et
perche in questi quattro uisaggi ho uiste tante cose uarie a nostri
costumi / mi disposi a scriuere un zibaldone / che lo chiamo le
quattro giornate: nelquale ho relato la maggior parte delle co
se che io uiddi / assai distinctamẽte / secondo che mi ha porto el
mio debile ingegno: elquale anchora nõ ho publicato / perche
sono di tanto mal ghusto delle mie cose medesime / che non ren
gho sapore in epse che ho scripto / ancora che molti mi confor
tino al publicarlo: in epso siuedra ogni cosa p minuto: alsi che
non mi allarghero plu in questo capitolo: perche nel processo
della lettera uerremo ad molte altre cose che sono particulari:
questo basti quanto allo uniuersale. In questo principio non
uedẽmo cosa di molto proficuo nella terra / saluo: alcuna di
mostra doro: credo che lo causaua / perche nõ sapauemo la lin
gua: che inquanto al sito & dispositione della terra / non si puo
migliorare: achordãmo di partirci / & andare plu inanzi co:

raggiando di continuo la terra: nella quale facemo molte sca-
le / & hauemo ragionamenti con molta gente: & al fine di certi
giorni fimm: a uenire uno porto / doue leuamo grandissimo
pericolo: & piacque allo Spirito. s. aluarsi: & fu in questo mo-
do. Fumo a terra in un porto / doue trouamo una populatione
fondata sopra lacqua come Venetia: erano circa 44. case gran-
de ad uso di capane fondate sopra pali grossissimi / & teneuano
le loro porte / o entrate di case ad uso di ponti leuatoi: & duna
casa si poteua correre p tutte / a causa de ponti leuatoi che gitta-
uano di casa in casa: & come le gente di esse ciuedessino / mostra-
rono hauere paura di noi / & di subito alzaron tutti e ponti: &
stando a uedere questa marauiglia / uedemo uenire per el mare
circa di 22. Canoe / che sono maniera di loro naulli / fabricati
dun solo arbore: equali uenono alla uolta de nostri battelli / co-
me si marauigliadino di nostre effigie & habiti / & si tennon
larghi da noi: & stando cosi / facemo loro segnali ch uenissino
a noi / assicurandoli con ogni segno di amista: & uisto che non
ueniuano / fumo a loro / & non ci aspettorono: ma si furono a
terra / & con cenni ci dixeno che aspettassimo / & che subito tor-
nerebbono: & furono drieto a un monte / & nō tardoron mol-
to: quando tornorono / menauan seco 16. fanciulle delle loro / &
Intraron con esse nelle loro Canoe / & si uenono a battelli: & i
ciaschedun battello nemisson 4. che tanto ci marauigliamo di
questo acto / quanto puo pensare V.M. & loro fimissono cō le
loro Canoe infra nostri battelli / uenendo cō noi parlando: di
modo che lo giudicamo segno di amista: & andando in questo
uedemo uenire molta gente p el mare notando / che ueniuano
dalle case: & come si uenissino appressando a noi senza sospe-
cto alcuno / in qsto simostrarono alle porte delle case certe don-
ne vecchie / dando grandissimi gridi & tirandosi ecapelli / mo-
strando tristitia: p ilche cifecono sospettare / & ricorremo cia-
scheduno alle arme: & i un subito le fanciulle ch tenauamo ne
battelli / sigittorono al mare / & quelli delle Canoe sallargaron
da noi / & cominciaron cō loro archi a faettarci: & quelli ch ue-
niano a nuoto / ciascano traua una lancia di basso nellacqua
piu coperta che poteuano: di modo che conosciuto el tradimēto
cominciamo nō solo cō loro a difenderci / ma aspramēte a of-
fendergli / & sozobramo cō li battelli molte delle loro Almadie
o Canoe / che cosi le chiamano / facemo istragho / & tutti sigit-
torono a nuoto / lassando di smaparare le loro canoe / cō assai

lor danno si furono norando a terra: moriron di loro circa 14.
o 20. & molti restoron feriti: & de nostri furon feriti 4. & tutti
scamporono gratia di Dio: pigliamo due delle fanciulle & dua
huomini: & fumo alle lor case / & entrāmo in epse / & in tut-
te non trouāmo altro ch̄ due uecchie & uno infirmo: togliēmo
loro molte cose / ma di poca ualuta: & non uolēmo ardere lo-
ro le case / perche ci pareua caricho di conscientia: & tornāmo
alli nostri battelli con cinque prigioni: & fumoci alle nau / &
mettēmo a ciaschuno de presi un paio di ferri in ple / saluo che
alle moze: & la nocte uegnente si fuggirono le due fanciulle &
uno delli huomini piu sottilmēte del mōdo: & laltro giorno ac-
cordāmo di salire di q̄sto porto & andare piu in anzi: andāmo
di cōtinuo allungho della costa / hauēmo uista dunaltra gente
che poreua star discosto da quella. 80. leghe: & la trouāmo mol-
to differēte di lingua & di costumi: accordāmo di surgere / & an-
dāmo cō li battelli a terra / & uedēmo stare alla spiaggia gran-
dissima gente / che poreuano essere al ple di 4000. anime: & co-
me fumo giunti cō terra / nō ci aspettorono / & simissiono a fug-
gire pe boschi / di smamparando lor cose: saltāmo i terra / & fu-
mo per un cāmīno che andaua al boscho: & i spatio dun tiro di
balestro trouāmo le lor trabacche / doue haueuon facto gran-
dissimi fuochi / & due stauano cocendo lor uiuāde & arrosten-
do di molti animali & pesci di molte sorte: doue uedēmo che ac-
rostituano un cerro animale ch̄ pareua un serpēte / saluo ch̄ nō
teneua alia / & nella apparenza tātto brutto / che molto ci mara-
uigliāmo della sua fiereza: Andāmo cō li lor case / o uero tra-
bacche / & trouāmo molti di questi serpēti uiui / & eron legati
pe piedi / & teneuano una corda allo intorno del muso / ch̄ nō
poreuono aprire la bocca / come sifa a cani alani / pche nō mor-
dino: eron di tanto fiero aspecto / che nessuno di noi nō ardīua
di torne uno / pensando ch̄ eron uenenosi: scno di grandezza di
uno cauretro & di lūgheza braccio uno & mezzo: tēgono epiedi
lungi & grossi & armati cō grosse unghie: tengono la pelle du-
ra & / & sono di uari colori: el muso & faccia tengon di serpēte:
& dal naso simouue loro una cresta come una sega / che passa
loro p el mezzo delle schiene infino alla sommita della coda: in
cōclusionone gli giudicāmo serpi & uenenosi / & se gli māgiauano:
trouāmo che faceuono pane di pesci piccholi che pigliauon del
mare / con dar loro prima un bollore / amassarli & farne pasta
di essi / o pane / & li arrostituano insulla brace: cō li mangia-

però: prouamolo / & trouammo che era buono: teneuono tante
altre sorte di mangiari / & maxime di fructe & radice / che fareb
be cosa larga raccontarle p minuto: & uisto che la gente non
riuentua / accordammo non toccare ne torre loro cosa alcuna per
miglior assicurarli: & lassamo loro nelle trabacche molte delle
cose nostre in luogo che le potessino uedere / & tornamoci p la
nocte alle naui: & laltro giorno come uenisse el di / uedemo al
la spiaggia infinita gente: & fumo a terra: & anchora che di noi
simostrassino paurosi / tutta uolta si assicurorono a tractare co
noi / dandoci quanto loro domadauamo: & mostrandosi molto
amici nostri / el di xeno chi qste erano le loro habitationi / & che
eron uenuti quiui p fare pescheria: & ci pregorono che fussimo
alle loro habitationi & populationi / pche ci uoleuano riceuere
come amici: & simisero a tanta amista a causa di dua huomini
che tenauamo con esso noi presi / perche erano loro nimici: di
modo che uista tanta loro importunatione / facto nostro consi
glio / accordammo 28. di noi christiani andare co loro bene aor
dine / & co fermo proposito / se necessario fusse / morire: et di
poi che fumo stati qui quasi tre giorni / fumo co loro per terra
drento: & a tre leghe della spiaggia fumo co una populatione
dassai gente & di poche case / pche non eron piu che noue: doue
fumo riceuuti co tante & tante barbare cerimonie / che non ba
sta la penna a scriuerle: che furono con li balli & canti & pianti
mescolati dallagreza / & con molte utuande: & qui stemo la no
cte: doue ci offerseuo le loro done / chi non ci potauamo difende
re da loro: & di poi deffere stati qui la nocte & mezzo laltro gior
no / furon tanti populi che per marauiglia ci ueniua a uede
re / che erano senza conto: & li piu uecchi ci pregauano chi fussi
mo con loro ad altre populationi / che stauano piu drento in
terra / mostrando di farci gradissimo honore: per onde accor
damo di andare: & non ui si puo dire quanto honore cifectiono:
& fumo a molte populationi / tanto che stemo noue giorni nel
viaggio / tanto che di gia i nostri christiani chi eron restati alle naui
stauano co sospetto di noi: & stando circa 18. leghe drento infra
terra / deliberammo tornarcene alle naui: & al ritorno era tanta la
gente si huomini come done che uennon co noi infino al ma
re / che fu cosa mirabile: & se alcuno de nostri si canfaua del ca
mino / ci leuauano in loro reti molto discanfata mente: & al pas
sare delli fiumi / che sono molti & molto grandi / con loro ar
tificii ci passauano tanto sicuri / che non leuauamo pericolo alcu

no / & molti di loro uenivano carichi delle cose che ci haue-
non date / che eron nelle loro reti per dormire / & plumaggi
molto ricchi / molti archi & frecce / infiniti pappagalli di ua-
rii coloris & altri traevano con loro carichi di loro mantenti /
menti / & di animali: che maggior marauiglia uidiro / che per
bene auenturato fireneua quello / che haueuio a passare una
acqua / di potea portare adosso: et giuncrì che fumo a ma-
re / uenuto nostri battelli / entrāmo i epi: et era rāta la calcha
che loro faceuano penetrare nelli battelli / & uentre a uedere
le nostre nauti / ch'ei marauigliauamo: & con li battelli leuāmo
di epi quanti potēmo / & fumo alle nauti / & tanti uenono a
nuoto / che ritenēmo per impacciati per uederci tanta gente
nelle nauti / che erano plu di mille anime tucti nudi & senza
arme: marauigliauonsi delli nostri apparecchi & artifici / &
grandezza delle nauti: et con costoro ci accadde cosa ben da ri-
dere / che fu / che accordāmo di sparare alcune delle nostre ar-
tiglierie / & quando saltel tuono / la maggior parte di loro p
paura fignitorono a nuoto nō altrimenti che si fanno li ranoc-
chi ch' stanno alle prode / che uedendo cosa paurosa / fignon-
nel pantano / tal fece quella gente: & quelli che restoron nelle
nauti / stauano tanto terrorosi / che cenepentimo di tal facto:
pure li assicurāmo con dire loro che cō quelle armi amazzaua-
mo enostri nimici: et hauēdo folgato tucto el giorno nelle na-
ui / dicēmo loro che sene andassino / perche uelauam^o parlar
re la nocte / & così si partiron da noi cō molta amista / & aino
re sene furono a terra. In questa gente / & in loro terra conob-
bi & uiddi tanti de loro costumi & lor modi di uiuere / che nō
curo di allargiarli in epi: perche sapra V. M. come in cia-
scuno delli miei ulaggi ho notate le cose plu marauigliose: &
tutto ho ridotto in un uolume in stilo di geografia: & le int-
tulo le quattro giornate: nella quale opera si contiene le cose p
minuto / & per anchora nō sene data fuora copia / perche me
necessario conferirla. Questa terra e/ popularissima / & di gen-
te piena / & di infiniti fiumi / animali pochi: sono simili a no-
stri / salvo Lioni / Lonze / cerui / Porci / capriuoli & danti: &
questi ancora tenghono alcuna difformità: nō tēghono caual-
li ne muli / ne cō reuerentia a fini / ne cani / ne di sorte alcuna
bestiame peculiolo / ne uacchini: ma sono rari li altri animali
che tēghono / & ueti sono saluarichi / & di nessuno si seruono
per loro seruizio / che nō sipossin contare. Che diremo d'altri
b.l.

uccelli / che son tanti & di tante sorte & colori di penne / che e/
marauiglia uederli. La terra e / molto amena & fruttuosa / pie
na di grandissime selue & boschi: & sempre sta uerde / che mai
non perde foglia. Le fructe son tante / che sono fuora di nume
ro / & disforme altucto dalle nostre. Questa terra sta dentro del
la torrida zona giuntamente / o di basso del pararello / che de/
scriue el tropico di Cancer: doue alza el polo dello orizzonte 23
gradi nel fine del secondo clyma. Vennonci a uedere molti
popoli / & si marauigliauano delle nostre effigie & di nostra
bianchezza: & ci domandoron donde uenauamo: & dauamo
loro ad intrẽdere / che uenauamo dal cielo / & che andauamo a
uedere el mōdo / & lo credeuano. In questa terra ponẽmo fon
te di baptesimo: & infinita gente si baptezo / & ci chiamauano
in lor lingua Carabi / che uol dire huomini di gran sauidor
ria. Partimo di questo porto: & la prouincia si dice Lartab; &
nauigãmo allungo della costa sempre a uista della terra / tan
to che corremmo dessa 8 70. leghe tutta uia uerso el maestrale /
facendo per ep̃a molte scale / & tractando con molta gente:
& in molti luoghi rischattãmo oro / ma non molta quantita
/ che assai facẽmo in discoprire la terra / & di sapere che re
ueuano oro. Erauamo gia stati 13. mesi nel uisaggio: & di gia
enauili & li apparecchi erano molto cōsumati / & li huomini
cansati: acchordãmo di comune consilia porre le nostre na
ui amonte / & ricorrerle per stancharle / che faceuano molta
acqua / & calefarle & brearle di nuouo / & tornarcene per la
uolta di Spagna: et quãdo questo deliberãmo / stanamo giun
ti con un porto el miglior del mondo: nel quale entrãmo con
le nostre naut: doue trouãmo infinita gente: la quale con mol
ta amista ci riceue: & in terra facẽmo un bastione con li nostri
battelli & con tonelli & botte & nostre artiglierie / che gioca
uano per tucto: et di scaricare & alloggiare nostre naut / le ti
ramo in terra / & le correggẽmo di tucto quello che era ne
cessario: & la gente di terra ci dette grãdissimo aiuto: & di con
tinuo ci prouedeno delle loro usiande: che in q̃sto porto po
che ghustãmo delle nostre / che ci feciono buon giuoco: perche
tenauamo el mantenimento per la uolta pocho & tristo: doue
stẽmo 37. giorni: et andãmo molte uolte alle loro populatio
ni: doue ci faceuono grandissimo honore: et uolendoci parti
re per nostro uisaggio / ci feciono richiamo di come certi tem
pi dell'anno ueniuano per la uia di mare / questa lor terra una
gente molto crudele / & loro nimici: & con rtadimenti / o con

forza amazzauano molti di loro / & selimanglanano: & alcuni captiuauanor / & glileuauan presi alle lor case / o retra: & cō apena si poteuono uolendete da loro: facendoci segnali che erano gente di isole / & poteuono stare drento in mare 100. le ghe: et con tanta affectione ci diceuano questo / che lo credemo loro: & promettemo loro di uendicarli di tanta ingiuria: & loro restoron molto allegri di q̃sto: et molti di loro u offer- sono di uenire con esso noi / ma nō gli uolmo leuare per molte cagioni / saluo che ne leuamo septe / cō conditione che si uenissino poi in Canoe: perche nō ci uolauamo obligare a tornarli a loro terra: & furon contenti: et così ci partimmo da queste genti / lassandoli molti amici nostri: et rimediate nostre nau: / & nauigando septe giorni alla uolta del mare p̃ el uenito infra greco. & leuante: et al capo delli septe giorni: rileuammo nelle isole / che eron molte / & alcune popolate / & altre deserte: & surgemo con una di esse: doue uedemo molta gente che la chiamauano Iti: et stipati enostri battelli di buona gente: & in ciaschuno tre tiri di bombarde / fumo alla uolta di terra: doue trouamo stare al pie di 400. huomini & molte donne / & tutti di snudi come epassati. Eron di buon corpo: & ben pareuano huomini bellicos: perche eron armati di loro armi / che sono archi / saette & lance: et la maggior parte di loro teneuano tauolacche quadrate: & di modo seleponeuano / che non gli impediuono el trarre dello archio: et come fumo a circha di terra con li battelli ad un tiro d'archio / tutti saltaron nell'acqua a tirarci saette / & difenderci che non saltassimo i terra: & tutti eron dipinti e corpi loro di diuersi colori / & implumati cō penne: & ci diceuano le lingue ch con noi erano / che quādo così si mostrauano dipinti & spiumati / che dauon segnale di uoler cōbattere: & tãto perseueroron i defenderci la terra / che fumo sforzati a giocare cō nostre artiglierie: et come sentirono el tuōno / & uidero de loro cader morti alcuni / tutti si tirasseno alla terra: p̃er onde facto nostro cōsiglio / accordamo saltare i terra 42. di noi: & se ci aspectassino / combatter con loro: così saltati i terra cō nostre armi / loro si uennono a noi / & combattermo a circha duna hora / ch poco uantaggio leuamo loro / saluo ch enostri balestrieri & spingar dieri ne amazzauano alcuni: & loro feriron certi nostri: & questo era / p̃che nō ci aspectauano nō altri di lancia ne di spada: et tanta forza ponemo al fine / che uenimo al tiro delle

b. li.

spade / & come ghustassino le nostre armi / simissino in fuga per emonti & boschi / & ci lascioron uincitori del campo con molti di loro morti & assai feriti: & per questo giorno non tra tagliamo altrimenti di dare loro dietro / perche stauamo molto affaricati / & cene tornamo alle navi con tanta allegrezza de sette huomini che con noi eron uentati / che non capriano in loro: & uenendo laltro giorno / uedemo uenire per la terra gran numero di gente / tutta uia con segnali di battaglia suonando corni / & altri uari strumenti che loro usan nelle guerre: & tutti dipinti & implumati / che era cosa bene strana a uederli: ilperche tutte le navi fecion consiglio / & fu deliberato poi che questa gente uoleua con noi nimicitia / che fussimo a uederli con loro / & di fare ogni cosa per farceli amici: in caso che non uolessino nostra amista / che li trattassimo come nimici / & che quasi nepotessimo pigliare di loro / tutti fussino nostri schiaui: et armati come miglior potauamo / fumo alla uolta di terra / & non ci difesono el saltare in terra / credo per paura delle bombarde: & saltamo in terra 47. huomini in quattro squadre / ciaschun Capitano con la sua gente: & fumo alle mani con loro: & dipoi duna lunga battaglia morti molti di loro / gli mettemo in fuga / & seguimo lor dietro fino a una populatione / hauendo preso circa di 240. di loro / & ardemo la populatione / & cene tornamo con uictoria & con 240. prigioni alle navi / lasciando di loro molti morti & feriti / & de nostri non morti piu che uno / & 22. feriti / chi tutti scamporono / dio sia ringraziato. Ordinamo nostra partita / & li sette huomini che cinque ne eron feriti / presono una Canoe della isola / & con sette prigioni che demmo loro / quattro donne & tre huomini / senetornorono allor terra molto allegri / mirandosi delle nostre forze: & noi alsi facemo uela per Spagna con 222. prigioni schiaui: & giugnemo nel porto di Calis addi 14. doctobre 1498. doue fumo ben riceuuti / & uedemo nostri schiaui. Questo e quello che mi accadde in questo mio primo uisaggio di piu notabile.

¶ Finisce el primo Viaggio.

¶ Comincia el secondo.



Q Vanto al secondo Viaggio / & quello che in esso uiddi
 piu degno di memoria / e / quello che qui segue. Partimo
 del porto di Calis tre navi di cōserua adi 16. di Maggio 1499
 & cominciāmo nostro cāmīno ad iritti alle isole del cauo ner-
 de / passando a uista della isola di gran Canaria: et tanto na-
 uigāmo / che fumo a tenere ad una isola / che si dice isola del
 fuoco: et qui facta nostra prouisione d'acqua & di legne / pi-
 gliāmo nostra nauigatione per illibeccio: & in 44. giorni fu-
 mo a tenere ad una nuoua terra: & la giudicāmo essere terra
 ferma / & continua con la disopra si fa mentione: laquale e / si-
 tuata drento della torrida zona / & fuora della linea equino-
 ciale alla parte dello austro: sopra laquale alza el polo del me-
 ridione 4. gradi fuora dogni clyma: & dista dalle dette isole
 per el uento libeccio 400. leghe: & trouāmo essere equali egior-
 ni con le nocte: pche fumo ad ep̃sa adi 27. di Giugno / quan-
 do el sole sta circa del tropico di Cancer: laqual terra trouāmo
 essere tutta annegata & piena di grandissimi fiumi. In questo
 principio nō uedēmo gente alcuna: surgēmo con nostre navi
 & buttāmo fuora enostri battelli: fumo con ep̃si a terra / & co-
 me dico / la trouāmo piena di grandissimi fiumi / & annegata
 b. iij.

per grandissimi fiumi che trouamo: & la cōmettēmo in molte parti / per uedere se potessimo entrare p ep̃sa: & per le grandi acque ch̃ trauono efiumi / con quāto trauaglio potēmo / nō trouamo luogo che non fussi annegato: uedēmo per efiumi molti segnali di come la terra era popolata: & uisto ch̃ p questa parte non la potauamo entrare / accordāmo tornarcene al le nauti / & di cōmetterla p altra parte: & leuatāmo nostre anchori / & nauticāmo infra leuante & sciloccho / costeggiando di continuo la terra / che così sicorreua / & in molte parti la cōmettēmo in spatio di 40. leghe: & tutto era tempo perduto: trouamo in questa costa che le corrente del mare erano di tanta forza / che non clasciauano nauigare / & tutte correuano dallo sciloccho al maestrale: di modo che uisto tanti inuenti per nostra nauicacione / facto nostro cōsiglio / accordamo tornare la nauicacione alla parte del maestrale: & tanto nauticāmo allungho della terra / che fumo a tenere un bellissimo porto: elquale era causato da una grande isola / che staua allentrata / & drento si faceua una grandissima insenata: & nauticando p entrare in ep̃so / prolungando la isola / hauēmo uista di molta gente: et allegratici / uidirizzāmo nostre nauti per surgere doue uedauamo la gente / ch̃ porauamo stare piu al mare circa di quattro leghe: et nauticando in questo modo / hauēmo uista duna Canoe / che uentua cō alto mare: nellaquale uentua molta gente: & accordāmo di hauerla alla mano: & facēmo la uolta con nostre nauti sopra ep̃sa con ordinē ch̃ nōi non la perdessimo: & nauticando alla uolta sua con fresco tempo / uedēmo che stauano fermi co remi alzati / credo per marauiglia delle nostre nauti: & come uidono che noi ci andauamo apressando loro / messono eremi nellacqua / & cominciarono a nauticare alla uolta di terra: & come i nostra cōpagnia uenisse una carouella di 44. tonelli molto buona della uela / si puose a barlouento della Canoe: & quando lēparue tempo darriuare sopra ep̃sa / allargo li apparecchi / & uenne alla uolta sua / & noi alis̃et come la carouelletta pareggiasse con lei / & nō la uoless̃i inuestire / la passo / & poi rimale sotto uento: & come si uedessino a uantaggio / cominciarono a far forza co remi p fuggire: & noi che trouamo ebattelli per poppa già stipati di buona gente / pensando ch̃ la piglierebbono: & trauagliorono piu di due hore / & infine se la carouelletta in al

tra uolta non tornaua sopra epſa / la perdauamo: & come ſi
uiddeno ſtrecti dalla carouella & da battelli / tucti ſigittarono
almare / che poteuono eſſere. 70. huomini: & diſtauano da ter
ra circa di due leghe: & ſeguédoli co battelli / in tutto el giorno
nō nepotēmo pigliare piu ch dua / che ſu p acerto: gli altri tut
ti ſi furono a terra a ſaluamēto: & nella canoe reitarono 4.
ſanculli: equali non eron di lor generatione / che li trauano
preſi dall'altra terra: & li haueuano caſtrati / che tucti eron ſen
za membro uſtile / & con la piaga freſcha: di che molto ci ma
rauigliāmo: & meſſi nelle nauiv cidixeno per ſegnali / che li
haueuon caſtrati p mangiarſeli: & ſapēmo coſtoro erano una
gente / che ſi dicono Camballi / molto eſſerati / ch mangiono
carne humana. Fumo con le nauì / leuando con noi la Canoe
per poppa alla uolta di terra / & ſurgēmo a meza lega: & co
me a terra uedeſſimo molta gente alla ſpiaggia / fumo co bat
telli a terra / & leuāmo con eplo noi edua huominini che pi
gliāmo: & giuncti in terra / tucta la gēte ſi fuggi / & ſimiffeno
pe bolchi: & allarghāmo uno dell huomini / dandogli molti
ſonagli / & che uolauamo eſſere loro amici: elquale fece molto
bene quello li mandamo / & traſſe ſeco tucta la gente / che po
teuono eſſere 400. huomini / et molte dōne: equali uennono
ſenza arme alcuna adonde ſtauamo con li battelli: et facto
con loro buona amiſta / rendēmo loro l'altro preſo / et man
damo alle nauì per la loro Canoe: et la rendēmo loro. Queſta
Canoe era lunga 26. paſſi / et largha due braccia / et tucta
dun ſolo arbore cauato / molto bene lauorata: et quando la
hebbono uarata in un rio / et meſſala in luogo ſicuro / tucti
ſi fuggitrono / et nō uollon piu praticare con noi / che ci parue
tucto barbaro atto / che gli giudicāmo gente di poca fede &
di mala conditione. A coſtoro uedēmo alcun pocho doro che
teneuano nelli orecchi. Partimo di qui / & entrāmo drento nel
la inſenata: doue trouāmo rāta gente / che fu marauigliato: con
liquali facēmo in terra amiſta: & fumo molti di noi con loro
alle loro populationi molto ſicuramente / & ben riceuuti. In
queſto luogo riſchattāmo 140. perle / che cele detton p un ſo
naglio / & alcun poco doro / che celodauano di gratia: et i que
ſta terra trouāmo che becuano uino facto di lor fructe & le
mente ad uſo di ceruogia / & bianchio & uermiglio: & el mi
gliore era facto di mirabolani / & era molto buono: et man

giàmo infiniti di epi / che era el tempo loro. E / molto buona fructa / saporosa al gusto / & salutifera al corpo. La terra / molto abondosa de loro mantenimenti / et la gente di buona conuersatione / et la piu pacifica che habbiamo trouata in fino aqui. Stèmo in questo porto 17. giorni con molto piacere: et ogni giorno ci uenivano a uedere nuoui populi della terra drento / marauigliandosi di nostre effigie & bianchezza / & de nostri uestiti & arme / & della forma & grandezza delle nauì. Da questa gente hauèmo nuoue di come staua una gente piu alponente ch' loro / che erano loro nimici / che teneuano infinita copia di perletet che quelle che loro teneuano / eron che le hauuan lor tolte nelle lor guerre: et cidixeno come se peschauono / & in che modo nasceuano / et li trouàmo essere con uerita / come uoltra uostra Magnificencia. Partimo di questo porto / et nauicàmo per la costa per la quale di continuo uedauamo fumalte con gente alla spiaggia: et al capo di molti giorni fumo a tenere in un porto / ad causa di rimediare ad una delle nostre nauì / che faceua molta acqua: douetrouàmo essere molta gente con liquali non porèmo ne per forza ne per amore hauer conuersatione alchuna: et quando andauamo a terra / cidifendeuano aspramète la terra: et quando più non poteuano / si fuggiuano per li boschi / & non ci aspettauano. Conosclutoli tãto barbari / ci partimo di qui: et andando nauicando / hauèmo uista duna isola / che distaua nel mare: & uleghe da terra: & acchordàmo di andare a uedere se era popolata. Trouàmo in epia la piu bestial gente & la piu brutta che mai si uedeisse / & era di questa sorte. Erano di gesto & uiso molto brutti: & tutti teneuano le ghote piene di dreno di una herba uerde / che di continuo la rugumauano come bestie / che apena poteuon parlare / & ciaschuno teneua al collo due zucche secche / che l'una era piena di quella herba che teneuano i boccha / & l'altra duna farina biacha / che pareua gesso in poluere / & di quãdo in quando con un fuso ch' teneuano in mollandolo cõ la boccha / lo metteuano nella farina: di poi selo metteuano in boccha da tutta dua le bande delle ghote / infarinandosi l'herba che teneuano in boccha: & q̃sto faceua / no molto aminuto: et marauigliati di tal cosa / nõ potauamo intrẽdere q̃sto secrete / ne ad ch' fine così faceuano. Questa gente come ciuidono / uennono a noi tanto famillarmète / come

se hauessimo tenuto con loro amista: andando con loro per la spiaggia parlando / & desiderosi di bere acqua f: elcha / di feciono legnali che nō la teneuano / & confereuon di quella loro herba & farina / di modo che stimāmo per discretione che q̃sta isola era pouera dacqua / & ch̃ per difenderli dalla sete / teneuano quella herba in bocca / & la farina per questo medesimo. Andāmo per la isola un di & mezo senza ch̃ mai trouassimo acqua uita: & uedēmo che lacqua che ebeuauo / era di rugiada ch̃ cadeua di nocte sopra certe foglie / ch̃ paruano orcechi di asino / & empleuonli dacqua / & di questa becuano: era acqua op̃tima: & di queste foglie nō ne hauuono in molti luoghi. Nō reneuano alcuna maniera di uiuande / ne radice / come nella terra ferma: & la lor uita era con pesci che pigliauon nel mare / & di questi teneuano grandissima abundantia / & erano grādissimi pescatori: & ci presentorono molte torughe & molti gran pesci molto buoni: le lor donne nō usauon tenere lherba in bocca come glhuomini / ma tutte traeuono una zuccha con acqua / & di quella becuano. Nō teneano populatione ne di case ne di capāne / sa'uo che habitauano di basso in frascati / che li defendeuan dal Sole / & nō da lacqua: che credo poche uolte uispioueua in quella isola: quando stauano almare pescando / tutti teneuano una foglia molto grande & di tal largheza / che uistauon di basso drēto alla mbra / & la fochauano in terra: & come el sole si uolgeua / così uolgeuano la foglia: & i questo modo si difendeano dal Sole. Li isola contiene molti animali di uarie sorte: & beano acqua di pantani: & uisto che nō teneuano proficuo alcuno / ci partimo / & fumo ad una ltra isola: & trouāmo che in ep̃sa habitaua gente molto grande: fumo indi in terra / per uedete se trouaemo acqua fresca: & nō pensando che li isola fussi popolata per non ueder gente / andando alungo della spiaggia / uedēmo pedate di gente nella rena molto grādi: & giudicāmo se la lre membrarisponde ssino alla misura / che sarebbono huomini grandissimi: & andando in questo riscontrāmo in un camino che andaua per la terra dentro: & achordāmo noue di noi / & giudicāmo che li isola per esser picchola / nō poteua hauere in se molta gente: pero andāmo per ep̃sa / per uedere che gente era quella: & di poi che fumo lri circa di una legua / uedēmo in una ualle cinque delle lor capāne / che ci paruon dispopolate: & fumo ad ep̃se / & trouāmo solo cinque donne / & due

uecchie & tre fanciulle di tanto alra statura / che per marau-
glia le guardauamo: & come diuidono / entro lor tãra pau-
ra / che non hebbono animo a fuggire: & le due uecchie ci co-
minciaron con parole a conuitare / traendoci molte cose da
mangiare / & messonci in una capãna: & eron di statura mag-
giori che uno grande huomo / che ben sarebbon grãde di cor-
po/come fu Francesco de glialbizi / ma di miglior proportio-
ne: di modo che stauamo tucti di proposito di torne lettere fan-
ciulle per forza / & per colã marauigliosa trarle a Castiglia:
et stando i questi raglionamenti / cominciorno a entrare per
la porta della capãna ben 36. huomini molto maggiori che
le donne: huomini tanto ben fatti / che era cosa famosa a ue-
dergli: equali cimissono in tanta turbatione / che piu tosto fa-
remo uoluti essere alle nauì / ch trouarci cõ tal gente. Traua-
no archi grandissimi / & frecce con gran bastoni con capoe-
chie: & parlauano infra loro dun suono / come uolessino ma-
nometterci: uistoci in tal pericolo / facemo uarii cõsigli infra
noi: alchuni diceuano che i casa sicominciasse a dare in loro:
& altri che alcampo era migliore: & altri che diceuano che nõ
cominciasimo la quistione infino a tanto che uedessimo quel-
lo che uoleuano fare: et acchordãmo del salir della capanna / &
andarcene dissimulatamente al cãmino delle nauì: & cõsi lo
facemo: et preso nostro cãmino / cenerornãmo alle nauì: loro
ci uenon drieto tur:auia a un tiro di pietra / parlando infra lo-
ro: credo ch non men paura haueuon di noi / che noi di loro:
perche alcuna uolta ci ripolauamo / & loro alsi senza appres-
sarsi a noi / tanto che giugnẽmo alla spiaggia doue stauano
ebatrelli aspettandoci: & entrãmo i epli: & come fumo larghi
loro saltorono / & citiforono molte saetre: ma poca paura re-
nauamo gia di loro: sparãmo loro dua tiri di bombarda piu p
spauẽtarli che per far loro male: & tutti aluono suggirone al
monter: & cõsi ci partimo da loro / ch ci parue scampare duna pe-
ricolosa giornata. Andauano del tucto disnudi come li altri.
Chiamo questa isola / l'isola de giganti a causa di lor grande-
za: & andãmo piu inanzi prolungando la terra: nellaquale ci
accadde molte uolte combãttere con loro per non ci uolere la-
sciare pigliare cosa alcuna di terra: & gia che stauamo di no-
lonta di tornarcene a Castiglia: perche erauamo stati nel ma-
re circha di uno anno / & tenauamo poco n antrimento / &
el poco dannato a causa delli gran caldi che passamo: perche

da che partimo per l'isole del cauo verde Infino aqul / di con-
nuo hauuamo nauicato p la torrida zona / & due uolte attra-
uersato per la linea equinoctiale: che come di sopra dixi / fumo
fuora di epſa 4. gradi alla parte dello austru: & qui ſtauamo in
14. gradi uerſo elſeprertrione. Stando in qſto cōſiglio / piacque
allo Spirito ſancto dare alchuno diſcanſo a tanti noſtri tra-
uagli: che fu / che andando cerchando un porto per racchon-
tare noſtri nauilli / fumo a dare con una gente: laquale ci ri-
couette cōn molta amiſta: & trouāmo che teneuano grandiffi
ma quātita di perle orientali & aſſai buone: co quali citenē-
mo 47. giorni: & riſcatāmo da loro 119. marchi di perle con
molta pocha mercantia: che credo nō ci coſtorono el ualere di
quaranta ducati: pche quello che dēmo loro / nō furono ſe nō
ſonagli & ſpecchi / & conte / dieci palle & foglie di octone: che
p uno ſonaglio daua uno quāte perle tenena. Da loro ſapēmo
come le peſcauano / & donde: & cidettono molte oſtriche / nel
lequali niſceuono: riſcatāmo oſtrica / nellaquale ſtana di na-
ſcimento 130. perle / & altre di meno: queſta delle 130. mitol
ſe la Regina: & altre mi guardai nō le uedeſſe. Et ha da ſapere
V.M. che ſe le perle non ſono mature / & da ſe non ſiſpiccha-
no / nō perſtanno: perche ſidamnano preſto: & di queſto ne ho
uiſto experientia: quando ſono mature / ſtanno drento nella
oſtrica ſpicchate & meſſe nella carne: et qſte ſon buone: quan-
to male teneuano / che la maggior parte erono roche & mal
forate: tutta uia ualeuano buon danari: pche ſi uendeua el mar-
cho. .et al capo di 47. giorni laſciāmo la gente molto
amica noſtra. Partimoci / & per la neceſſita del mantenimento
fumo a tenere all'isola dantiglia / che e/ queſta che diſcoperſe
Chriſtophal colombo plu anni fa: doue facēmo molto man-
tenimēto: & ſtēmo duo meſi & 17. giorni: doue paſſamo mol-
ti pericoli & trauagli con li medefimi chriſtiani che in queſta
iſola ſtauano col Colombo: credo per inuidia: che per nō eſſe-
re prolixo / li laſcio di racchontare. Partimo della decta iſola
adi 22. di Luglio: & nauicāmo i un meſe & mezo: & entrāmo
nel porto di Calis / che fu adi 8. di Septembre di di / el mio ſe-
condo uiaaggio: Dio laudato.

¶ Finito el ſecondo Viaggio:

¶ Cominda el terzo.



ST Andoni di poi in Sibylla / riposandomi di tanti mia
 trauagli / che i questi duo ulaggi haueuo passati / & con
 uolonta di tornare alla terra delle perle: quando la fortuna nō
 contenta de miei trauagli / che nō lo come uenissi in pensa-
 meuro a questo serenissimo Re don manouello di portogallo
 eluolerli seruire di meier stando in Sibylla fuori dogni pen-
 samento di uenire a Portogallo / inuēne un messaggiero cō
 lettera di sua real corona / che mirogaua ch lo uenissi a Lisbo-
 na a parlare cō sua alteza / promettēdo farmi mercedes. Nō
 fui aconsigliato che uenissi: expediti el messaggiero / dicendo
 che stauo male / & che quando stessi buono / & che sua alteza
 siuolessse pure seruire di me / che farei quanto mi mandasse. Et
 visto che non mi poteua hauere / acchordo mandare per me
 Giuliano di Bartholomeo del Giocondo stante qui in Lisbo-
 na / con commissione che in ogni modo mi traesse. Venne el
 detto Giuliano a Sibylla: per la uenuta & ruogho delquale
 fui forzato a uenire / che fu tenuta a male la mia uenuta da
 quanti mi conosciuano: perche mi parti di Castiglia / doue mi
 era facto honore / & il Re mi teneua i buona possessione: peg-
 gior fu / che mi parti iusalutaro hospiterei appresentaromi
 inanzi a questo Re / i nostro hauer placere di mia uenuta: &
 mi prirgo di fussi la compagnia di tre lue naue / che stanno

preste p andare a discoprire nuoue terre: & come un ruogo d'...
Re e mandò / hebbi a consentire a quáro m'rogaua: et partimē
di q̄sto porto di Lilibona tre naui di conserua ad i. lo. di Maggio
1401. & pigliamo nostra derrota diritti alla Isola di gran Cana-
ria: & passiamo senza posare a uista di ep̄sa: & di qui fumo costeg-
giando la costa d'af̄rica p la parte occidētale: uella quale costa fa-
cēmo nostra p̄scheria a una forte p̄sch / che si chiamano Parchi:
doue ci dīrenēmo tre giorni: & di qui fumo nella costa dethiopia
ad un porto che s'dice Besehtice / die sta dentro dalla torrida zo-
na: sopra la quale alza el polo del septentrione 14. gradi & mezo
situato nel primo dyma: doue stēmo. 11. giorni: piguano acqua
& legne: p̄che mia inietione era di marm̄gare uer̄lo laustro p el
golfo atlantico. Partimo di q̄sto porto di ethiopia: & nauicāmo
p̄ellibecio / pigliando una quarta del mezo di / tanto che in 67.
giorni fumo a tenere a una terra che staua nel dēcto porto 700.
leghe uer̄so libeccio: & i quelli 67. giorni leuāmo el peggior tē-
po / che mai leuasse huomo che nauicasse nel mare / per molti
aguazeri & turbonate & tormēte che ci dettono: p̄che tutto i tē-
po: molto cōttarlo / a causa che el forte di nostra nauicacione fu di
cōtinuo giunta con la linea equinoctiale / che nel mese di Glia-
gno e in uerno: & trouāmo el di con la nocte essere equale: & tro-
uāmo lombra uer̄so mezo di di cōtinuo: placq̄ ad io mostrar el
terra nuoua / & fu ad i 17. d'agosto: doue surgēmo a meza legha
& buttāmo fuora nostri battelli: et fumo a uedere la terra / se era
habitata da gente / & che tale era: & trouāmo essere habitata da
gete / ch̄ erano peggiori ch̄ animali: pero V.M. Intendera i q̄sto
principio nō uedēmo gente / ma ben conoscēmo ch̄ era popula-
ra p molti segnali che l'ep̄sa uedēmo: pigliāmo la possessione di
ep̄sa p questo serenissimo Re: la quale trouāmo essere terra molto
amena & uerde / & di buona apparentia: staua fuora della linea
equinoctiale uer̄so laustro 4. gradi: et per questo ci dītornāmo
alle naut: et p̄che renauamo gran necessita d'acqua & di legne /
accordāmo l'altro giorno di tornare a terra per prouedere del ne-
cessario: et stando i terra / uedēmo uua gēte nella sommita dun-
monte / che stauano m̄trando / & nō uelauono dēscēdere abasso:
erano dīsnudi / & del medesimo colore & factione che erano li
uiri passati: et stando cō loro trauagliando / perche uenissino a
parlare con ep̄so noi / mai nō li porēmo assicurare / che nō si fi-
darono di noi: et uisto la loro obstinatione / & di glia era tardi /
ci dītornāmo alle naut / lasciando loro in terra molti sonagli
c. l.

& specchi / & altre cose a uista loro: et come fumo larghi al ma
re / disceseno del mōte / & uennon p le cose lassamo loro / faccē
do di epse grā marauiglia: & p ōsto giorno nō ci puedēmo se nō
dacqua: l'altra matina uedemo delle naue ch la gēte di terra face
non molte fumate: & noi pensando che ci chiamassino / fumo a
terra / doue trouāmo ch erano uenuti molti populi / & tutta uia
stauano larghi di noi: & ci accēnauano ch fuſſimo cō loro p la ter
ra drento: p onde ſimoffeno dua delli nostri xpiani a domādare
el capitano ch deſſe loro licentia / che ſiuoleuano metter a picolo
di uolere andare cō loro i terra / p uedere ch gente erano / & se
teneuano alcuna riccheza / o spetieria / o drugheria: & tanto pre
gorono / ch el capitano fu cōtento: & messonſi a ordine cō molte
cose di riscatto / ſipartiron da noi cō ordine / ch nō stessino piū
di 4. giorni a tornare: pche tāto gli ſpecteremo: & pson lor cami
no pla terra / & noi p le nauti aspectādoli: & quasi ogni giorno ue
n l'ua gēte alla spiaggia / & mai nō ci uollon parlare: et il ſeptimo
giorno andamo i terra / & trouamo che haueuō tracto cō loro le
lor dōne: et come saltassimo i terra / gli huomini della terra man
dorono molte delle lor dōne a parlar cō noi: & uisto nō ſi afficu
rauano. / accordāmo di mādare a loro uno huomo de nostri / ch
fu un glouane ch molto faceua lo sforzo: & noi passicurarlo / en
trāmo nelli battelli: & lui ſi fu p le dōne: & come giūſe a loro / gli
feciono un grā cerchio iorno / toccandolo / & mirandolo ſi ma
rauigliauano: et ſtando i qſto / uedēmo uenire una dōna del mō
te / & traua un grā palo nella mano: & come giunſe dōde ſtaua
el nostro xpiano / li uenne padrieto: & alzato el baſtone / gli dette
tam grāde el colpo / ch lo diſteſe morto i terra / i un ſubito le al
tre dōne lo psono pe piedi / & lo ſtraſcinorono pe piedi uerſo el
mōte: & li huomini ſaltorono uerſo la spiaggia / & cō loro archi
& ſaette a ſactrarci: et poſon la noſtra gente i tanta paura ſurt
cō li battelli ſopra le ſateſce / che ſtauano in terra / che p le molte
frecele ch dimetteuano nelli battelli / neſſuno accertaua di piglia
re l'arme: pure diſparāmo loro 4. tiri di bōbarda / & nō accerto
rono / ſaluo ch udiſto el tuono / tutti fuggirono uerſo el mōte: &
doue ſtauano gla le dōne faccēdo pezi del xpiano: & ad un gran
fuoco che haueuō facto / lo ſtauano arroſtēdo a uista noſtra / mo
ſtrandoci molti pezi / & māgiandoceli: et li huomini faccendoci
ſegnali cō loro cenni d come hauer morti li altri duo xpiani / &
mangiatoceli: el che el peſo molto / ueggēdo cō li noſtri occhi la
mudela che faceuan del morto / a tutti noi fu ingiuria intollerā

bile: & stando di proposito piu di 40. di noi di saltare in terra & uendicare tãta cruda morte & acto bestiale & inhumano / el Capitano maggiore nõ uolle acõsentire / & si restaron satiti di rãta ingiuria: & noi ci partimo da loro cõ mala uolõta & cõ molta uergogna nostra a causa del nostro Capitano. Partimo di q̃sto luogo / & cominciammo nostra nauicacione i fra leuante & sciloccho / & cosi si correua la terra: et facemo molte schale / & mai trouamo gente ch̃ cõ ep̃so noi uolessin cõuersare: et cosi nauicamo rãto / che trouamo che la terra faceua la uolta p̃ libeccio: come doblissimo un cauo / al quale ponemo nome el cauo di scõ Augustino / cominciammo a nauicare p̃ libeccio / & dista q̃sto cauo dalla p̃detta terra / che uedemo doue amazorono echristiani. i 40. leghe uerso leuante: et sta q̃sto cauo 8. gradi fuori della linea equinoctiale uerso laustro: et nauicando / hauemo un giorno uista di molta gente / ch̃ stauano alla spiaggia p̃ uedere la marauiglia delle nostre nauti: et di che come nauicamo / fumo alla uolta loro / & surgemo i buon luogo / & fumo cõ li battelli a terra / & trouamo la gente essere di miglior cõditione ch̃ la passata: et ancor ch̃ ci fusse tra uoglio di smetticarli / tuttauia ci facemo amici / & tractamo cõ loro. In q̃sto luogo stemo 4. giorni: & qui trouamo canna fistola molto grossa & uerde & secca i cima dell̃i arbori. Accordamo i questo luogho leuate un paio di huomini / per h̃. ci mostrassino la lingua: et uennono tre di loro uolunta per uenire a Portogallo: & per questo digia cansato di tanto scriuere / sapra uostra Magnificencia / che partimo di questo porto / sempre nauicando per libeccio a uista di terra / di continuo facendo di molte scale / & parlando con infinita gente: et tanto fumo uerso laustro / che gia stauamo fuora del tropico di Capricorno: a donde el polo del Meridione salzaua sopra lo Orizzonte 32. gradi: et digia hauamo perduto del ructo l'orsa minore / & la maggiore ci staua molto bassa / & quasi ci si mostraua al fine dello Orizzonte / & ci reggiauamo per le Stelle dell'altro polo del Meridione: le quali sono molte / & molto maggiori / & piu lucenti che le di q̃sto nostro polo: et della maggior parte di ep̃le trassi le lor figure / & maxime di q̃lle della prima / & maggior magnitudine / con la dichiaratione de lor circuli / che faceuano itorno al polo del austro / cõ la dichiaratione de lor diametri & semidiametri / come si potra uedere nelle mie 4. giornate: corremo di q̃sta costa al pie di 740. leghe: le 140. dal cauo detto di scõ Augustino

uerso el ponēte / & le 600. uerso el libeccio: et uolendo ricontare
le cose che i q̃sta costa uidi: & q̃llo che passamo / non mi bastereb
be al treranti fogli: & in q̃sta costa nō uedēmo cosa di p̃ficto / sal
uo. infiniti arbori di uerzino & di cassia / & di quelli ch̃ generano
la myrra / & altre marauiglie della natura / che nō si possion rac
contrare: et di gla effendo stati nel uisaggio ben 10. mesi / & uisto
che in q̃sta terra nō trouabamo cosa di minero alcuno / accordā
mo di dispedirci di ep̃sa / & andarci a cōmettere al mare p̃ altra
partes: et facto nostro cōsiglio / fu deliberato ch̃ li seguisse q̃lla na
uigatione che mi pareffe bene: & tutto fu rimesso i me el mandando
della fiotta: et allhora mandai che tutta la gente & fiotta si pro
uedessi da acqua & di legne p̃ sei mesi / che t̃to giudicorono li uis
tiali delle nauì ch̃ porauamo nauicare cō ep̃se. Facto nostro pue
dimento di q̃sta terra / cominciammo nostra nauigatione p̃ el uen
to sciloccho: & fu adi 14. di Febrato / quando gia el sole sandaua
cercando allo equinoctio / & tornaua uerso q̃sto nostro emispe
rio del seprentione: & tanto nauicāmo p̃ q̃sto uento / che ci tro
uāmo tanto alti / chel polo del meridione ci staua alto fuora del
nostro orizzonte ben 42. gradi / & piu nō uedadamo le stelle ne
dell'orsa minore / ne della maggore orsa: & di gla stauamo di
scosto del porto di doue partimo ben 400. leghe p̃ sciloccho: &
questo fu adi 3. d'aprile: & i q̃sto giorno comincio una tormenta
in mare t̃to forzola: che ci fece amalnare del tutto nostre uel
& corrauamo alla rbera seco con molto uento / che era libeccio
cō grandissimi mari / & laria molto tormentosa: et tanta era la
tormēta / che tutta la fiotta staua con gran timore: e nocte eron
molto grandi: che nocte tenēmo adi septe d'aprile / che fu di 16.
hore: p̃che el sole staua uel fine di Arles: et in q̃sta regione era lo
inuernō / come ben puo cōsiderare V.M. et andando i q̃sta tor
menta adi septe d'aprile / hauēmo uista di nuoua terra: della quale
cōtrēmo circha di 20. leghe / & la trouāmo tutta costa brava: et
nō uedēmo l'ep̃sa porto alcuno / ne gente: credo p̃che era t̃to el
freddo / che nessuno della fiotta si poreua rimediare / ne soppor
tarlo: di modo ch̃ uistoci in tanto pericolo & i tanta tormēta / che
apena porauamo hauere uista luna naue dell'altra / p̃ gran mari
ch̃ faceuano: & p̃ la gran serrazon del tēpo / che accordāmo con
el capitano maggiore fare segnale alla fiotta che arriuaſsi / & la
sciaſſimo la terra: et cene tornāſſimo al cāmino di Portogallo: et
fu molto buon cōiglio: che certo e che se tardauamo quella no
cte / tutti ci perdauiamo: p̃che come arriuāmo a poppa / & la no

ete & laltro giorno si criscerebbe tanta tormenta / che dubitamo
perderci: et hauemo di fare peregrini & altre cerimonie / como
e/ufanza de marinai p tali tēpi: corrēmo 4. giorni / & tutra via
ci uenauamo apssando alla linea equociale / & in aria & i mari
piu tēperati: et piacq a Dio scamparci di rāto pericolo: & nostra
nauicacione era p el uento intra el tramōtano & greco: pche no
stra itentione era andare a riconoscere la costa di ethiopia / che
stauamo discosto da ep̄sa i 300. leghe p el golfo del mare atlanti
co: & cō la gratia di dio a 10. g orni di Maggio fumo i ep̄sa a una
terra uerso laustro / ch si dice La serra liona: doue stēmo 14. giorni
pigliādo nostro rinfrescamēto: & di qui partimo pigliādo nostra
nauicacione uerso li sole dell azori / ch distāno di q̄sto luogo della
Serra circa di 740. leghe: et fumo cō li sole alfin di Luglio: doue
stēmo altri 14. giorni / pigliādo alcuna recreatione: & partimo di
ep̄se p lisbona: ch stauamo piu allo occidēte 300. leghe: & entra
mo p q̄sto porto di Lisbona ad i 7. di Seprēbre del 1402. a buon
sa: uamēto / Dio ringratiato sia / cō solo due nauti: pche laltra ar
dēmo nella Serra liona: pche nō poteua piu nauicare / che stēmo
In questo uaggio circa di 14. mesi: & giorni 11. nauigāmo sen
za ueder la stella tramōtana / o lora maggiore & minore / che si
dicono el cornio: et ci reggēmo p le stelle dello altro polo. Questo
e / quāto uidi in q̄sto uaggio / o giornata.

¶ Quarto Viaggio.



Restami di dire le cose p me uiste nel quarto uiaggio / o g'ior
nata: & perlo essere gia cansato / & etiam pche q'sto quarto
uiaggio nō sifornt / scōdo ch'io leuauo el pposito / p una disgrat
tia che ci achadde nel golfo del mare atlantico: come nel pcesso
sotto breuita intrèdera V.M. minge'nero d'essere brieue. Parti
mo di q'sto porto di Lisbona 6. nau' di cōserua cō pposito di an
dare a scoprire una isola uerso l'oriente / che si dice Melaccha: del
laquale si ha nuoue esset molto ricca / & ch' e/ come el magazzino
di tucte le nau' che uégano del mare gangetico & del mare indi
co / come e/ Calis camera di turri enauilli che passano da leuante
a ponēte / & da ponēte a leuāte p la uia di Galigut: et q'sta Me
laccha e/ plu all'occidēte ch' Caligut / & molto plu alta parte del
mezo di: pche sappiamo ch' sta in paraggio di 33. gradi del polo
antarctico. Partimo adī 10. di Maggio 1403 et fumo diritti alle
isole del cauo uerde / doue facēmo nostro caragne / & pigliāmo
sorte di rinfrescamēto / doue stēmo 13. giorni: et di qui partimo
a nostro uiaggio / nauicādo p el uēto sciloccho: et come el nostro
Capitano maggiore fuisse huomo psumptuoso & molto cauezu
to / uolle andare a riconoscere la Serra l'iona / terra dethiopia au
strale / senza tenere necessita alcuna / se nō p farsi uedere / ch' era
Capitano di sei nau' / cōtro alla uolūta di tucti noi altri Capita
ni: et colī nauicando / quādo fumo cō la detta terra / furon tate
le turbonate che c'idetrono / & cō epla el tēpo cōtrario / che stan
do a uista di epla ben 4. giorni / mai nō cila scio el mal tēpo pi
gliar terra: di modo ch' fumo forzati di tornare a nostra nauica
tione uera / & lassare la detta Serra: et nauicādo di qui al suduest
che e/ uēto ifra mezo di & libeccio: et quādo fumo nauicati ben
300. leghe p el mōstro del mare / stando di già fuora della linea
egnocctionale uerso l'austro ben 3. grad. ci si discoperse una terra
ch' portauamo distare di epla 22. leghe: della q'le ci marauigliāmo:
et trouāmo ch' era una isola nel mezo del mare / & era molto al
ta cosa / ben marauigliosa della natura: pche nō era plu che due
leghe di lungo / & una di largo: nellaquale isola mai nō fu habi
tato da gente alcuna: & fu la mala isola p tutta la flocta: pche fa
pra V.M. che per el mal cōfiglio & reggimēto del nostro Capita
no maggiore / perde quī sua naue: pche dette con epla ī uno sco
glio / & la perse la nocte di scō Lorenzo / che e/ adī 10. dagosto / &
si fu ī fondo: & nō si saluo di epla cosa alcuna / se nō la gente. Era
naue di 300. tonelli: nellaquale andaua tucta la importāza del
la flocta: & come la flocta tucta trauagliasse ī rimediaria / el Ca

plano mi mando che io fussi con la mia naue alla deca isola a
cerchare un buon surgidero / doue potessin surgere tutte le naui:
& come el mio battello stipato con 9. mia marinai fussi in serui-
gio & aluto da ligare le naui / nõ uolle ch' lo leuassi / & ch' mi fussi
sine epso: dicẽdomi ch' nill'euerebbono all'isola: partimi della flo-
cta come mĩmando p' l'isola senza battello / & cõ meno la mera
de mia marinai / & fui alla deca isola / che distauo circha di 4.
leghe: nellaquale trouai un bonissimo porto / doue ben sicura /
mente porcuon surgere tutte le naui: doue aspectai el mio Capit-
tano & la flocta ben 8. giorni / & mai nõ uennono: di modo ch' i-
stauamo molto mal cõrenti / & le genti che meran restate nella
naue / stauano cõ tãta paura / ch' nõ li poteuo cõsolare: et stando
cosi / loctauo giorno uedẽmo uenire una naue pel mare: & di pau-
ra che non el potessi uedere / ci leuãmo con nostre naui / & fumo
ad' ep̃sa / pensando ch' mĩtraeua el mio battello & genteret come
pareggiamo con ep̃sa / dipoi di saltuata ci dix̃e come la capita-
na sera ita i fondo / & come la gente sera saluata / & che el mio
battello & gente restaua con la flocta / laquale sera ita per quel
mare auanti / che ci fu tãta graue tormenta / qual puo pensare
V.M. p' trouarci io o o. leghe discosto da Lisbona / & i g. lfo / &
con pochi gente: tuttaua facẽmo rostro alla fortuna / & anda-
mo tuttaua innanzi: tornãmo alla isola / & fornimoci d'acqua
& di legne con el battello della mia conserua: laquale isola fro-
uãmo disabitata / & teneua molte acque uue & dolci / infiniti
tissimi arbori / piena di tãti uccelli marini & terrestri / che eron
senza numero: et eron tanto semplici / che si lasciãuon piglia-
re con mano: et tanti ne pigliãmo / che carichãmo un battello
di ep̃si animali: nessuno non uedẽmo / saluo Topi molto gran-
di / & Ramarri con due code / & alchuna Serpe: et facta nostra
prouisione / ci dipartimo per el uento infra mezo di & libeccio
perche tenauamo un reggimento del Re / che ci mandaua / che
qualunque delle naui che superdesse della flocta / o del suo Capit-
tano / fussi a tenere nella terra / che el uiaaggio passato. Disco-
rimo in un porto / che li ponẽmo nomẽ la badia di tutti e san-
cti: et piacque a Dio di darcĩ tãto buon tempo / che in 17. gior-
ni fumo a tenere terra in ep̃so / che distaua da l'isola ben 300.
leghe: doue non trouãmo ne il nostro Capitano / ne nessuna al-
tra naue della flocta: nelqual porto aspectãmo ben dua mesi &
4. giorni: & uisto che non ueniua ricapito alcuno / acchordãmo

la conserua / & iocorret la costa: et nauigamo piu inanzi 260. le
ghe / tráo ch' giugnemo i un porto: doue accordamo far una for
teza / & la facemo: & lasciámo i epla 24. huomini christiani / che
ci haueua la mia cōserua / che haueua ricolti della naue capitana
che fera pducta: nelqual porto stēmo ben 4. mesi i fare la forteza
& caricar nōstre naui druerzino: pche nō potauamo andare piu
inanzi / a causa che non tenauamo genti / & mīmancaua molti
apparecchi. Facto tutto q̄sto / accordámo di tornarcene a Por
togallo / che distaui p iluenro infra grēco & tramótano: & laffa
mo li 24. huomini. che restoron nella forteza cō mantenimēto p
sei mesi / & 12. bōbarde / & molte altre armi / & pacificámo tur
ca la gente di terra: dellaquale nōlle facto mentione i q̄sto uia
gio: nō pche nō uedeuamo & pratificámo cō infinita gente di
epla: pche fumo i terra drento ben 30. huomini 40. leghe: doue
uidi tate cose / ch' le lascio di dire / riserbandole alle mie 4. gior
nate. Questa terra sta fuori della linea egnociale alla parte del
lo aultro 18. gradi / & fuori del mantenimento di Lisbōna 37.
gradi / plu all'occidēse secōdo ch' mostrano enostri strumenti. Et
facto tutto q̄sto / ci dispedimo de christiani & della terra: et co
minciámo nōstra nauicatore al nornodeste / che euenio infra
traniótana & grēco / cō proposito dandare a dīritura cō nōstra
nauicatore a questa citra di Lisbōna: et in 77. giorni di poi tãti
trauagli & pericoli entrámo i questo porto adl 18. di Giugno
1404. Dio laudato: doue fumo molto ben riceuti / & fuori do
gni credere: pche tutta la citra ci faceua perduti: pche laltre naui
della flocta tutte seron perdute p la superbia & pazia del nōstro
Capitano / che cōsi pagha Dio la superbia: et al presente mītruo
uò qui in Lisbōna / & non so quello uorra el R e fare di me / che
molto desidero riposarmi. El presente aportatore che e/Benue
nuro di Domenico Benuenuti / dīra a V.M. di mio essere / & di
alcune cose sūsono lasciate di dire per prolixita: perche le ha ui
ste & sentire / Dio sia cō li . lo sono ito stringēdo la let
tera quāto ho potuto: & heffi lasciato a dire molte cose naturali /
a causa di scusare plixia. V.M. mīperdoni: laquale supplico ch'
mirenga nel numero de sua seruitori: & uiraccomando ser An
tonio Vespucci mio fratello / & tutta la casa inia. Resto rogando
Dio / che ui accresca edi della uita: & ch' salzi lo stato di cotesta ex
celsa Rep. & l'hōnore di V.M. & d. Data in Lisbōna adl 4. di
Septembre 1404.

Scruttore Amerigo Vespucci in Lisbōna.

Letter of Amerigo Vespucci
upon the isles newly
found in his
four Voyages.



[Letter of Amerigo Vespucci to Pier
Soderini, Gonfalonier of the Republic
of Florence.]

Woodcut of
Vespucci at a
writing desk

MAGNIFICENT Lord. After humble reverence and due commendations, etc. It may be that your Magnificence will be surprised by my rashness and the affront to your wisdom,¹ in that I should so absurdly bestir myself to write to your Magnificence the present so-prolix letter: knowing [*as I do*] that your Magnificence is continually employed in high councils and affairs concerning the good government of this sublime Republic. And will hold me not only presumptuous, but also idly-meddlesome in setting myself to write things, neither suitable to your station, nor entertaining, and written in barbarous style, and outside of every canon of literature:² but the confidence which I have in your virtues and in the truth of my writing, which are things [*that*] are not found written neither by the ancients nor by modern writers, as your Magnificence will in the sequel perceive, makes me bold.³ The chief cause which moved [*me*] to write to you, was by the request of the present bearer, who is named Benvenuto Benvenuti our Florentine [*fellow citizen*], very much, as it is proven, your Magnificence's

¹ Literally "dared your wisdom" in a barbarous phrase which is meant for "your wisdom thus affronted."

² *Humanità*.

³ Here *usato* is certainly the Spanish *osado*, or the Portuguese *ousado*,

servant, and my very good friend: who happening to be here in this city of Lisbon, begged that I should make communication to your Magnificence of the things seen by me in divers regions of the world, by virtue of four voyages which I have made in discovery of new lands: two by order of the King of Castile,¹ King Don Ferrando VI., across the great gulph of the Ocean-sea towards the west: and the other two by command of the puissant King Don Manuel King of Portugal, towards the south: Telling me that your Magnificence would take pleasure thereof, and that herein he hoped to do you service: wherefore I set me to do it: because I am assured that your Magnificence holds me in the number of your servants, remembering that in the time of our youth I was your friend, and now [*am your*] servant: and [*remembering our*] going to hear the rudiments of grammar under the fair example and instruction of the venerable monk friar of Saint Mark Fra Giorgio Antonio Vespucci: whose counsels and teaching would to God that I had followed: for as saith Petrarch, I should be another man than what I am. Howbeit soever,² I grieve not: because I have ever taken delight in worthy matters: and although these trifles of mine may not be suitable to your virtues, I will say to you as said Pliny to Mæcenas, you were sometime wont to take pleasure in my prattlings: even though your Magnificence be continually busied in public affairs, you will take some hour of relaxation to consume a little time in laughable or amusing things: and as fennel is customarily given atop of delicious viands to fit them for better digestion, so may you, for a relief from your so heavy occupations, order this letter of mine to be read: so that they³ may withdraw you somewhat from the continual anxiety and assiduous reflection upon public affairs: and if I shall be prolix, I crave pardon,⁴ my Magnificent Lord. Your Magnificence shall know that the motive of my coming into this realm of Spain was to traffic in merchandise:

¹ This lack of precision with regard to Ferdinand's title may be compared with similar carelessness on the early maps which refer to America.

² *Quomodo cunque sit.* Vespucci affected a little Latin. ³ "They" for "it."

⁴ *Veniam peto,*

and that I pursued this intent about four years : during which I saw and knew the inconstant shiftings of Fortune : and how she kept changing those frail and transitory benefits : and how at one time she holds man on the summit of the wheel, and at another time drives him back from her, and despoils him of what may be called his borrowed riches : so that, knowing the continuous toil which man undergoes to win them, submitting himself to so many discomforts and risks, I resolved to abandon trade, and to fix my aim upon something more praiseworthy and stable : whence it was that I made preparation for going to see part¹ of the world and its wonders : and herefor the time and place presented themselves most opportunely to me : which was that the King Don Ferrando of Castile being about to despatch four ships to discover new lands towards the west, I was chosen by his Highness to go in that fleet to aid in making discovery : and we set out from the port of Cadiz on the 10² day of May 1497, and took our route through the great gulph of the Ocean-sea : in which voyage we were 18 months [*engaged*] : and discovered much continental land and innumerable islands, and great part of them inhabited : of which there is no mention made by the ancient writers : I believe, because they had no knowledge thereof : for, if I remember well, I have read in some one [*of those writers*] that he considered that this Ocean-sea was an unpeopled sea : and of this opinion was Dante our poet in the xxvi. chapter of the Inferno, where he feigns the death of Ulysses : in which voyage I beheld things of great wondrousness, as your Magnificence shall understand. As I said above, we left the port of Cadiz four consort ships :³ and began our voyage in a direct course to the Fortunate Isles, which are called to-day *la gran Canaria*, which are situated in the Ocean-sea at the extremity of the inhabited west, [*and*] set in the third climate : over which the North Pole has an elevation

¹ *Parte* is used by Vespucci as plural as well as singular, and consequently this means properly "parts" or "various parts," as it appears in the Latin version.

² The Latin version at the end of the *Cosmographiæ Introductio* has "20" instead of "10."

³ *Navi di conserva*.

of 27 and a half degrees¹ beyond their horizon:² and they are 280 leagues distant from this city of Lisbon, by the wind between *mezzo di* and *libeccio*:³ where we remained eight days, taking in provision of water, and wood, and other necessary things: and from here, having said our prayers, we weighed anchor, and gave the sails to the wind, beginning our course to westward, taking one quarter by south-west:⁴ and so we sailed on till at the end of 37⁵ days we reached a land which we deemed to be a continent: which is distant westwardly from the isles of Canary about a thousand leagues beyond the inhabited region⁶ within the torrid zone: for we found the North Pole at an elevation of 16 degrees above its horizon,⁷ and [*it was*] according to the shewing of our instruments, 75 degrees to the west of the isles of Canary: whereat we anchored with our ships a league and a half from land: and we put out our boats freighted with men and arms: we made towards the land, and before we reached it, had sight of a great number of people who were going along the shore: by which we were much rejoiced: and we observed that they were a naked race: they shewed themselves to stand in fear of us: I believe [*it was*] because they saw us clothed and of other appearance [*than their own*]: they all withdrew to a hill, and for whatsoever signals we made to them of peace and of friendliness, they would not come to parley with us: so that, as the night was now coming on, and as the ships were anchored in a dangerous place, being on a rough and shelterless coast, we decided to remove from there the next day, and to go in search of some harbour or bay, where we might place our ships in safety: and we sailed with the *maestrale* wind,⁸ thus running along the coast with the

¹ The Latin has "27½."

² That is, *which are situate at 27½ degrees north latitude.*

³ South-south-west. It is to be remarked that Vespucci always uses the word *wind* to signify the course in which it blows, not the quarter from which it rises.

⁴ West and a quarter by south-west.

⁵ Latin has 27.

⁶ This phrase is merely equivalent to a repetition of *from the Canaries*, these islands having been already designated *the extreme western limit of inhabited land.*

⁷ That is, 16 degrees north latitude. If his computations be correct, we might say that the landfall was on the northern coast of Honduras,

⁸ North-west. Latin has *vento secundum collem.*

land ever in sight, continually in our course observing people along the shore: till after having navigated for two days, we found a place sufficiently secure for the ships, and anchored half a league from land, on which we saw a very great number of people: and this same day we put to land with the boats, and sprang on shore full 40 men in good trim: and still the land's people appeared shy of converse with us, and we were unable to encourage them so much as to make them come to speak with us: and this day we laboured so greatly in giving them of our wares, such as rattles and mirrors, beads,¹ balls, and other trifles, that some of them took confidence and came to discourse with us: and after having made good friends with them, the night coming on, we took our leave of them and returned to the ships: and the next day when the dawn appeared we saw that there were infinite numbers of people upon the beach, and they had their women and children with them: we went ashore, and found that they were all laden with their worldly goods² which are suchlike as, in its [*proper*] place, shall be related: and before we reached the land, many of them jumped into the sea and came swimming to receive us at a bowshot's length [*from the shore*], for they are very great swimmers, with as much confidence as if they had for a long time been acquainted with us: and we were pleased with this their confidence. For so much as we learned of their manner of life and customs, it was that they go entirely naked, as well the men as the women, without covering any shameful part, not otherwise than as they issued from their mother's womb. They are of medium stature, very well proportioned: their flesh is of a colour that verges into red like a lion's mane: and I believe that if they went clothed, they would be as white as we: they have not any hair upon the body, except the hair of the head which is long and black, and especially in the women, whom it renders handsome:

¹ The word is *cente*, supposed to be a misprint for *conte*, an Italianised form of the Spanish *cuentas*. *Spalline* (palline, diminutive of *palle*) is a word not given in the dictionaries. The Latin translator seems to have read the original as *certe cristalline*.

² *Mantenimenti*. The word "all" (*tucte*) is feminine, and probably refers only to the women,

in aspect they are not very good-looking, because they have broad faces, so that they would seem Tartar-like : they let no hair grow on their eyebrows, nor on their eyelids nor elsewhere, except the hair of the head : for they hold hairiness to be a filthy thing : they are very light-footed in walking and in running, as well the men as the women : so that a woman reckes nothing of running a league or two, as many times we saw them do : and herein they have a very great advantage over us Christians : they swim [*with an expertness*] beyond all belief, and the women better than the men : for we have many times found and seen them swimming two leagues out at sea without any thing to rest upon. Their arms are bows and arrows very well made, save that they have no iron nor any other kind of hard metal [*wherewith to tip the arrows*] : and instead of iron they put animals' or fishes' teeth, or a spike of tough wood, with the point hardened by fire : they are sure marksmen, for they hit whatever they aim at : and in some places the women use these bows : they have other weapons, such as fire-hardened spears, and also clubs with knobs, beautifully carved. Warfare is used amongst them, [which they carry on] against people not of their own language, very cruelly, without granting life to any one, except [*to reserve him*] for greater suffering. When they go to war, they take their women with them not that these may fight, but because they carry behind them their worldly goods : for a woman carries on her back for thirty or forty leagues a load which no man could bear : as we have many times seen them do. They are not accustomed to have any Captain, nor do they go in any ordered array, for every one is lord of himself : and the cause of their wars is not for lust of dominion, nor of extending their frontiers, nor for inordinate covetousness, but for some ancient enmity which in by-gone times arose¹ amongst them : and when asked why they made war, they knew not any other reason to give us than that they did so to avenge the death of their ancestors, or of their parents : these people have neither King, nor Lord, nor do they yield obedience to any one, for they live in their own liberty : and how

¹ The expression in the original is *e suta*, an error for *è surta*.

they be stirred up to go to war is [*this*] that when the enemies have slain or captured any of them, his oldest kinsman rises up and goes about the highways haranguing them to go with him and avenge the death of such his kinsman: and so are they stirred up by fellow-feeling: they have no judicial system, nor do they punish the ill-doer: nor does the father, nor the mother chastise the children: and marvellously [*seldom*] or never did we see any dispute among them: in their conversation they appear simple, and [*yet*] are very cunning and acute in that which concerns them:¹ they speak little and in a low tone: they use the same articulations as we, since they form their utterances either with the palate, or with the teeth, or on the lips:² except that they give different names to things. Many are the varieties of tongues: for in every 100 leagues we found a change of language, so that they are not understandable each to the other. The manner of their living is very barbarous, for they eat at no certain hours, and as oftentimes as they will: and it does not matter much to them that the will may come rather at midnight than by day, for they eat at all hours:³ and their repast is [*made*] upon the ground without a table-cloth or any other cover, for they have their meats either in earthen basins which they make therefor, or in the halves of pumpkins: they sleep in certain very large nettings made of cotton,⁴ suspended in the air: and although this their [*fashion of*] sleeping may seem uncomfortable, I say that it is sweet to sleep in those [*nettings*]: and we slept better in them than in quilts. They are a people of neat exterior, and clean of body, because of so continually washing themselves as they do: when, saving your reverence, they evacuate the stomach they do their utmost not to be observed: and as much as in this they are cleanly and bashful, so much the more are

¹ *Che loro cuple.* The Spanish word *cumplir*, with the sense of being important or suitable.

² He means that they have no sounds in their language unknown to European organs of speech, all being either palatals or dentals or labials.

³ The words from "and it does not matter" down to "at all hours" omitted in the Latin.

Bambacia.

they filthy and shameless in making water : since, while standing speaking to us, without turning round or shewing any shame, they let go their nastiness, for in this they have no shame : there is no custom of marriages amongst them : each man takes as many women as he lists : and when he desires to repudiate them, he repudiates them without any imputation of wrong-doing to him, or of disgrace to the woman : for in this the woman has as much liberty as the man : they are not very jealous and are immoderately libidinous, and the women much more so than the men, so that for decency I omit to tell you the artifice they practice to gratify¹ their inordinate lust : they are very prolific women, and do not shirk any work during their pregnancies : and their travails in childbed are so light that, a single day after parturition, they go abroad everywhere, and especially to wash themselves in the rivers, and are [*then*] as sound as fishes : they are so void of affection and cruel, that if they be angry with their husbands they immediately adopt an artificial method by which the embryo is destroyed in the womb, and procure abortion, and they slay an infinite number of creatures by that means : they are women of elegant persons very well proportioned, so that in their bodies there appears no ill-shapen part or limb : and although they go entirely naked, they are fleshy women, and, of their sexual organ, that portion which he who has never seen it may imagine, is not visible, for they conceal with their thighs everything except that part for which nature did not provide, which is, speaking modestly, the pectignone.² In fine, they have no shame of their shameful parts, any more than we have in displaying the nose and the mouth : it is marvellously [*rare*] that you shall see a woman's paps hang low, or her belly fallen in by too much childbearing, or other wrinkles, for they all appear as though they had never brought forth children : they shewed themselves very desirous of having connexion with us Christians. Amongst those people we did not learn that they had any law, nor can they be called Moors nor Jews, and [*they are*] worse than pagans : because we never

¹ In the original, *contar* for *contentare*.

² Bigger bosom, *mons Veneris*,

saw them offer any sacrifice: nor even had they a house of prayer: their manner of living I judge to be Epicurean: their dwellings are in common: and their houses [*are*] made in the style of huts,¹ but strongly made, and constructed with very large trees, and covered over with palm-leaves, secure against storms and winds: and in some places [*they are*] of so great breadth and length, that in one single house we found there were 600 souls: and we saw a village of only thirteen² houses where there were four thousand³ souls: every eight or ten years⁴ they change their place of habitation: and when asked why they did so: [*they said it was*] because of the soil⁵ which, from its filthiness, was already unhealthy and corrupted, and that it bred aches in their bodies, which seemed to us a good reason: their riches consist of birds' plumes of many colours, or of rosaries⁶ which they make from fishbones, or of white or green stones which they put in their cheeks and in their lips and ears, and of many other things which we in no wise value: they use no trade, they neither buy nor sell. In fine, they live and are contented with that which nature gives them. The wealth that we enjoy in this our Europe and elsewhere, such as gold, jewels, pearls, and other riches, they hold as nothing: and although they have them in their own lands, they do not labour to obtain them, nor do they value them. They are liberal in giving, for it is rarely they deny you anything: and on the other hand, free in asking, when they shew themselves your friends: the greatest sign of friendship which they shew you is that they give you their wives and their daughters, and a father or a mother deems himself [*or herself*] highly honored, when they bring you a daughter, even though she be a young virgin, if you sleep with her: and hereunto they use every expression of friendship. When they die,

¹ Waldseemüller has "bell-towers," having misread *campane* for *capanne*, huts or cabins.

² Latin has *eight*.

³ Latin, *ten thousand*.

⁴ Latin has *seven* for *ten*.

⁵ *Suolo*, the ground or flooring, which Waldseemüller absurdly misread *sole*, the sun. Varnhagen, no less strangely, translates it "the atmosphere."

⁶ *Paternostri*, rosaries or chaplets of beads used by illiterate Catholics.

they use divers manners of obsequies, and some they bury with water and victuals at their heads: thinking that they shall have [*whereof*] to eat: they have not nor do they use ceremonies of torches¹ nor of lamentation. In some other places they use the most barbarous and inhuman burial,² which is that when a suffering or infirm [*person*] is as it were at the last pass of death, his kinsmen carry him into a large forest, and attach one of those nets of theirs, in which they sleep, to two trees, and then put him in it, and dance around him for a whole day: and when the night comes on they place at his bolster, water with other victuals, so that he may be able to subsist for four or six days: and then they leave him alone and return to the village: and if the sick man helps himself, and eats, and drinks, and survives, he returns to the village, and his [*friends*] receive him with ceremony: but few are they who escape: without receiving any further visit they die, and that is their sepulture: and they have many other customs which for prolixity are not related. They use in their sicknesses various forms of medicines,³ so different from ours that we marvelled how any one escaped: for many times I saw that with a man sick of fever, when it heightened upon him, they bathed him from head to foot with a large quantity of cold water: then they lit a great fire around him, making him turn and turn again every two hours, until they tired him and left him to sleep, and many were [*thus*] cured: with this they make much use of dieting, for they remain three days without eating, and also of blood-letting, but not from the arm, only from the thighs and the loins and the calf of the leg: also they provoke vomiting with their herbs which are put into the mouth: and they use many other remedies which it would be long to relate: they are much vitiated in the phlegm and in the blood because of their food which consists chiefly of roots of herbs, and fruits and fish: they have no seed of wheat nor other grain: and for their ordinary use and feeding, they have a root

¹ *Lumi*, lights, tapers, candles, as in Catholic ceremonies.

² *Interramento* is the word, but he means only "funeral rite."

³ That is, "medical treatment."

of a tree, from which they make flour, tolerably good, and they call it Iuca, and [*there are*] others who call it Cazabi, and others Ignami:¹ they eat little flesh except human flesh: for your Magnificence must know that herein they are so inhuman that they outdo every custom [*even*] of beasts: for they eat all their enemies whom they kill or capture, as well females as males, with so much savagery, that [*merely*] to relate it appears a horrible thing: how much more so to see it, as, infinite times and in many places, it was my hap to see it: and they wondered to hear us say that we did not eat our enemies: and this your Magnificence may take for certain, that their other barbarous customs are such that expression is too weak for the reality: and as in these four voyages I have seen so many things diverse from our customs, I prepared to write a common-place-book² which I name LE QUATTRO GIORNATE: in which I have set down the greater part of the things which I saw, sufficiently in detail, so far as my feeble wit has allowed me: which I have not yet published, because I have so ill a taste for my own things that I do not relish those which I have written, notwithstanding that many encourage me to publish it: therein everything will be seen in detail: so that I shall not enlarge further in this chapter: as in the course of the letter we shall come to many other things which are particular: let this suffice for the general. At this beginning, we saw nothing in the land of much profit, except some show of gold: I believe the cause of it was that we did not know the language: but in so far as concerns the situation and condition of the land, it could not be better: we decided to leave that place, and to go further on, continuously coasting the shore: upon which we made frequent descents, and held converse with a great number of people: and after some days we went into a harbour where we underwent very great danger: and it pleased the Holy Ghost to save us: and it was in this wise. We landed in a harbour, where we found a village built like Venice upon the water: there were about 44 large dwellings in the form

¹ *Ignami* is the Portuguese *inhame*, African *yam*.

² *Zibaldone*, miscellany, *omnium-gatherum*.

of huts erected upon very thick piles,¹ and they had their doors or entrances in the style of drawbridges: and from each house one could pass through all, by means of the drawbridges which stretched from house to house: and when the people thereof had seen us, they appeared to be afraid of us, and immediately drew up all the bridges: and while we were looking at this strange action, we saw coming across the sea about 22 canoes, which are a kind of boats of theirs, constructed from a single tree: which came towards our boats, as if they had been surprised by our appearance and clothes, and kept wide of us: and thus remaining, we made signals to them that they should approach us, encouraging them with every token of friendliness: and seeing that they did not come, we went to them, and they did not stay for us, but made to the land, and, by signs, told us to wait, and that they would soon return: and they went to a hill in the back-ground,² and did not delay long: when they returned, they led with them 16 of their girls, and entered with these into their canoes, and came to the boats: and in each boat they put 4 of the girls. How greatly we marvelled at this behaviour your Magnificence can imagine, and they placed themselves with their canoes among our boats, coming to speak with us: inso-much that we deemed it a mark of friendliness: and while thus engaged, we beheld a great number of people advance swimming towards us across the sea, who came from the houses: and as if they were approaching us without any apprehension: just then there appeared at the doors of the houses certain old women, uttering very loud cries and tearing their hair to exhibit grief: whereby they made us suspicious, and we each betook ourselves to arms: and instantly the girls whom we had in the boats, threw themselves into the sea, and the men of the canoes drew away from us, and began with their bows to shoot arrows at us: and those who were swimming each carried a lance held, as covertly as they could, beneath the water: so that, recognizing

¹ Waldseemüller has 20 instead of 44, and repeats his error of "bell-towers" for "huts."

² Varnhagen says "went straight to land," evidently mistaking *drieto* (*dietro*) for *dricto*, and ignoring *monte*.

the treachery, we engaged with them, not merely to defend ourselves, but to attack them vigorously, and we overturned with our boats many of their skiffs or canoes, for so they call them, we made a slaughter [*of them*], and they all flung themselves into the water to swim, leaving their canoes abandoned, with considerable loss on their side, they went swimming away to the shore: there were killed of them about 15 or 20, and many were left wounded: of ours 5 were wounded, and all, by the grace of God, escaped [*death*]: we captured two of the girls and two men: and we proceeded to their houses, and entered therein, and in them all we found nothing but two old women and a sick man: we took away from them many things, but of small value: and we would not burn their houses, because it seemed to us [*as though that would be*] a burden upon our conscience: and we returned to our boats with five prisoners: and betook ourselves to the ships, and put a pair of irons on the feet of each of the captives, except the girls: and when the night came on, the two girls and one of the men escaped in the most subtle manner possible: and next day we decided to quit that harbour and go further onwards: we proceeded continuously skirting the coast, [*until*] we had sight of another tribe distant perhaps some 80 leagues from the former tribe: and we found them very different in speech and customs: we resolved to cast anchor, and went ashore with the boats, and we saw on the beach a great number of people amounting probably to 4000 souls: and when we had reached the shore, they did not stay for us, and betook themselves to flight through the forests, abandoning their things: we jumped on land, and took a pathway that led to the forest: and at the distance of a bow-shot we found their tents, where they had made very large fires, and two [*of them*] were cooking their victuals, and roasting several animals, and fish of many kinds: where we saw that they were roasting a certain animal which seemed to be a serpent, save that it had no wings,¹ and was in its appearance so foul

¹ *Alia*—wings or fins. Vespucci must have been thinking of the fabulous dragon.

that we marvelled much at its loathsomeness: Thus went we on through their houses, or rather tents, and found many of those serpents alive, and they were tied by the feet and had a cord around their snouts, so that they could not open their mouths, as is done [*in Europe*] with mastiff-dogs so that they may not bite: they were of such savage aspect that none of us dared to take one away, thinking that they were poisonous: they are of the bigness of a kid, and in length an ell and a half:¹ their feet are long and thick, and armed with big claws: they have a hard skin, and are of various colours: they have the muzzle and aspect of a serpent: and from their snouts there rises a crest like a saw which extends along the middle of the back as far as the tip of the tail: in fine we deemed them to be serpents and venomous, and [*yet*] they were used as food: we found that [*those people*] made bread out of little fishes which they took from the sea, first boiling them, [*then*] pounding them, and making thereof a paste, or bread, and they baked them on the glowing embers: thus did they eat them: we tried it, and found that it was good: they had so many other kinds of eatables, and especially of fruits and roots, that it would be a large matter to describe them in detail: and seeing that the people did not return, we decided not to touch nor take away anything of theirs, so as better to reassure them: and we left in the tents for them many of our things, placed where they should see them, and returned by night to our ships: and the next day, when it was light, we saw on the beach an infinite number of people: and we landed: and although they appeared timorous towards us, they took courage nevertheless to hold converse with us, giving us whatever we asked of them: and shewing themselves very friendly towards us, they told us that those were their dwellings, and that they had come hither for the purpose of fishing: and they begged that we would visit their dwellings and villages, because they desired to receive us as friends: and they engaged in such friendship because of the two captured men whom we had with us, as these were their enemies: insomuch

¹ *Braccio uno e mezo.* This animal was the iguana.

that, in view of such importunity on their part, holding a council, we determined that 28 of us Christians in good array should go with them, and in the firm resolve to die if it should be necessary: and after we had been here some three days, we went with them inland: and at three leagues from the coast we came to a village of many people and few houses, for there were no more than nine [*of these*]: where we were received with such and so many barbarous ceremonies that the pen suffices not to write them down: for there were dances, and songs, and lamentations mingled with rejoicing, and great quantities of food: and here we remained the night: where they offered us their women, so that we were unable to withstand them: and after having been here that night and half the next day, so great was the number of people who came wondering to behold us that they were beyond counting: and the most aged begged us to go with them to other villages which were further inland, making display of doing us the greatest honour: wherefore we decided to go: and it would be impossible to tell you how much honour they did us: and we went to several villages, so that we were nine days journeying, so that our Christians¹ who had remained with the ships were already apprehensive concerning us: and when we were about 18 leagues in the interior of the land, we resolved to return to the ships: and on our way back, such was the number of people, as well men as women, that came with us as far as the sea, that it was a wondrous thing: and if any of us became weary of the march, they carried us in their nets very refreshingly: and in crossing the rivers, which are many and very large, they passed us over by skilful means so securely that we ran no danger whatever, and many of them came laden with the things which they had given us, which consisted of their sleeping-nets, and very rich feathers, many bows and arrows, innumerable popinjays² of divers colours: and others brought with them loads of their household goods, and of animals: but a greater marvel will I tell you, that, when we had to cross a river, he deemed himself lucky who was able to carry us on his back: and when we reached the

¹ *I.e.*, comrades.

² *Pappagalli*, perroquets.

sea, our boats having arrived, we entered into them: and so great was the struggle which they made to get into our boats, and to come to see our ships, that we marvelled [*thereat*]: and in our boats we took as many of them as we could, and made our way to the ships, and so many [*others*] came swimming that we found ourselves embarrassed in seeing so many people in the ships, for there were over a thousand persons all naked and unarmed: they were amazed by our [*nautical*] gear and contrivances, and the size of the ships: and with them there occurred to us a very laughable affair, which was that we decided to fire off some of our great guns,¹ and when the explosion took place, most of them through fear cast themselves [*into the sea*] to swim, not otherwise than frogs on the margins of a pond, when they see something that frightens them, will jump into the water, just so did those people: and those who remained in the ships were so terrified that we regretted our action: however we reassured them by telling them that with those arms we slew our enemies: and when they had amused themselves in the ships the whole day, we told them to go away because we desired to depart that night, and so separating from us with much friendship and love, they went away to land. Amongst that people and in their land, I knew and beheld so many of their customs and ways of living, that I do not care to enlarge upon them: for Your Magnificence must know that in each of my voyages I have noted the most wonderful things, and I have indited it all in a volume after the manner of a geography: and I intitle it LE QUATTRO GIORNATE: in which work the things are comprised in detail, and as yet there is no copy of it given out, as it is necessary for me to revise it.² This land is very populous, and full of inhabitants, and of numberless rivers, [*and*] animals: few [*of which*] resemble ours, excepting lions, panthers, stags, pigs, goats, and deer:³ and even these have some dissimilarities of form: they have no horses nor

¹ *Artiglierie.*

² *Conferirla.*

³ In the text the colon follows "few," which alters the sense considerably, and makes the statement run thus, "Numberless rivers and few animals: they resemble ours," &c.; but the real intention is evidently better conveyed by adding the words in brackets, and displacing the colon in question.

mules, nor, saving your reverence, asses nor dogs, nor any kind of sheep or oxen : but so numerous are the other animals which they have—and all are savage, and of none do they make use for their service—that they could not be counted. What shall we say of their different birds ? which are so numerous, and of so many kinds, and of such various-coloured plumages, that it is a marvel to behold them. The land is very pleasant and fruitful, full of immense woods and forests : and it is always green, for the foliage never drops off. The fruits are so many that they are numberless and entirely different from ours. This land is within the torrid zone, close to or just under the parallel which marks the Tropic of Cancer : where the pole of the horizon has an elevation of 23 degrees, at the extremity of the second climate.¹ Many tribes came to see us, and wondered at our faces and our whiteness : and they asked us whence we came : and we gave them to understand that we had come from heaven, and that we were going to see the world, and they believed it. In this land we placed baptismal fonts, and an infinite [*number of*] people were baptized, and they called us in their language Carabi, which means men of great wisdom. We took our departure from that port : and the province is called Lariab : and we navigated along the coast, always in sight of land, until we had run 870 leagues of it, still going in the direction of the maestrale [*north-west*] making in our course many halts, and holding intercourse with many peoples : and in several places we obtained gold by barter but not much in quantity, for we had done enough in discovering the land and learning that they had gold. We had now been thirteen months on the voyage : and the vessels and the tackling were already much damaged, and the men worn out by fatigue : we decided by general council to haul our ships on land and examine them for the purpose of stanching leaks,² as they made much water, and of caulking and tarring them afresh, and [*then*] returning towards Spain : and when we came to this determination, we were close to a harbour the best in the world : into which

¹ That is, 23 degrees north latitude ; possibly referring to the coast near Tampico (Mexico).

² *Stancharle* (? *stagnarle*).

we entered with our vessels: where we found an immense number of people: who received us with much friendliness: and on the shore we made a bastion¹ with our boats and with barrels and casks, and our artillery, which commanded every point:² and our ships having been unloaded and lightened,³ we drew them upon land, and repaired them in everything that was needful: and the land's people gave us very great assistance: and continually furnished us with their victuals: so that in this port we tasted little of our own, which suited our game well:⁴ for the stock of provisions which we had for our return-passage was little and of sorry kind: where [*i.e., there*] we remained 37 days: and went many times to their villages, where they paid us the greatest honour: and [*now*] desiring to depart upon our voyage, they made complaint to us how at certain times of the year there came from over the sea to this their land, a race of people very cruel, and enemies of theirs: and by means of treachery or of violence slew many of them, and ate them: and some they made captives, and carried them away to their houses, or country: and how they could scarcely contrive to defend themselves from them, making signs to us that [*those*] were an island-people and lived out in the sea about a hundred leagues away: and so piteously did they tell us this that we believed them: and we promised to avenge them of so much wrong: and they remained overjoyed herewith: and many of them offered to come along with us, but we did not wish to take them for many reasons, save that we took seven of them, on condition that they should come [*i.e., return home*] afterwards in canoes because we did not desire to be obliged to take them back to their country: and they were contented: and so we departed from those people, leaving them very friendly towards us: and having repaired our ships, and

¹ Fort or barricade. The Latin misreads it "a new boat."

² *Che giocavano per tucto.*

³ *Allogiate* is slurred over by the Latin and Varnhagen. I take it to be intended for *allegiate*, and this to be an old form, corresponding to the French *alléger*, of *allegierite* or *alleviate*: lightened, eased.

⁴ *Che ci feciono buon giuoco.*

sailing for seven days out to sea between north-east and east: and at the end of the seven days we came upon the islands, which were many, some [*of them*] inhabited, and others deserted: and we anchored at one of them: where we saw a numerous people who called it Iti: and having manned our boats with strong crews, and [*taken*] three guns in each, we made for land: where we found [*assembled*] about 400 men, and many women, and all naked like the former [*peoples*]. They were of good bodily presence, and seemed right warlike men: for they were armed with their weapons, which are bows, arrows, and lances: and most of them had square wooden targets: and bore them in such wise that they did not impede the drawing of the bow: and when we had come with our boats to about a bowshot of the land, they all sprang into the water to shoot their arrows at us and to prevent us from leaping upon shore: and they all had their bodies painted of various colours, and [*were*] plumed with feathers: and the interpreters¹ who were with us told us that when [*those*] displayed themselves so painted and plumed, it was to betoken that they wanted to fight: and so much did they persist in preventing us from landing, that we were compelled to play with our artillery: and when they heard the explosion, and saw some of their number fall dead, they all drew back to the land: wherefore, forming our Council, we resolved that 42 of our men should spring on shore, and, if they waited for us, fight them: thus having leaped to land with our weapons, they advanced towards us, and we fought for about an hour, but we had little advantage of them, except that our arbalasters and gunners killed some of them, and they wounded certain of our men: and this was because they did not stand to receive us within reach of lance-thrust or sword-blow: and so much vigour did we put forth at last, that we came to sword-play, and when they tasted our weapons, they betook themselves to flight through the mountains and the forests, and left us conquerors of the field with many of them dead and a good number wounded: and for

¹ *Le lingue*, a Portuguese idiom.

that day we took no other pains to pursue them, because we were very weary, and we returned to our ships, with so much gladness on the part of the seven men who had come with us that they could not contain themselves [*for joy*]: and when the next day arrived, we beheld coming across the land a great number of people, with signals of battle, continually sounding horns, and various other instruments which they use in their wars: and all [*of them*] painted and feathered, so that it was a very strange sight to behold them: wherefore all the ships held council, and it was resolved that since this people desired hostility with us, we should proceed to encounter them and try by every means to make them friends: in case they would not have our friendship, that we should treat them as foes, and so many of them as we might be able to capture should all be our slaves: and having armed ourselves as best we could, we advanced towards the shore, and they sought not to hinder us from landing, I believe from fear of the cannons: and we jumped on land, 57 men in four squadrons, each one [*consisting of*] a captain and his company: and we came to blows with them: and after a long battle [*in which*] many of them [*were*] slain, we put them to flight, and pursued them to a village, having made about 250 of them captives, and we burnt the village, and returned to our ships with victory and 250 prisoners¹ leaving many of them dead and wounded, and of ours there were no more than one killed, and 22 wounded, who all escaped [*i.e., recovered*], God be thanked. We arranged our departure, and the seven men, of whom five were wounded, took an island-canoe, and, with seven prisoners that we gave them,

¹ Varnhagen thought we ought to read "25" (not 250), like the Latin version, and to correct the figures "222" lower down into "22," in both the text and the Latin. But he was in error, having omitted to observe that the figures "250" occur *twice*. He evidently looked more on the Latin than the text. Besides, a capture of only 25 savages would be very little indeed for the European force to make, whether we reckon it at 57 men or 228 men, as he and the Latinizer read it (four squadrons, each of 57 men, with its captain), especially when they had entered into hostilities with the express intention of making captives. [He afterwards corrected himself.]

four women and three men, returned to their [*own*] country full of gladness, wondering at our strength: and we thereupon made sail for Spain with 222 captive slaves: and reached the port of Cadiz on the 15 day of October 1498, where we were well received and sold our slaves. Such is what befel me, most noteworthy, in this my first voyage.

ENDS THE FIRST VOYAGE.

BEGINS THE SECOND.





Second Voyage.

[Woodcut of two Ships at Sea.]

AS for the second voyage, and what I saw in it most worthy of record, it is as follows here. We started from the port of Cadiz, three ships in company, on the 16 day of May 1499¹ and began our voyage in a direct course to the islands of Cape Verde, passing in sight of the island of Great Canary: and sailed on until we dropped anchor at an island which is called the Island of Fire:² and having here taken in our provision of water and firewood, we resumed our voyage towards the south-west:³ and in 44 days⁴ we touched upon a new land: and we deemed that it was [*part of*] a continent, and continuous with that [*land*] of which mention is made above:⁵ the which [*new land*] is situated within the Torrid Zone, and southward of the equinoctial line: above which the southern pole rises to the elevation of 5 degrees, beyond every climate:⁶ and it is 500 leagues distant south-westwardly⁷ from the said islands:⁸ and we found that the days were equal with the nights: for we reached it on the 27 day of June, when

¹ 1499. Latin has 1489, by error. ² *Lisola del fuoco.* ³ *Per illibeccio.*

⁴ The Latin has "19 days," and so has Varnhagen, notwithstanding that his *text* is correct.

⁵ *I.e.*, in the preceding relation of the first voyage. The Latin makes a blunder here, and says, "opposite to," instead of "continuous with." The translator must have read "*contraria*" for "*continua*."

⁶ This means, simply, at 5 degrees south latitude.

⁷ *Per el vento libeccio.*

⁸ *I.e.*, the Canaries.

the sun is nigh the Tropic of Cancer : which land we found to be all overflowed with water and full of very large rivers.¹ As yet² we saw no people : we brought our ships to anchor and put out our boats : in them we pulled to the land, and as I have said, we found it full of the largest rivers and inundated by very great floods which we met with : and we attempted it in many places to see if we could enter therein : and because of the great floods poured by the rivers, however strenuously we strove, we could find no spot that was not inundated : we observed on the waters many tokens that the land was inhabited : and seeing that in this quarter we could not enter it, we decided to return to the ships and to attempt landing in another place : and we weighed our anchors, and sailed east-south-east,³ always coasting the shore which trended in that direction, and in a space of 40 leagues we made attempts to land in several places : and it was all lost time : we found on that coast the sea-currents so strong that they did not allow us to navigate, and they all ran from south-east to north-west : consequently, seeing so many impediments to our navigation, we held a council, and decided to turn our course to the north-west : and we sailed along the land till we arrived at a very fine port : which was formed by a large island that was situated at the mouth, inside of which there was a bay, very deeply indented : and while sailing by the side of the island to enter into the harbour, we beheld many people : and rejoicing thereat, we directed our vessels thither, so as to drop anchor where we saw the people, being probably [*then*] about four leagues away to seaward from them :⁴ and proceeding thus we had sight of a canoe that was coming from the high sea : in which there were coming many persons : and we resolved to seize it :⁵ and we turned our vessels round to meet it, navigating

¹ Varnhagen inserts here (from the Latin) a statement about the greenness of the land, and that it was full of large trees ; which does not at all appear in the text.

² *In questo principio.*

³ *Infra levante e sciloccho.*

⁴ There is some confusion here ; they could hardly have been able to see a crowd of people at four leagues' distance.

⁵ *Haverla alla mano.*

in such order that we should not lose it : and sailing towards it with a brisk breeze,¹ we observed that they were at a stand-still, with their oars lifted, I believe in wonder at our ships : and when they perceived that we were advancing to approach them, they dipped their oars in the water and began to row towards the land : and as in our company there was a caravel of 45 tons, a very quick sailor, she took station to windward² of the canoe : and when it seemed to be time to bear down upon it, [*the caravel*] shook out³ full sail and made for [*the canoe*] and we likewise : and when the caravel came abreast of it and did not seek to board [*the canoe*], she passed by, and then stood still against the wind : and when they saw themselves at a vantage, they began to struggle hard with their oars to escape : and we, who had our boats already astern manned with good crews, thinking that they would take it [*the canoe*], and they laboured for more than two hours, and at last, if the little caravel had not tacked again upon them, we should have lost it [*the canoe*] : and when they found themselves hemmed in by the caravel and the boats, they all flung themselves into the sea, probably some 70 men [*in number*]:⁴ and they were at a distance of about two leagues from land : and following them with our boats, the whole day, we were unable to take more than two of them, for, certain it was, all the others reached the land in safety : and in the canoe there remained four boys : who were not of their tribe : for they brought them as captives from another land : and they had castrated them, for they were all without the virile member, and had the wound still fresh : whereat we marvelled much : and being taken into the ships they told us by signs that [*the men of the canoe*] had castrated them in order to eat them : and we learned that those were a people who are called Camballi, very savage, who ate human flesh. Towing the canoe astern, we made in our ships for the land and anchored at *the* [*distance of*] half a league : and as we saw great numbers of people on the shore, we rowed to the land in our boats, taking with us the two men we had captured : and having landed, all

¹ *Fresco tempo.*³ *Allargho li apparechi.*² *Barlovento.*⁴ Latin has "20 men,"

the people fled away, and betook themselves to the forests: and we let go one of the [two] men, giving him several little bells,¹ and [indicating] that we desired to be their friends: which he [whom] we sent to them effected very well, and brought with him all the tribe, who were about 400 men and many women: who came without any weapons to where we were with our boats: and having made good friendship with them, we restored to them the second captive, and sent to the ships for their canoe and gave it back to them. This canoe was 26 paces long, and two ells² broad, and entirely hollowed out of a single tree, and very elaborately made; and when they had docked it in a river and put it in a safe place, they all fled away, and would no further hold intercourse with us, which seemed to us a quite barbarous action, so that we deemed them a people of little faith and ill condition. With them we saw some little gold which they had in their ears. We departed thence, and made our way to the inner part of the bay:³ where we found such a multitude of people, that it was marvellous: with whom on landing we made a friendship: and many of us went with them to their villages, very safely, and well-received. In this place we obtained⁴ 150 pearls which they gave us in exchange for a little bell, and some little gold which they gave us for nothing:⁵ and in this land we found that they drank a wine made of their fruits and grain, in the manner of beer, both white and red: and the best was made of *myrobalans*,⁶ and was very good: and they ate infinite numbers of these, it being then the season for them. It is a very good fruit, pleasant to the taste, and healthful to the body. The soil abounds greatly with everything they need for subsistence, and the people [were] of polite behaviour and the most pacific we had

¹ *Sonagli*, little bells or rattles.

² *Braccia*.

³ Instead of the simple statement, "and made our way," &c., the Latin inserts "having voyaged along that coast for about eighty leagues we came to a safe harbour," which is absurd, but has apparently influenced Varnhagen, who evidently made the mistake of incautiously referring sometimes to the Latin only and sometimes to the Italian text, thus failing to see all the discrepancies.

⁴ *Rischattammo*. The Latin has 500, instead of 150.

⁵ *Di gratia*.

⁶ *Mirabolani*.

as yet met with. We remained in this harbour for seventeen days with much pleasure : and every day fresh people, from the interior of the country, came to see us, wondering at our appearance and whiteness, and our clothing and arms, and at the shape and great size of the ships. From those people we had information of a tribe that lived further to the west of them, who were their enemies, who had an infinite quantity of pearls : and that those [pearls] which they [our friends] had were what they had taken from them [the enemies] in their wars : and they told us how they fished for them, and in what manner they [the pearls] were produced, and we found that they spoke with truth, as Your Magnificence shall hear. We departed from this harbour and navigated along the coast : on which we continually saw clouds of smoke¹ arising, with people on the beach : and at the end of several days we came to anchor in a harbour, for the purpose of repairing one of our ships, which had sprung a great leak :² where we found that there was a large population : with whom we were not able, neither by force nor for love, to obtain any conversation whatever : and when we went on land, they struggled fiercely to prevent us from doing so : and when they could hold out no longer, they fled through the forests and did not await us. Finding them so barbarous, we went away from hence : and proceeding on our voyage we had sight of an island distant 15 leagues out to sea from the [main-] land : and we decided on going to see if it were inhabited. We found therein the most brutish and loathsome people that were ever seen, and they were on this wise. In behaviour and looks, they were very repulsive : and they all had their cheeks swollen out with a green herb inside, which they were constantly chewing like beasts, so that they could scarcely utter speech : and each one had [suspended] upon his neck, two dried gourds, one of which was full of that herb which they kept in their mouths, and the other [full] of a white flour, which looked like powdered chalk, and from time to time, with a small stick which they kept moistening in their mouths, they dipped it into the flour and then put it into

¹ *Fumalte*, by error for *fumate*. Varnhagen has transcribed *fumatte*.

² *Faceva molta acqua*.

their mouths inside both cheeks, thus mixing with flour the herb which they had in their mouths: and this they did very frequently: and marvelling at such a thing, we were unable to comprehend this secret, nor with what object they acted thus. These people when they saw us, came to us as familiarly as if we had been united with them in friendship: going with them along the beach, talking, and desirous of drinking fresh water, they made signs to us that they had none, and offered us some of that herb and flour of theirs, so that we concluded by inference that this island was poor in water, and that it was to preserve themselves against thirst they kept that herb in their mouths, and the flour for the same [*reason*]. We went through the island for a day and a half without ever finding any flowing water: and we observed that the water which they drank was of a dew which fell by night on certain leaves that looked like asses' ears, and [*which*] became full of water, and hereof they drank: it was most excellent water: and [*i.e., but*] they had not those leaves in many places. They had no form of victuals, nor roots, as on the mainland: and they subsisted on fish which they took in the sea; and of these they had very great abundance, and they were most expert fishermen: and they presented to us many turtles, and many very excellent fish of great size: their women did not use to keep the herb in their mouths like the men, but all [*the women*] carried a gourd with water and drank thereof. They had no villages, neither of houses nor huts, save that they dwelt underneath arbours, which protected them from the sun, and not from the water; for I believe it rained very seldom in that island: when they were at sea fishing, they all had a leaf of great size and so broad, that they were quite in shadow beneath it, and they used to fix it in the ground: and as the sun revolved so did they turn the leaf: and in this manner they protected themselves from the sun. The island contains many animals of various kinds: and they drink marsh-water: and seeing that they had nothing profitable [*for us*] we departed, and took our course to another island: and we found [*afterwards*] that a race of very great stature dwelt therein: we then landed to see if we found [*could find*] fresh water: and imagining that the island was

not inhabited because we saw no people, going along the shore we beheld very large footprints of men on the sand: and we judged, if their other members were of corresponding size, that they must be very big men: and proceeding onwards, we came upon a pathway which led to the interior of the land: and nine of us agreed: and concluded that the island being small could not contain within itself many people: and thereupon we went onward through it, to see what manner of people they were: and after we had gone for about a league, we beheld in a valley five of their huts, which appeared uninhabited: and we made our way to them and found only five women, two old ones and three girls, so lofty in stature that we gazed at them in astonishment: and when they saw us, so much terror overcame them that they had not even spirit to flee away: and the two old women began to invite us with words, bringing us many things to eat, and they put us in a hut: and they were in stature taller than a tall man, so that they would be quite as big of body as was Francesco degli Albizi, but better proportioned: insomuch that we were all of a mind to take away the three girls from them by force: and to carry them to Castile as a prodigy: and while thus discoursing, there began to enter through the door of the hut full 36 men much bigger than the women: men so well built that it was a famous sight to see them: who put us in such uneasiness that we would much rather have been in our ships than in the company of such people. They carried very large bows and arrows, with large knobbed clubs: and they spoke among themselves in such a tone as though they meant to lay hands upon us: seeing that we were in such danger, we debated of various plans among ourselves: some [*of us*] said that we ought to attack immediately in the house: and others that it were better on the open ground [*outside*]: and others who said that we ought not to begin the quarrel until we should see what they meant to do: and we agreed to go forth from the hut and to make our way slyly towards the ships: and so we did: and having taken our way we returned to the ships: those [*savages*] however came following behind us, always at the distance of a stone's throw, speaking amongst themselves: I believe that they were no less afraid of

us, than we were of them : because we halted sometimes, and they did the same without approaching nearer, until we reached the shore where the boats were awaiting us : and we entered into them : and when we were at some distance, they danced about and shot many arrows at us : but we had little dread of them now : we fired two gunshots at them, more to terrify them than to do any hurt : and at the explosion they all fled inwards :¹ and so we departed from them, having as it seemed to us escaped from a perilous day's work. They went entirely naked like the others. I call that island, the Isle of Giants, because of their great size : and we proceeded onward still skirting the coast on which it befel us many times to have to fight them, as they sought not to allow us to take anything from the land : and since it was our desire to return now to Castile, as we had been about a year at sea, and had [*but*] a small stock of provisions [*remaining*], and that little damaged by reason of the great heats that we endured : because from the time when we started for the isles of Cape Verde till now, we had continually navigated in the torrid zone, and twice crossed the equinoctial line : for as I have said above we had gone to 5 degrees below it southwardly :² and here we were at 15 degrees north of it.³ Being in this mind, it pleased the Holy Ghost to give us some relief for so much travail : which was, that while we were seeking a harbour wherein to repair our vessels, we met with a nation which received us with great friendliness : and we found that they had a great abundance of very fine oriental pearls : with whom we stayed for 47 days : and we bought from them 119 marks⁴ of pearls for very little merchandize : for I believe they did not cost us the value of forty ducats : since that which we gave them was nothing but little bells and looking-glasses and beads, *dieci-palle*,⁵ and sheets of tin, indeed, for a single little bell a man gave as many pearls as

¹ *Al monte*. Upwards, or to the further end.

² Cape St. Roque.

³ A little north of Caracas, probably 12 degrees (not 15).

⁴ *Marchi, marco*—a weight of eight ounces.

⁵ *Conte, dieci palle et foglie di octone*. *Dieci palle* must be some sort of balls or playing-marbles, perhaps the same as the *spalline* of the first voyage.

he had. From them [*the natives*] we learned how and where they fished for them [*the pearls*] : and they gave us many [*of the*] oysters in which they grew : we bought [*also*] an oyster in which 130 pearls were growing, and others with less : The Queen took ¹ from me that with the 130 : and others I took care she should not see. And Your Magnificence must know that unless the pearls are matured, and drop out of themselves, they do not last : because they perish quickly : and of this I have had actual experience : when they are mature, they lie within the shell detached and set in the flesh : ² and these ones are good : whatsoever bad ones they had, though the most of them were rough and ill-formed, still they were worth good money : because the mark sold for ³ : and at the end of 47 days we quitted the people, leaving them very friendly towards us. We departed, and through the necessity of our victualling we made for the island of Antiglia ⁴ which is the same that Christophal Colombo discovered several years ago : where we took in much store of provision : and remained two months and 17 days : ⁵ where we underwent many perils and troubles with the very Christians who were in this island along with Colombo : ⁶ I believe through envy : but, in order not to be prolix, I refrain from narrating them. We departed from the said island on the 22 day of July : and we navigated during a month and a half : and entered into the port of Cadiz, which was on the 8 day of September, by daylight, my second voyage : God [*be*] praised.

ENDED THE SECOND VOYAGE.

BEGINS THE THIRD.

¹ From "the Queen took" down to "she should not see" omitted in Latin.

² The text is obscure ; the Latin is explicatory, and I presume correct, in its account of the nature of pearls.

³ A blank in the text. From "good" to "sold for" omitted in Latin.

⁴ Hispaniola.

⁵ The Latin "2 months and 2 days."

⁶ "Along with Columbus," omitted in Latin and not noted by Varnhagen.



Third Voyage.

[Woodcut of a Ship at Sea.]

BEING afterwards in Seville, resting myself from so many travails that I had in those two voyages undergone, and purposing to return to the land of the pearls: when Fortune not contented with my labours, for I know not how it came into the mind of this most serene King Don Manuel of Portugal, to wish to employ me: and being in Seville without any thought of coming to Portugal, there comes to me a messenger with a letter of his royal crown,¹ which desired me to come to Lisbon to speak with his Highness, promising to give me recompense. I was not of opinion that I should come: I sent away the messenger, saying that I was ill in health, and that when I should be well and his Highness still desired to employ me, that I would do whatever he should command me. And seeing that he could not have me, he decided to send for me [*i.e., to fetch me*] Giuliano di Bartholomeo del Giocondo, residing here in Lisbon, with a commission to bring me by whatever means. The said Giuliano came to Seville: through whose coming and entreaty I was compelled to come:² but my coming was regarded with ill-favour by so many as knew me: because I quitted Castile where honour had been done me, and the King kept me in good

¹ *I.e.*, an official letter from the Crown.

² He means "go," and in the next line "going," but was led to say "come" and "coming" from the consciousness that he was writing his letter in Lisbon.

ownership:¹ the worst was that I went *insalutato hospite*:² and having presented myself before this King [*of Portugal*], he shewed himself pleased with my coming: and prayed me to join the company of three of his ships which were ready to go in discovery of new lands: and as a King's request is a command, I had to consent to whatever he desired of me: and we sailed from this port of Lisbon, three ships in company, on the 10 day of May 1501, and took our route directly for the Island of Great Canary: and we passed in sight of it without halting: and from hence we went skirting along the coast of Africa on the west side: on which coast we exercised our fishing-skill on a kind of fish which are called *Parchi*;³ where we stopped three days: and from hence we made for the coast of Ethiopia, to a port which is called *Besechicce*,⁴ which is within the Torrid Zone: over which the North Pole is at an elevation of $14\frac{1}{2}$ degrees, situated in the first climate:⁵ where we remained 11 days, taking in water and firewood: because my intention was to make our seaway southwardly through the Atlantic gulf.⁶ We quitted this Ethiopian port, and navigated south-westwardly,⁷ taking one quarter by south, until after a course of 67 days we anchored at a land which was 700 leagues to the south-west of the said port: and in those 67 days we had the worst weather that ever any seafarer had, through numerous storm-showers,⁸ whirlwinds, and tempests which struck us: because we were in a very adverse season since the greater part of our navigation was continually close to the equinoctial line, for in the month of June it is winter: and we found that the day was equal with the night: and we found that the shadow was always towards the south: it pleased God to shew us new land, and [*this*] was on the 17 day of August: when we anchored at half a league [*from the shore*]: and put out our boats: and went to inspect the land, whether it was inhabited by people, and who these people were: and we found

¹ *In buona possessione* (? "in high consideration," as Latin has it).

² "Without bidding adieu to my host." ³ Portuguese *Pargos*.

⁴ Latin has *Besilicca*.

⁵ That is, $14\frac{1}{2}$ degrees north latitude.

⁶ Ocean.

⁷ *Libeccio*.

⁸ *Aguazeri* (waterspouts?).

that it was inhabited by a people who were worse than animals: however Your Magnificence must understand that as yet¹ we saw no people, but we perceived well that it was inhabited from many signs that we observed therein: we took possession of it for this most serene King [*Don Manuel*]:² which land we found to be very pleasant and green, and of goodly appearance: it was 5 degrees towards the south beyond the equinoctial line: and for that day³ we returned to the ships: and because we were in great want of water and firewood, we determined the next day to return to the shore to provide ourselves with what was needful: and, when on land, we beheld some people on the top of a hill, who stood gazing and did not venture to come down: they were naked, and of the same colour and fâshion as were the other former [*savages we had met with elsewhere*]: and although we strove to induce them⁴ to come and speak with us, we were totally unable to reassure them, for they had no trust in us: and seeing their obstinacy, and [*as*] it was already late, we returned to the ships, leaving on the ground for them several little bells and looking-glasses, and other things within their ken: and when we were at a distance on sea, they descended from the hill and came for the things we had left them, displaying great wonderment at these: and for that day we provided ourselves only with water: the next morning we saw from the ships that the land's people were making many clouds of smoke: and thinking that they were calling us [*to them*] we went on shore where we found that great numbers of them had come, and yet they remained aloof from us: and they made signs to us that we should go with them into the interior of the land: wherefore two of our Christians were moved to ask the Captain that he would give them leave as they wished to undertake the risk of going with those [*savages*] into the land, to see what [*manner of*] people they were, and whether they had any riches, or spices, or druggeries; and so much did they beseech that the captain was pleased [*to*

¹ *In questo principio.*

The Latin says, by mistake, "King of Castile."

² *Per questo ci di*, by mistake for *per questo di ci*. It is *ita* in Latin,

By signals, of course,

allow it] : and they prepared themselves with many things for barter [*and*] quitted us with the order that they should not be more than 5 days before returning : because we would wait for them just so long : and they took their way through the country : and we [*remained*] by the ships awaiting them : and almost every day people came to the beach and would never hold speech with us : and the seventh day we went on land, and found that they had brought their women with them : and when we leaped to shore, the land's men sent many of their women to speak with us : and seeing they did not become confident, we decided to send one of our men to them, who was a young fellow given to feats of strength ;¹ and, to reassure them,² we entered into our boats : and he went among the women : and when he reached them, they made a great circle around him, touching him and gazing at him in wonderment : and while he was thus [*encircled*] we saw a woman come from the hill, and she carried a great stake in her hand : and when she reached to where our Christian stood, she came behind him : and, lifting the club, gave him such a tremendous blow that she stretched him dead on the ground, in an instant the other women took hold of him by the feet and dragged him along by his feet towards the hill : and the men bounded towards the beach, and with their bows and arrows [*began*] to shoot at us : and they put our people into such terror, the boats being held fast by the small anchors which were sunk in the ground, that, because of the numerous arrows [*the natives*] shot into the boats, no one had courage to snatch up his arms : however we fired 4 gunshots at them, and they took no effect, save that on hearing the explosion, they all fled towards the hill and to where the women were already [*cutting*] the Christian into bits : and at a great fire which they had made, they were roasting him before our eyes, holding up several pieces towards us and [*then*] eating them : and the men [*were*] making signs to us by their gestures how they had killed the other two Christians and eaten them : which grieved us greatly, seeing with our eyes

¹ *Che molto faceva lo sforzo.*

² Text has "him," by a typographical error of "lo" for "le."

the cruelty they were exercising on the dead man, to all of us it was an intolerable offence : and more than 40 of us being determined to jump on land and revenge such a cruel death, and an action [*so*] bestial and inhuman, the Admiral would not give his consent, and so they [*the natives*] remained gluttoned with so great a villainy :² and we departed from them ill-willingly, and with much shamefulness because of our Captain. We quitted that place, and began our navigation east-south-east, and thus the land trended : and we made many descents on land, and never did we meet a tribe that was willing to hold parley with us : and thus we navigated onward till we found that [*the line of*] the land was turning to south-westward :³ when we doubled a cape, to which we gave the name of Cape St. Augustine,⁴ we began to sail south-west, and this cape is 150 leagues distant to the east of the aforesaid land which we saw, where they slew the Christians : and this cape is 8 degrees south of the equinoctial line : and while [*thus*] sailing we had sight one day of many people who were standing on the beach to behold the wondrous sight of our ships and the manner of our navigation, we directed our course towards them, and anchored in a good place, and made in our boats for land, and found them a better-conditioned people than the last : and although it was a toil to us to tame them, yet we made them our friends and held intercourse with them. We stayed 5 days in this place : and here we found *canna fistola* very thick and green, and dry on the tops of the trees. We decided to take in this place a couple of [*native*] men, so that they should explain for us the language : and there came three of their own free will to come to Portugal : and for the present, tired [*as I am*] already of so much writing, Your Magnificence shall know, that we departed from that port, navigating always within sight of land in a south-west direction, frequently making descents upon shore, and speaking with an infinite number of peoples : and so far did we proceed southwards

¹ *Capitano maggiore.*

³ *Libeccio.*

² *Di tanta ingiuria*, wrong-doing.

⁴ The Latin has St. Vincent.

that we were now beyond the Tropic of Capricorn, where the South Pole was at an elevation of 32 degrees above the horizon: and we had already quite lost [*sight of*] Ursa Minor, and [*Ursa*] Major was very low, and appeared to us to be almost on the line of the horizon, and we guided ourselves by the stars of the other pole [*that*] of the South: which are numerous, and much larger and more brilliant than those of our pole: and I drew diagrams of most of them, and especially of those of the first and greatest magnitude, with an exposition of the orbits which they describe around the southern pole, and a declaration of their diameters and semidiameters, as may be seen in my 4 *Giornate*:¹ we ran along this coast to the length of 750 leagues, 150 leagues west of the cape called [*Cape*] St. Augustine, and 600² leagues to the south-west: and if I wished to narrate the things which I saw on this coast, and what we underwent, twice the number of leaves [*of paper*] would not suffice me: and on this coast we saw nothing of value,³ except an infinite number of dye-wood and cassia-trees, and those which beget myrrh, and other wonders of nature which cannot be recounted: and having already been fully 10 months voyaging, and seeing that in this land we found nothing of mineral [*wealth*] we decided to hasten away from there, and to put to sea for some other quarter: and having held our council, it was resolved that the course should be followed which I should think fitting: and the command of the fleet was entirely handed over to me: and I then ordered that all the crews and the fleet should provide themselves with water and wood for six months, as the masters of the ships judged that we might navigate in them for so much time. Having taken in our stores from this land, we began our voyage towards the south-east: and it was on the 15⁴ day of February when the sun was already nearing the Equinox, and turning towards this our northern hemisphere: and so long did we sail by that wind, that we

¹ "*Le Quattro Giornate*," the projected book to which he has already made more than one reference.

² Latin has 700.

³ *Proficito*.

⁴ Latin has 13,

found ourselves [*at*] so high¹ [*a latitude*] that the southern pole stood quite 52 degrees above our horizon, and we no longer beheld the stars either of Ursa Minor or Ursa Major: and we were already at a distance of full 500 leagues south-east from the harbour whence we had set out: and this was on the 3 day of April, and on that day there arose a tempest of so much violence upon the sea that we were compelled to haul down all our sails, and we scudded under bare poles before the great wind, which was south-west with enormous waves and a very stormy sky: and so fierce was the tempest that all the fleet was in great dread: the nights were very long: so that on the seventh day of April we had a night which was 15 hours long: for the sun was at the end of Aries: and in that region it was winter [*then*] as Your Magnificence may well consider, and while in this tempest on the seventh² day of April, we had sight of a new land, along which we ran for about 20 leagues, and found that it was wholly a rough coast:³ and we beheld therein neither any harbour nor any people, because, as I believe, of the cold which was so intense that no one in our fleet could fortify himself against it or endure it: insomuch that, finding ourselves in so great a danger and in such a tempest that one ship could hardly see another for the great billows that were running and for the deep gloominess⁴ of the weather, we agreed with the Admiral⁵ to signal to [*the rest of*] the fleet to approach and that we should abandon [*this*] land: and turn round in the direction of Portugal: and it was a very good resolve: for it is certain that if we had delayed that night, we had all been lost: because when we turned a-stern,⁶ both that night and the next day, the tempest grew to such a height that we were in fear of being lost: and we had to make [*vows of*] pilgrimage and other ceremonies, as is the custom of sailors at such times: we scudded for 5 days,⁷ and kept

¹ So high—that is, so far south.

² 2nd April, Latin.

³ *Costa brava* in the Spanish sense.

⁴ *Serrazon*, from the Portuguese *cerração*.

⁵ *Capitano maggiore*.

⁶ *Come arrivammo a poppa*, from Spanish *arribar*.

⁷ In Latin there is added here “in which five days we made 250 leagues of sea-passage.”

still drawing nearer to the equinoctial line, with the weather and the sea [*becoming*] more temperate: and it pleased God that we should escape from so great a peril: and our course was with the wind between north and north-east:¹ because our intention was to go and reconnoitre the coast of Ethiopia,² as we were distant therefrom [*only*] 300³ leagues across the gulf of the Atlantic Sea: and by the grace of God on the 10 day of May we came to a land therein, [*lying*] southward, which is called La serra liona:⁴ where we stayed 15 days, taking our refreshment: and from here we departed taking our course towards the islands of the Azores, which are distant about 750 leagues from this place of the Serra: and we reached the islands at the end of July: where we stayed 15 days more, taking some recreation: and we quitted them for Lisbon: being [*then*] 300 leagues to the west [*of it*]: and we entered into this port of Lisbon on the 7 day of September 1502, in good condition, God be thanked, with two ships only: because we [*had*] burnt the other in Serra liona: as it was disabled from further navigation, for we were about 15⁵ months on this voyage: and for 11 days we navigated without seeing the Polar Star, or the Greater and Lesser Bear, which are called the Corno:⁶ and we steered by the stars of the other hemisphere. This is what I saw in this voyage or giornata.

¹ *Tramontano* and *greco*.

² Africa.

³ Like Varnhagen, I read this distance as 300 leagues, but the text may mean either "1300," or "in 300," and is more like the former.

⁴ Sierra Leone.

⁵ Latin has 16.

⁶ *Corno*—evidently a typographical error for *carro*, the Wain.





Fourth Voyage.

[Woodcut of a Ship at Anchor, two figures in it, and one on land ; towers in the background.]

I T remains for me to tell the things seen by me in the fourth voyage, or giornata : and as I am already wearied, and also because this fourth voyage was not carried out in accordance with the purpose I [*had*] formed, through a mishap which befel us in the gulf of the Atlantic Sea, as Your Magnificence shall learn briefly in the sequel : I will endeavour to be brief. We departed from this port of Lisbon 6 ships in company, with the intention of going to discover an island towards the east, which is called Melaccha : of which there are news that it is very rich, and that it is as it were the storehouse of all the ships which come from the Gangetic sea and from the Indian Sea, (just as Cadiz is the waiting-room¹ of all the vessels which pass from east to west, and from west to east) by the route of Galigut,² and this Melaccha is more westerly than Caligut, and much more to the southward :³ for we know that it lies at the level⁴ of 33⁵ degrees of the antarctic hemisphere. We departed on the 10 day of May 1503 and made directly for the isles of Cape Verde, where we careened, and took some manner of

¹ *Camera*.

² This puzzling sentence leads us to infer that the object was a South-west passage to India. When he says that Malacca was west of Calicut, he means probably that it was nearer to his New World. The brackets inserted here are not in the original.

³ Mistranslated in the Latin. *Alta* is an error for *alla*.

⁴ *Paraggio*.

⁵ As Varnhagen justly corrects, this must have been meant for "3."

refreshment, where we stayed 13¹ days: and from here we departed on our voyage, sailing by the south-east wind: and as our Admiral was a presumptuous and very obstinate man, he would go to examine Serra liona, a land of Southern Ethiopia, without having any need except to make it be seen that he was Captain of six ships, against the wish of all the rest of us Captains: and thus navigating, when we reached the said land, so great were the whirlwinds that struck us, and with them the weather so adverse, that [*although*] we were in sight of it [*the shore*] quite four days, the foul weather never allowed us to land: so that we were compelled to return to our proper course, and to quit the said Serra: and navigating hence to the *suduest* which is the wind between south and south-west:² and when we had sailed full 300 leagues through the immensity³ of the sea, being then quite 3 degrees south of the equinoctial line, we became aware of a land from which we were probably 22⁴ leagues distant: whereat we marvelled: and we found that it was an island in the middle of the sea and was very lofty, a very marvellous work of nature: since it was no more than two leagues in length and one in breadth: in which island, never had there been inhabitation by any people: and it was Bad Island⁵ for all the fleet: for Your Magnificence must know that by the ill-counsel and management of our Admiral he lost his ship here: since he struck with it upon a rock, and it split open on St. Laurence's night, which was on the 10 day of August, and went to the bottom: and there was nothing saved thereof except the crew. It was a ship of 300 tons: in which went all the importance of the fleet: and when all the fleet were labouring to save it, the Chief commanded me to make with my ship for the said island to seek a good anchorage, where all the ships might anchor: and as my boat manned with 9 of my sailors was engaged and aiding to belay the ships, he

¹ Latin has "12," and misunderstands the *careenage*.

² *Infra mezzo di e libeccio*. *Suduest* is a typographical blunder for *sudsudueste*.

³ *Mōstro* (?).

⁴ Latin has "*duodecim*."

⁵ *La mala isola*, Fernando Noronha.

⁶ *Ligare* (? bind together).

willed that I should not take it, and that I should proceed without it: telling me that they should take it to me at the island: I quitted the fleet for the island as he ordered me, without a boat, and with the deficiency of half my crew, and I went to the said island, which was about 4 leagues distant: in which I found an excellent harbour, where all the ships could anchor very safely: where I awaited my Chief and the fleet fully 8 days, and they never came: so that we were very discontented, and the men that had remained with me in the ship were in such dread, that I was unable to console them: and being thus, the eighth day we beheld a ship coming upon the sea, and from fear that it might not see us, we weighed with our ship,¹ and made for it, thinking that it brought me my boat and crew: and when we came alongside of it, after having saluted, they told us how the admiral's ship had gone to the bottom, and how the crew had been saved, and that my boat and crew had remained with the fleet, which had gone further on that sea, which was to us so great an annoyance as Your Magnificence may conceive, finding ourselves 1000 leagues away from Lisbon, and on the ocean,² and with a little crew: however we set our prow³ at Fortune, and went still onward: we returned to the island, and provided ourselves with water and timber by means of my companion's boat: which island we found uninhabited, and it contained many fresh and sweet waters,⁴ innumerable trees, [*and was*] full of so many sea and land birds that they were beyond count: and they were so tame, that they allowed themselves to be taken with the hand: and so many of them did we take that we loaded a boat with those animals: we saw none [*other*] except very large rats and lizards with double tails, and some snakes: and having made our provision, we departed by the wind betwixt south and south-west, for we had an ordinance of the King which commanded us that whichever of the ships should lose sight of the fleet or of its Chief, should make for the land that we discovered in the previous voyage, at a harbour to which we had given the name of

¹ *Nostre navi* for *nostra nave*. He had only one (see *supra*).

² *Golfo*.

³ *Facemmo rostro*,

⁴ That is, streams or springs.

Badia di tucti e sancti:¹ and it pleased God to give us such good weather, that in 17 days we reached land therein, which was distant from the island full 300 leagues: where we found neither our Admiral nor any other ship of the fleet: in which harbour we waited quite two months and 4 days: and seeing that there was no arrival, we agreed, my partner and I, to run the coast: and we sailed 260 leagues further on, till² we arrived in a harbour: where we decided to construct a fort, and we did so: and left therein 24 Christian men whom my partner had for us, whom she had collected from the flagship³ that had been lost: in which port we stayed quite 5 months making the fortress and loading our ships with verзино:⁴ as we were unable to proceed further, because we had not men [*enough*] and I was deficient of many pieces of ship-tackle. All this done, we determined to turn our course towards Portugal, which lay in the direction of the wind between north-east and north:⁵ and we left the 24 men who remained in the fort with provision for six months, and [*with*] 12 big guns⁶ and many other arms, and we pacified all the land's people: of whom no mention has been made in this voyage: not because we did not see and traffic with an infinite number of them: for we went, quite 30 men of us, 40 leagues inland: where I saw so many things that I omit to tell them, reserving them for my 4 Giornate. This land lies 18 degrees south of the equinoctial line, and 37 degrees to the west of the longitude of Lisbon, as is demonstrated by our instruments. And all this being done, we took leave of the Christians and the land: and began our navigation to *nornordeste*,⁷ which is the wind between north and north-east, with the intention of making our navigation in a direct course to this city of Lisbon: and in 77 days, after so many travails and perils, we entered into this port on the 18 day of June 1504, God [*be*] praised: where we were received very well and beyond all belief:

¹ Mistake for *Bahia de todos os Santos*. This confusion of *d* and *h* in Vespucci's handwriting led to a long-continued error in the maps.

² *Ttão*, for *tãto*, so far that, until.

³ *Nave capitana*.

⁴ Brazil-wood, or dye-wood.

⁵ *Greco* and *tramontano*.

⁶ *Bombarde*.

⁷ It is printed *nornodeste*.

because all the city believed us lost: since the other ships of the fleet had all been lost through the arrogance and folly of our Admiral, for so does God reward pride: and at present I find myself here in Lisbon, and I know not what the King will want to do with me, for I desire much to take repose.¹ The present bearer, who is Benvenuto di Domenico Benvenuti, will tell your Magnificence of my condition, and of some things which, for prolixity, have been left unsaid: for he has seen and felt them, God be.....² I have gone on compressing the letter as much as I could, and there have been omitted to be told many natural things,³ because of avoiding prolixity. May Your Magnificence pardon me: whom I beseech to hold me in the number of your servants: and I recommend to you Ser Antonio Vespucci, my brother, and all my family. I remain, praying of God that he may increase the days of your life, and that the state of this sublime Republic and the honour of Your Magnificence may be exalted, etc. Given in Lisbon on the 4 day of September 1504.

[*Your*] servant AMERIGO VESPUCCI in Lisbon.

¹ The Latin substitutes "this messenger in the meantime commending much to your Majesty. Americus Vesputius. In Lisbon," for all the text which follows the word "repose."

² *Dio sia o cli*, followed by a blank. This is incomprehensible, and may be "God be" (something not understood by the printer), or *dì sui occhi* ("with his own eyes"), which would imply that Benvenuto had accompanied Vespucci in this voyage.

³ Things relating to natural history.







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