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哥伦布和鸡蛋

1492年10月12日,克里斯托弗·哥伦布发现了美洲大陆。他花了18年的时间来策划、筹备那次壮观的、史无前例的横跨大西洋的航海旅行。他把生命中的黄金时期全部用来思考和祈盼这件事。就这个问题,他曾经游说过水手、学者、王子,甚至国王。他说:"我认为,向西横跨大西洋,最后会到达欧洲人没有去过的地方。"然而,他却被认为是愚蠢的梦想家,他遭到了众人的嘲笑,几乎没有人相信他的设想。

最终,西班牙国王和王后为他准备了舰船,供他试航。他越过海洋发现了一个陌生的大

陆,上面住着未曾见过的人,他们 完全不同于欧洲人。他认为,这就 是印度的一部分。

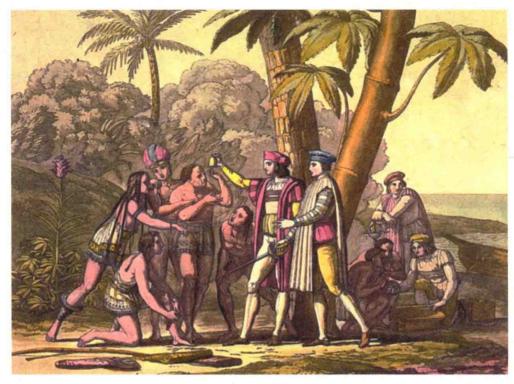
当他带着他的发现回来时,举 国欢庆,人们把他看作为西班牙发 现新世界的英雄。成群的人们排着 队伍站在他经过的道路边,大家都 渴望向他致敬。国王和王后也邀请 他到宫殿来,兴致勃勃地聆听他在 航海过程中的故事。从没有哪个平 民像他一样获得如此尊重。

但是有些人却嫉妒这位发现 者,他们在别人赞扬他时吹毛求

克里斯托弗·哥伦布(Christopher Columbus 1451?-1506),西班牙著名航海家,地理大发现的先驱者。他出生在意大利港口城市热那亚 Genoa,十分推崇马可·波罗,立志要做一个航海家。年轻的时候,哥伦布就信奉地圆说,后得到西班牙国王斐迪南和王后伊莎贝拉(Isabella)的资助,得以实现首次远航,横渡大西洋后发现了巴哈马群岛和古巴、海地等岛。







哥伦布上岸后,将随身所带物品展示给美洲土著人看。

疵。"谁是哥伦布?"他们问,"他做过什么?他不就是从意大利来的穷领航员吗?难道其他海员就不能像他一样横跨大洋吗?"

一天,哥伦布出席一个西班牙绅士为他举行的授予他荣誉的宴会。几个这样的人也在场。他们狂妄自大、自以为是,没过多长时间就开始想方设法为难哥伦布了。

"你只不过在海对岸发现了陌生的大陆,"他们说,"但那又算得了什么呢?我们不明白为什么大家没完没了地谈论它。谁都可以像你一样航船飘过大洋,谁都可以像你一样沿着那一面的岛屿航行。这是世界上最简单的事情!"

哥伦布没有作声,他从盘子里拿了一个鸡蛋,对着所有客人说:"先生们,你们之中有谁能让这个鸡蛋站稳呢?"

在场的人逐个尝试了一番,但鸡蛋转了一圈,没有一个人能把鸡蛋竖起来。最后,所有的人都说这是无法办到的事情。

于是, 哥伦布拿起鸡蛋, 将相对较小的那一端在桌子上轻轻一磕。就这样, 蛋壳被磕破了一点, 接着鸡蛋就毫不费力地在桌子上竖了起来。

"先生们,"哥伦布说,"还有比这更简单的事情吗?这是世界上最简单的事情!你们居然说不可能!谁都可以做到——只是需要有人告诉他怎么做才行。"





Columbus and the Egg

CHRISTOPHER Columbus discovered America on the 12th of October, 1492. He had spent eighteen years in planning for that wonderful first voyage which he made across the Atlantic Ocean. The thoughts and hopes of the best part of his life had been given to it. He had talked and argued with sailors and scholars and princes and kings, saying, "I know that, by sailing west across the great ocean, one may at last reach lands that have never been visited by Europeans." But he had been laughed at as a foolish dreamer, and few people had any faith in his projects.

At last, however, the king and queen of Spain gave him ships with which to make the trial voyage. He crossed the ocean and discovered strange lands, inhabited by a people unlike any that had been known before. He believed that these lands were a part of India.

When he returned home with the news of his discovery there was great rejoicing, and he was hailed, as the hero who had given a new world to Spain. Crowds of people lined the streets through which he passed, and all were anxious to do him honor. The king and queen welcomed him to their palace and listened with pleasure to the story of his voyage. Never had so great respect been shown to any common man.



上岸后的哥伦布

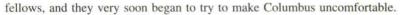


But there were some who were jealous of the discoverer, and as ready to find fault as others were

to praise. "Who is this Columbus?" they asked, "and

what has he done? Is he not a pauper pilot from Italy? And could not any other seaman sail across the ocean just as he has done?"

One day Columbus was at a dinner which a Spanish gentleman had given in his honor, and several of these persons were present. They were proud, conceited



"You have discovered strange lands beyond the sea," they said. "But what of that? We do not see why there should be so much said about it. Anybody can sail across the ocean; and anybody can coast along the islands on the other side, just as you have done. It is the simplest thing in the world."

Columbus made no answer; but after a while he took an egg from a dish and said to the company, "Who among you, gentlemen, can make this

egg stand on end?"

One by one those at the table tried the experiment. When the egg had gone entirely around and none had succeeded, all said that it could not be done.

Then Columbus took the egg and struck its small end gently upon the table so as to break the shell a little. After that there was no trouble in making it stand upright.

"Gentlemen," said he, "what is easier than to do this which you said was impossible? It is the simplest thing in the world. Anybody can do it—after he has been shown how."



西班牙女王伊莎贝拉一世



在达连湾的山巅上(一)

在哥伦布发现美洲大陆后,大批西班牙人漂洋前往。他们到了海地、古巴、波尔图以及附近一些更小的岛屿。就像哥伦布一样,他们深信这些小岛靠近亚洲的东海岸,是印度的一部分,因此他们把这些岛屿称为印度群岛。后来,他们认识到这是个错误,就称这些岛屿为西印度群岛,而真正的印度群岛被称为东印度群岛。

在距离古巴西南很远的地方,哥伦布发现了一个长长的海岸,他为之命名为达连湾,就是我们所说的巴拿马地峡,但哥伦布却以为这就是亚洲大陆的一部分。几年之后,西班牙水手到达达连湾,回到海地后他们说那里有黄金。那个时候,一个西班牙人就打算到世界的另一端去寻找黄金。所以,这个消息在横渡大洋冒险的年轻人中引起了极大轰动。

"到达连湾去,到达连湾去!"的口号风靡一时,不久他们便成立了一支航行队伍。两只舰艇整装待发,前往那块希望之地。

航行开始的时候,大家都非常愉快。海上风平浪静,海风柔和,舰船飞快地按照既定路线向前行驶。但是不久,令人感觉舒服的沙滩和郁郁葱葱的海地山脉就消失了,眼前出现的只是一些小小的岩石岛。舰船径直驶进加勒比海。

这时,大船上的船员非常惊奇地听到了敲击货舱的声音!一个声音响起,就像有人在呼喊求救。怎么回事呢?船员们没有看见人,听到的声音却不是错觉。

- "请把我救出来!"这个声音像是从供应品的桶里传出来的。
- "有人在桶里!"船长说。

不一会儿,船员们就找到了那个桶。从桶里跳出一个年轻人,他穿着天鹅绒斗篷,里面





巴尔博亚(Vasco Núnez de Balboa 1475-1519),西班牙著名探险家,第一位发现太平洋的欧洲人。

是一件丝绸制成的金边紧身衣。这是个英俊的家伙,他的眼睛锐利而明亮,脸上露出坚毅的表情,像是一个我行我素的人。他的身上挂着一把剑,腰带上别着一把匕首。

有人认识他,所以他也没有必要说出他的名字。他叫巴斯科·努涅斯·德·巴尔博亚。大家都知道他是一个 狂热的冒险家,常常进行冒险,并常常花光借来的钱。但 是,他为什么会在桶里呢?

"是这样的,"巴尔博亚说,"在海地,我欠了几乎所有人的钱。州长到处找我,我差点被投进监狱。所以,我只好说服我的一个朋友,让他把我藏在桶里,混在腌牛肉的桶中,一起送到船上。所以,现在我将和你们一起去富饶的达连湾寻找金子了。"

船长大发雷霆。他威胁说要把巴尔博亚抛到全是石头的孤岛上。"可惜呀!可惜呀!"其他船员喊着,"让他和我们一起走吧,他会对咱们大有帮助呢。"接着船长态度缓和了一点,答应带他一起走。

巴尔博亚很讨人喜欢,他精明干练、勇敢无畏。很快,几乎所有的船员都很尊敬他,并把他当作他们的领导。当他们到达达连湾,寻找登陆的地方时,巴尔博亚给了他们很大的帮助。他曾经来过此地,因此他指引船员们在一个安全的海港停靠。

船长向来傲慢无礼、不可一世,最后,船员们都拒绝执行他的命令。他们推选巴尔博亚 为他们的新船长,而原船长也高兴地坐另外一艘船回海地了。

巴尔博亚和势力强大的印第安人酋长商定了一项协议。酋长住在一所大房子里,是附近所有村庄的统治者。巴尔博亚娶酋长的女儿为妻。在婚宴上,酋长赠给这些西班牙人许多金子和奴隶。

印第安人根本不看中金子,他们并不知道金子的价值。当他们看见西班牙人把金子铸成金条、并为之争得死去活来时,他们非常吃惊。他们说:"如果你们那么在乎那堆黄色东西的话,为什么不去盛产这些东西的地方呢?"于是,他们告诉巴尔博亚,在很远的南部地区,山的另一面,有一片广阔的海洋。海边住着许多居民,他们拥有很多黄金。他们用黄金做杯子和弓箭,甚至盘子和壶之类的东西。

巴尔博亚决心立刻前往他们所说的海洋。他带上两百人和一群侦探犬,追寻着不友好的印第安人的脚步,朝大山进发了。这段路程并不遥远,但是地面崎岖不平,森林几乎无法穿过,他们不得不走得非常慢。许多天过去了,他们终于到达了山脉的最高点。巴尔博亚登上山巅,俯瞰四周。在他的南面和西面都是海洋。海洋看上去非常近,就像在他的脚下一样。海水延伸到远方,直到海天相接处。

在巴尔博亚之前,从未有白人来此观望过这片海,甚至没有人听说过它。后来,这位西班牙的冒险家将其命名为南海,因为去南海的路上要穿过地峡,而它看起来就在大陆的南



边。但我们知道,它就是大洋中最大的一个——浩瀚的太平洋。 在山巅上,巴尔博亚怀着敬畏和喜悦的复杂感情俯瞰。

他有着鹰一样的眼睛 凝视着太平洋, 其他人相互对视, 胡乱猜测默不作声, 矗立在达连湾的山巅之上。

巴尔博亚并不知道他发现了一个新大洋。他以为,这片大海仅仅是一个冲击着海岸的 鸿沟或海湾。也许是印度,也可能是中国。他飞快地来到海滨。站在海滩上,波浪拍打着他 的脚踝。他举起长剑指向空中,并以西班牙国王的名义宣布他拥有这片新发现的海洋。

不久,巴尔博亚和他的部下就返回地峡的另一边。他派人向西班牙国王报告了他的新发现。但这时船舰、船员和新的长官已经在去达连湾的路上了。因为国王对这里蕴含丰富的黄金这件事已经有所耳闻了。

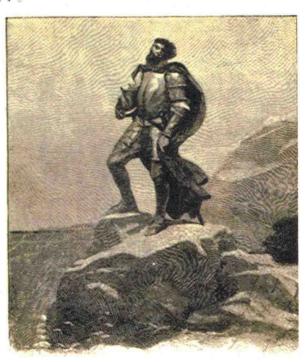
新的长官是一个老头,像一只凶猛而无情的老虎。他们一到达达连湾,就开始压迫、屠 杀当地的印第安人。数以千计的人在他的残暴统治下丧生。巴尔博亚非常伤心,他同情那些 贫苦的印第安人。在第一次回国探亲的船上,他秘密地将新长官的所作所为写信报告给国 王。接着他开始为去南海探险做准备了。

在达连湾,巴尔博亚将四艘小船分开,并运到山的对面。在巴尔博亚的带领下,这些小船又被重新组装起来,然后向海洋出发。这是欧洲第一艘漂浮在太平洋上的船舰。

但他们并不准备开始航行。他 们还需要一些螺栓加固船只,需要 沥青堵住船只上的漏洞。在准备这 些东西的时候,长官派人来抓他。这 只老恶虎听说了巴尔博亚写给国王 的那封控告信。

巴尔博亚做好了服从命令的准备。他再次穿过群山,和逮捕他的人一起回去。"你想谋害我,想让国王不信任我,"冷酷无情的长官说,"你将以叛国者的罪名被处死。"

太阳落山之前,勇敢英俊、充满活力的巴尔博亚死去了。







"Upon a Peak in Darien"

First Story

AFTER Columbus had shown the way to America a great many Spaniards came over. They came to Haiti and Cuba and Porto Rico and the smaller islands near them. Like Columbus they believed that these lands were near the eastern coast of Asia. They believed that they were a part



装扮奇特的印第安人

of India, and therefore spoke of them as the Indies. Afterwards, when their mistake became known, these islands were named the West Indies and the true islands of India were called the East Indies

Far to the southwest of Cuba, Columbus had discovered a long coast which he named Darien. It was the neck of land which we call the Isthmus of Panama, but he supposed that it was a part of the mainland of Asia. A few years later some Spanish sailors visited Darien and carried word back to Haiti that there was gold there. Now at that time a Spaniard would go to the end of the world for gold, and therefore this news caused great excitement among the young men who had come across the ocean for the purpose of adventure.

"To Darien! To Darien! " was the cry, and soon a company was



formed and two ships were made ready to sail to that land of promise.

The voyage was a delightful one from the start. The sea was calm, the wind was fair, and the vessels sped swiftly on their way. Soon the pleasant shores and green mountains of Haiti were lost to view. Only little rocky islets could be seen. The ship was heading straight into the Caribbean Sea.

Then, what was the surprise of the crew of the larger ship to



欧洲的入侵给印第安人带来了灾难。

hear strange rapping in the hold! A voice also was heard, like that of some one calling for help. What could it mean? The sailors could not see any one, and yet the sounds could not be mistaken.

"Please help me out!" The voice seemed to come from among some barrels in which provisions were stored.

"A man is in one of the barrels," said the captain.

Soon the barrel was found and opened. Out of it leaped a young man, richly clad in a velvet cloak and a silk doublet embroidered with gold. He was a handsome fellow. His eyes were keen and bright, and his face had a determined look, like that of one who is used to having his own way about things. At his side hung a long sword, and in his belt was a dagger.

Several of the men knew him; and so he did not need to say that his name was Vasco Nunez de Balboa. They knew that he was a dashing adventurer, always doing and daring, and always borrowing and spending money. But why was he in the barrel?

"The truth of the matter is that," he said, "I am in debt to almost everybody in Haiti. The officers were looking for me and would have taken me to prison. So I persuaded one of my friends to put me in a barrel and send me on board with the salt beef. And now here I am, bound with the rest of you for the rich coast of Darien."

The captain was very angry. He threatened to put Balboa ashore on one of the rocky islets. "Shame! Shame! " cried the rest of the party. "Let him go with us. He will be a great help." And so the captain grew kinder and agreed to take him.

Balboa's manners were so pleasant, and he proved to be so able and brave, that soon nearly all on the ship looked up to him as their leader. When they reached Darien and began to



seek for a good place to settle, Balboa gave them much help. He had been on the coast before, and he guided them to a safe harbor.

The captain proved to be so overbearing that the men at last refused to obey him. They chose Balboa to be their commander, and the captain was glad to go back to Haiti in one of the ships.

Balboa made a treaty with a powerful Indian chief who lived in a grand house and ruled all the country around. He married the chief's daughter; and at the wedding feast the chief gave the Spaniards a great quantity of gold and many slaves.

The Indians did not care much for gold. They did not know that it was worth anything. When they saw the Spaniards molding it into bars and quarreling over it, they were astonished. "If you think so much of that yellow stuff," they said, "why don't you go where there is plenty of it?" And then they told Balboa that far to the south, on the other side of the mountains, there was a great sea, and on the shores of the sea there lived a people who had so much gold that they used it to make cups and bowls and even pans and kettles.

Balboa made up his mind to go at once in search of that sea. With two hundred men and a pack of bloodhounds, to chase unfriendly Indians, he set off toward the mountains. The



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distance was not great, but the country was very rough, the forest was almost impassable, and the party had to move slowly. After many days they came to the highest ridge of the mountains. Balboa climbed to the top of the loftiest peak and looked around. South and west of him he beheld a great sea. It was so near that it seemed almost at his feet; and it stretched away and away into the distance until it seemed to meet the blue sky.

No white man had ever beheld that sea before; none had even so much as heard of it. The Spaniards afterwards called it the South Sea, because in going to it across the isthmus it seemed to lie south of the land; but we know it as the largest of all the oceans, the mighty Pacific.

From that peak in Darien, Balboa looked down with mingled feelings of awe and exultation.



With eagle eyes

He stared at the Pacific,—and all his men Looked at each other with a wild surmise— Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

Balboa had no idea that he had discovered an ocean. He supposed that the great water was merely a gulf or bay washing the coast, perhaps of India, perhaps of China. He hastened to get down to the shore. He stood on the beach, and as the waves broke about his feet he raised his sword in the air and declared that he took possession of the new-found sea in the name of the king of Spain.

Balboa with his men soon returned to the other side of the isthmus. He sent word to Spain of the discovery he had made. But ships



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and men and a new governor were already on their way to Darien; for word had reached the king that plenty of gold was to be had there.

The new governor was an old man, as fierce and heartless as a tiger. No sooner had he arrived in Darien than he began to oppress and kill the Indians. Thousands of them perished through his cruelty. Balboa was grieved to the heart; he felt pity for the poor savages. By the first homeward–bound ship he secretly sent complaints to the king about the governor's doings. Then he set to work getting ready to explore the South Sea.

Four small ships were taken apart at Darien, and Balboa caused the pieces to be carried over the mountains. At the shore on the farther side these pieces were again put together, and the ships were launched upon the sea. They were the first European vessels that ever floated on the Pacific.

But they were not yet ready to sail. They still needed a few bolts to strengthen them and some pitch to stop the leaks. While Balboa was waiting for these things the governor sent for him. The old tiger had heard of the complaints that had been sent to the king.

Balboa was ready to obey orders. He recrossed the mountains and was met by the officers who had been sent to arrest him. "You have plotted against me, you have tried to turn the king against me," said the savage governor. "You shall die the death of a traitor."

Before the sun went down, the brave, dashing, handsome Balboa was dead.