

**STORIES
FROM HAKLUYT**

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Stories from Hakluyt by Richard Wilson

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RICHARD WILSON

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FROM HAKLUYT**

The KINGS TREASURIES
OF LITERATURE



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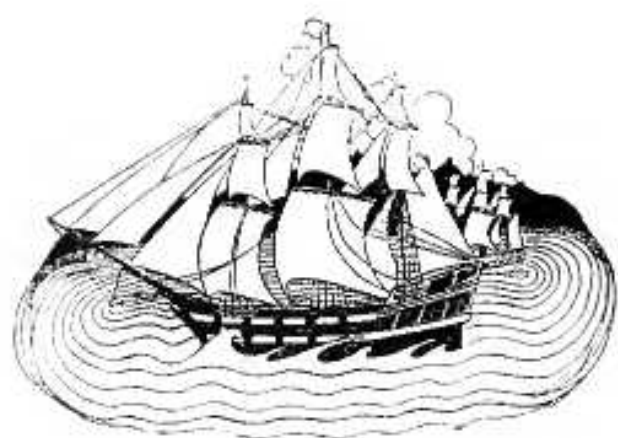
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N.B.—The present text is that used in the edition published by Messrs. MacLehose & Sons in 1903, &c., and edited by S. Douglas Jackson, but the spelling has been modernised and some of the paragraphs divided.





INTRODUCTION

HAKLUYT died in the same year as Shakespeare, having accomplished the task of compiling "the great prose epic of the English nation." His story is diffused and lacks form, balance, proportion. It is long and it is usually printed in a manner which gives a first impression of confusion and incoherence—solid pages of small type in old spelling, unattractive to the eye, and therefore unwelcome to the mind. Will the reader sample his pages with me, not by picking out disconnected extracts, with neither beginning nor ending, but by reading a complete "voyage" here and there, and especially those of the Elizabethan sea-farers? The stories are here printed in open type on a small page. The spelling is modernised and the longest paragraphs are broken up to allow time for breathing and for the pauses necessary to contemplate at leisure, and wonder over, some of the most marvellous feats of daring and endurance of which the world holds record. Told without rhetoric, too, and always (even when the matter in hand is piracy!) "As ever in the great Task-Master's Eye."

Taken in this spirit "Richard Hakluyt, Preacher," needs no recommendation of mine. He speaks for himself, or, to be quite correct, his contributors speak for themselves; for, as will be seen in the pages following, Hakluyt was to a great extent a collector or editor who gathered together, by dint of infinite pains and patience, the records made by travellers themselves or by the "special correspondents" whom

the great voyagers of the sixteenth century seem to have taken with them when they set out from some port on our southern or south-western shores. The names of some of the latter still live—"Master Dionise Settle"; "Clement Adams" who wrote in Latin and was probably translated by Hakluyt into noble Elizabethan prose¹ worthy of the Shakespearean period; "M. John Lane, a man of good observation," who writes one of the finest tales of adventure in our language; and others unknown to literature text-book fame but including several men whose imagination, power of expression, and faculty for selection are greater than those of some writers regarded as "standards" by many who pose as guides. There are paragraphs in these pages which are literature, and great literature at that. Let the reader read the book aloud and he will soon find them out, for they sing of themselves.

R. W.

¹ What could be better in spirit, form and substance than the noble speech which begins on page 25?





CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

The offer of the discovery of the West Indies by Christopher Columbus to King Henry the Seventh in the year 1488 the 13th of February: with the King's acceptation of the offer, and the cause whereupon he was deprived of the same; recorded in the thirteenth chapter of the history of Don Fernand Columbus of the life and deeds of his father Christopher Columbus.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS fearing lest if the King of Castile in like manner [as the King of Portugal had done] should not condescend unto his enterprise, he should not be enforced to offer the same again to some other prince, and so much time should be spent therein, sent into England a certain brother of his which he had with him, whose name was Bartholomew Columbus, who, albeit he had not the Latin tongue, yet nevertheless was a man of experience and skilful in sea causes, and could very well make sea cards and globes, and other instruments belonging to that profession, as he was instructed by his brother.

Wherefore after that Bartholomew Columbus was departed for England, his luck was to fall into the hands of pirates, which spoiled him with the rest of them which were in the ship which he went in. Upon