A Chapter in the Life of Columbus.

WRITTEN FOR THE DESERET NEWS.

A propos of the World's Fair, as a matter of course, all Americans and, for that matter, all civilized people, should be familiar with the life of the discoverer whose great achievement is the occasion for the present extraordinary celebration. On the supposition that the reader is already acquainted with much of this biography we offer the following condensed chapter as an interesting lookback of the hero's life:

After his third voyage to the new world Columbus sent to the Spanish sovereigns specimens of the beautiful pearls he had obtained on the coast of Paria accompanied by an account of the coast, and of his own growing appreciation of the newly found land which afterward proved to be the mainland of South America. Details of the voyage were sent, and these fell into the hands of his most implacable enemy. This was Fonseca, the rector of Indian affairs in Spain. Fonseca imparted the information to Alonzo de Ojeda, a daring and unscrupulous adventurer who had returned from a former voyage to the new world. He also informed him of the difficulties through which Columbus was passing, of his force and retainers in the island and jealous suspicions at home with which even the king's mind was not unstained. He did not conceal the fact that he was himself looking forward with confidence and eager expectancy to the final downfall of the admiral, or that he was instituting that crisis by every means within his power, legal or illegal. Ojeda knew an opportunity of aggrandisement, not only through officially assisting and assisting the shameful efforts of Columbus's enemies, but by personal enterprise in snatching the first fruits of the rich pearl fisheries and gold mines of the new world, which were pledged by the crown to be kept inviolate from individual speculation. Contrary to this stipulation, Ojeda was granted the privilege of being not a private enterprise to explore the coast of Paria and any part of the new world not discovered prior to 1498. Many wealthy persons assisted Ojeda in fitting out his fleet and many adventurous men accompanied the expedition. Among the latter was Amerigo Vespucci, whose account of this voyage afterward caused his name to be given to the new continent. When Roldan, who was sent by Columbus to inquire into the cause for the revolt of Ojeda in a distant part of the island of Hayti, called upon the latter to give an account of himself, he actually promised to visit and report to the admiral himself—a promise which he had no idea of fulfilling. When next heard from he was setting himself up as a leader of a rebellious faction in the distant province of Azagua. Upon learning this Columbus again sent Roldan against him, this time with a force of armed men. Ojeda retired to his ships but was brought to terms and promised to return to Spain. This voyage was also broken and he was presently seen in a remote part making up a crew of slaves of the poor natives to be sold in the slave markets of Spain.

Ojeda had told Roldan that the downfall of Columbus was near at hand and that Isabella, his friend and patroness, was sick into death. The severe difficulties which the admiral (Columbus) had encountered since his first conception of the great enterprise of discovery, and the unending boldness with which Ojeda presented his piracy, rendered it a sale property probable. Columbus was grieved but still trusted in the justice and gratitude of his sovereigns. He congratulated himself upon having successfully quelled the mutinies of the island and having established a foundation of law and property and the peaceful submission of the natives. He thought it would see his way clear for the prosecution of his long-cherished design—a voyage of exploration to the coast of Paria. In his imagination it was to be the fulfillment of his greatest hopes. Beyond that splendid coast of which he had caught just a glimpse, he confidently expected to find the Grand Khan whose rich kingdom was to yield the mighty wealth which was to obtain for the Spanish crown for its chief in him, and which was to redeem, according to his fervent vow, the holy sepulcher in which the cross of just centuries had lifted. The dreams of Columbus could never have been surpassed by the paradise of Mahomet; but the serpent in his Eden had always been of no insignificant dimensions. His hopes and splendid designs were repeatedly interrupted by his mortal foes. And thus it happened now.

Every ship load of returning voyagers to Spain recounted tales of disappointment and ever was repeated the ungenerous, illiberal cry that the Columbus brothers were foreign and common birth who had first loved to dominate the highest seats of Spain. A new slander began to circulate at court and reached the suspicious and jealous ear of Ferdinand. This was to the effect that Columbus designed to throw off his allegiance to Spain and make himself sovereign of the new world or at offer it to some other power. Fonseca was in his element and nothing pleased every suspicion, that and shadow to fullest extent, leaving not a stone unturned that could accelerate the downfall of the man whom he so implacably hated.

It was determined to send an agent to Hispaniola to investigate the affairs of the island. This would have been right but for the injudicious power entrusted to the chosen instrument, and was in accordance with the supposed desire of the admiral.

The man who was selected to fill this office was Francisco de Bobadilla, an intriguer and ambitious courtier. The reward for his services was to be the emoluments and dignities belonging to the admiral should he succeed in establishing guilt in him. He was, however, commanded to first inquire into the rebellious that had existed in the island and to punish such as were really guilty. He was then to investigate, calmly and impartially, the conduct of the admiral, and to establish his guilt beyond a question of doubt before proceeding against him.

Arrived at the island, Bobadilla proceeded in exactly inverse order. Columbus was in the interior regulating its affairs at the time of his arrival. Bobadilla took advantage of the absence, seized the reins of government, established himself in the admiral's palace, took possession of all his effects, including his private letters and journals, and gave a generous welcome to every malcontent who could conjure a real or fancied grievance against the admiral. Nay, complaint was even encouraged and it was said that the list of evidence might be woven as firmly around his victim as to secure his rule, whether the new governor in his secluded position and seized him against the reserved remonstrances of his own peculiable help.

When the news of Bobadilla's coming was brought to the ears of Columbus he would not believe that they were done with the sentiment of the friend but the bitter potent jibbonnet of the usurper settled this point. He resolved, grieved by the strange, humiliating manner in which he was thus hurled from his position, he slowly and calmly obeyed the arrogant summons to appear before Bobadilla. He had to wait arrived at San Domingo, where he was ordered to be put in irons. Irons in excessive were showed on a great an indignity being forced upon the venerable and dignified man, and all refused to receive the degrading act of restoring the admiral. At last a woman domestic was found to wrench the task. It has seen truly said that "there is a noble scorn which revils and repels the heart, and silences the tongue of the most proud when enduring the bonds of the unworthy." The superior dignity and virtue of Columbus exerted itself in his present situation. He knew in silent scorn the vile charge of outrage upon Castilian price by imposing irons upon Spanish nobles in difficult times of emergency when the building of public spirit was imperative to public safety if or limiting post servitude (when such was the only safeguard against conspiracy) instead of preventing the conversion of the natives to Christianity that he might secure their honest, when the truth was that he attended to their conversion without first having been instructed in the principles of the Christian faith. He was likewise charged with having secreted pearls and gold that belonged to the government, with intent to plunder the treasure of the island, with intent to defraud of Spaniards, and with all of any kind or nature of grievance that could be conceived.

In considering the island the reasonable plan of publishing accounts of the list of emigrating, from countries to transportation to the new world are been adopted. What good could be expected from a community of that sort, whose chief Commerce of the very dregs of society. Send the better class of people, and Columbus's high spirited ones the prospects of such a fine of Spain and thus flushed the island with adventurers of all kinds who were jealous over the triumph of fairness and villainy. Bobadilla was had stood in awe of him, while humble called upon him resolved and smiled as him now to chains. He treated their flattery with a silent scorn and did not deign to return or recognize either the vile rabble of the miserable representatives of the crown. Bobadilla believed that he had woven a net around his victim which would insure his downfall and secure for him seat as future governor of the island. Columbus was not given a trial or any opportunity of defense, but was thrown in prison with his two brothers, secluded by Bobadilla, where they were confined separately, loaded with irons, allowed too little food or drinking and where they were not permitted to see any one but the jailer or informer of the grounds upon which the harsh treatment was made.

A distant relative of Fonseca named Alonzo de Vilejo was given charge of the prisoners with instructions to carry them to Spain and deliver them to Fonseca, Bobadilla thinking thereby to put the capstone on the malignant triumph of the latter. Vilejo was of a more generous nature than Bobadilla had supposed.

The idolatry and fond relationships of Columbus's servants, together with the silent, mysterious manner in which he was imprisoned and the triumphant usurpation of government by Bobadilla had aroused, to some extent, the apprehensions of the admiral. He did not know to what length their prerogative and passionate manner might carry them. He began to fear that he might be violently murdered to insure an opportunity of taking head and his name thereby go down to posterity in ignominy and disgrace. When Vilejo entered his cell he thought it was with the purpose of conducting him to execution. When him that he was to embark for Spain his relief was better be imagined than described. The caravan set sail early in October, 1500, amid the vivid shouts, jeers and curses of the mercantile rabble on shore, and Columbus sailed for Spain manacled like a criminal. Vallejo wished to remove the shackles but he peremptorily replied: "Not their majesties commanded me by letter to submit to whatever Bobadilla should order in their name; by their authority he has put upon me these chains; I will wear them until they shall order them to be taken off, and I will preserve them afterward as relics and memorials of the reward of my services."

He arrived in chains at Cadiz phenomenon a sensation. The chiefs of the rabble to cause his ruin had overreached themselves. An indignant murmur resounded throughout the kingdom against the cruelty and injustice of the great discoverer. Letters from the court of Arragon and the great aristocracy chained in terms like a whirlwind. To say the least, it would have been policy for the crown to have turned a deaf ear to this tide of public remonstrance. Ferdinand and Isabella joined in expressions of indignation against Columbus. They sent orders for the immediate release of himself and his brothers, with a affectionate letter expressing grief at his suffering and inviting him to the presence and presiding him with two thousand ducats, further inviting him to come their court to Granada, where he arrived on the 17th of December.

Isabella had lost hold of death of exceedingly dear. This was brought on by a long, lingering illness. The Queen had expressed the intensity of her feelings and wishes at the bedside of Isabella in her last moments when she had bequeathed the care of her husband to her. Her last act of Isabella was to give her husband a ring to present to her successor. Ferdinand was overwhelmed with grief at the loss of his wife, and was through the peculiar and great military difficulties of his time.

The sovereign received the proceedings of Bobadilla and declared that he should immediately be removed from his position of command. They found that he had bitterness in the cup, and was so completely confounded and confused that the only conditions of Ferdinand were to transport the haughty authorities to the mainland and to be given in peaceful and loyal to succeed in the royal grounds were never fulfilled.

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