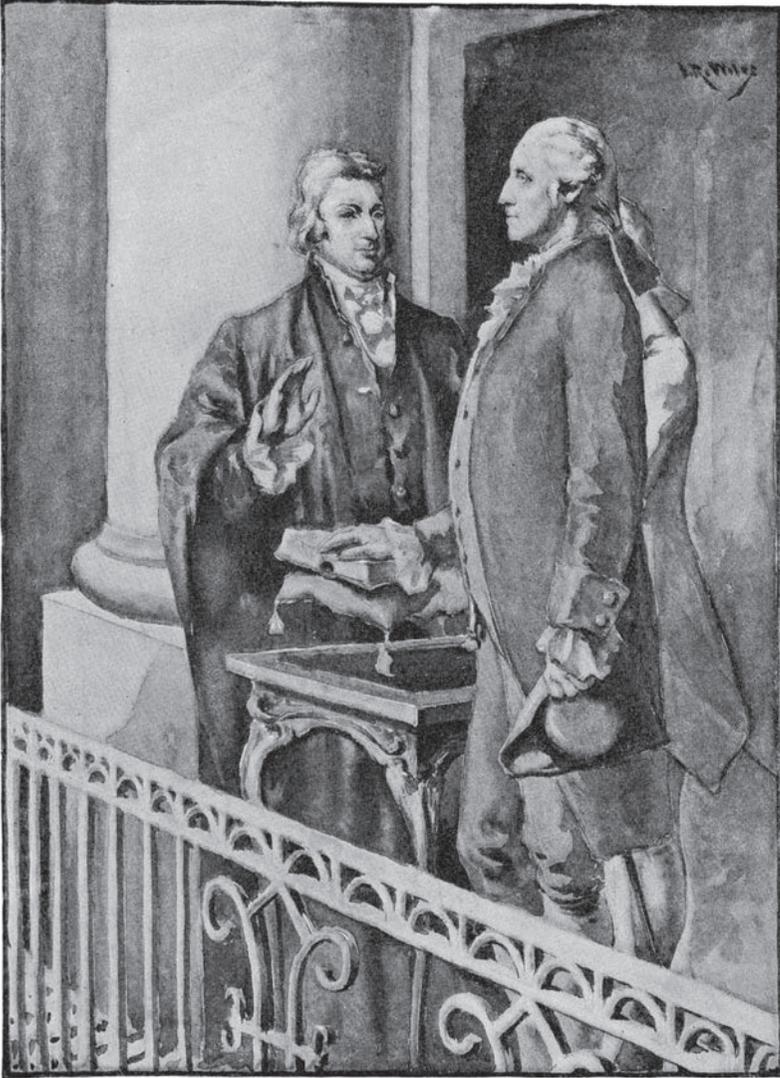


**A FIRST BOOK IN  
AMERICAN HISTORY**



THE FIRST PRESIDENT, INAUGURATED 1789

A FIRST BOOK IN  
AMERICAN HISTORY

*with special reference to the  
lives and deeds of great Americans*

by  
EDWARD EGGLESTON

YESTERDAY'S CLASSICS

ITHACA, NEW YORK

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ISBN: 978-1-63334-156-2

Yesterday's Classics, LLC  
PO Box 339  
Ithaca, NY 14851

## PREFACE

In preparing a first book of American history, it is necessary to keep in mind the two purposes such a work is required to serve. There are children whose school life is brief; these must get all the instruction they are to receive in their country's history from a book of the grade of this. To another class of pupils the first book of American history is a preparation for the intelligent study of a textbook more advanced. It is a manifest waste of time and energy to require these to learn in a lower class the facts that must be re-studied in a higher grade. Moreover, primary histories which follow the order of larger books are likely to prove dry and unsatisfactory condensations. But a beginner's book ought before all things else to be interesting. A fact received with the attention raised to its highest power remains fixed in the memory; that which is learned listlessly is lost easily, and a lifelong aversion to history is often the main result produced by the use of an unsuitable textbook at the outset.

The main peculiarity of the present book is that it aims to teach children the history of the country by making them acquainted with some of the most illustrious actors in it. A child is interested, above all, in persons. Biography is for him the natural door

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into history. The order of events in a nation's life is somewhat above the reach of younger pupils, but the course of human life and the personal achievements of an individual are intelligible and delightful. In teaching younger pupils by means of biography, which is the very alphabet of history, we are following a sound principle often forgotten, that primary education should be pursued along the line of the least resistance. Moreover, nothing is more important to the young American than an acquaintance with the careers of the great men of his country.

The superiority of works of history in our time over those of other ages lies in the attention given to the development of the life of the people as distinguished from the mere recital of public events. The biographical method here adopted offers a great advantage, by giving the younger pupil interesting glimpses of life in other times by means of personal anecdote. The usages of European courts, the dwellings and arts of the Indians, the struggles of pioneers in the wilderness, the customs of the inmates of frontier houses, the desolations of the early wars with the Indians, the home spinning and other domestic handicrafts, the stately manners and ostentatious dress of our forefathers, and many other obsolete phases of life, are vividly suggested to the pupil's mind, not by dry didactic statements, but in unforgettable stories of real people. This line of instruction is much furthered by the running comment of the accompanying illustrations.

It has often been lamented that no adequate provision is made in a school course for teaching the

## PREFACE

principles of morality. But the teaching of abstract principles is generally unavailing to produce good conduct. In the preparation of the present work I have been surprised to find how abundant are the materials for moral instruction by example in the careers of our great men. The perseverance of Columbus, of Hudson, and of Morse, the fortitude of John Smith, of Standish, and of Boone, can not but excite the courage of those who read the narratives of their lives. No intelligent pupil will follow the story of Franklin's industrious pursuit of knowledge under difficulty without a quickening of his own aspirations. What life could teach resolute patience, truth-telling, manly honor, and disinterested public spirit better than that of Washington? And where will a poor lad struggling with poverty find more encouragement to strictest honesty, to diligent study, and to simplicity of character than in the history of Lincoln? It would be a pity for a country with such examples in her history not to use them for the moral training of the young. The faults as well as the virtues of the persons whose lives are told here will afford the teacher opportunities to encourage right moral judgments.

In the matter of illustrations, the publishers have shown a liberality without precedent, I believe, in the preparation of books of this class. The talents and skill of some of the most eminent illustrators in America have been brought into requisition to lend a charm to the first lessons in American history. Should this example be generally followed in the preparation of schoolbooks, it may produce notable results; a general

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refinement of taste and feeling ought to follow an early acquaintance with works of real artistic value. The pictures have been made under the author's supervision, and are meant to be essential aids to the pupil rather than mere decorations. The younger the pupil the more must one have recourse to the imagination in teaching. Some of the pictures convey information additional to that in the text; the object of most of them is to suggest to the pupil a vivid conception of the narrative.

Perhaps the most novel feature of the book is the system of picture maps. To the untrained eye of the younger pupil an ordinary map has not much meaning, but the beautiful and effective bird's-eye views here first used in a schoolbook will leave a conception in the mind of a child distinct and ineffaceable.

Of course, the mode of studying such a book may be what the teacher pleases. Brief suggestions for a topical recitation are appended to each lesson. Recitations should not be verbal repetitions of the text; nor should they, in this grade, be precise and exhaustive. If the pupil is taught to give the substance of the narrative in his own words, it will make him assimilate what he has studied, and prove a valuable training in thought and expression. Several superintendents of schools in large cities have declared in advance their desire to introduce this book as a class reader, thus securing an elementary acquaintance with American history without overcrowding the course of study. In using the book as a reader, the topical questions will still be of service to make sure that attention has been given to the substance of the lesson.

## *PREFACE*

The definitions at the close of each lesson give chiefly the meaning of the word as used in the text. It is important that the pupil pass no word without a clear comprehension of its force. The judicious teacher will take pains to have the pupil examine the illustrations carefully, and make sure that their force is understood. The maps will be readily comprehended, and are not likely to be slighted.



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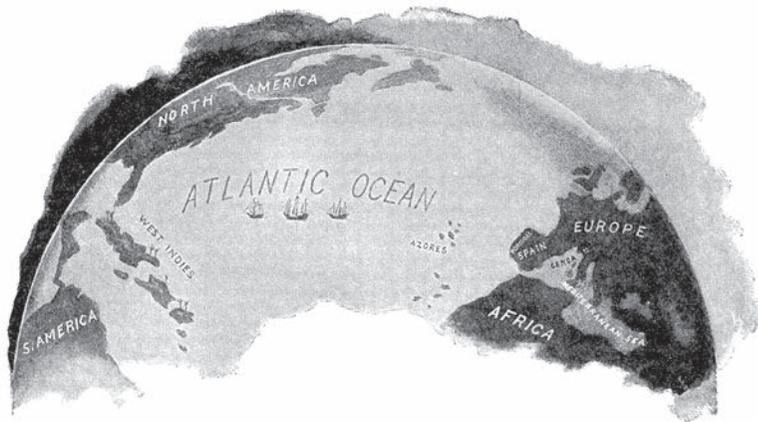
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## CHAPTER I

# THE EARLY LIFE OF COLUMBUS

MORE than four hundred years ago there lived in the old city of Genoa, in Italy, a workingman who had four sons. One of these was Christopher Columbus, who was born, probably about the year 1446, in that part of the city occupied by the weavers of woolen cloth. Learned men have lately taken much pains to find the very house. It is a narrow house, and dark inside. The city has bought it and put an inscription in Latin on the front, which says: "No house more worthy! Here, under his father's roof, Christopher Columbus passed his boyhood and youth." The father of little Christopher was a wool comber—that is, a man who prepared the wool for the spinners, or, as some say, a weaver. Christopher



COMBING WOOL

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learned to work in wool, like his father.

At this time Genoa was a place of ships and sailors, going and coming to and from many parts of the world. On the beach he might have seen the fishermen launch their boats and spread their curious pointed



sails, such as you see in the picture. From the wharves of Genoa he could watch the ships sailing out to trade in distant lands. I wonder if the wool-comber's little boy ever dreamed that he might one

day come to be the most famous of all ship captains, and sail farther away into unknown seas than any man had ever sailed before.

Columbus was doubtless poor and had to work for his living. But he must have been studious, for he somehow got a pretty good education. He learned Latin, he wrote a good hand, and could draw maps and charts for the use of sailors, by which last calling he was able to support himself when he came to be a man. At twenty-four years of age Columbus made a voyage, but he was at least twenty-seven years of age when he finally became a seaman, and began to acquire that knowledge of sailing which prepared him to make discoveries. The seamen of that time did not sail very far. Their voyages were mostly in the



COLUMBUS  
LEARNING TO DRAW  
MAPS

## THE EARLY LIFE OF COLUMBUS

Mediterranean, and they knew little of the Atlantic Ocean, which they called "The Sea of Darkness," because they did not know what was in it or on the other side of it. They believed that great monsters swam in the ocean, and that in one part it was so hot that the water boiled.

Of course, they did not know that there was any such place as America, and they believed that Africa reached clear to the south pole. The only trade they had with Asia was by caravans, which brought silks, gums, spices, and precious stones from the far East on the backs of camels.

While Columbus was yet a little boy, there was living in Portugal a prince named Henry, the son of the king of that country. Henry was a learned man, who thought he could find a way to get round Africa to the rich countries of Asia. He sent out ship after ship, until he had discovered much of the African coast.



PRINCE HENRY

It was probably the fame of these voyages that drew Columbus to Portugal. From Portugal Columbus himself sailed down the newly discovered coast of Africa. Then he went north beyond England, so that he was already a very great traveler for the time.

While the Portuguese, in trying to get to India, were creeping timidly down the coast of Africa, with land

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always in sight, Christopher Columbus conceived a new and far bolder plan. As learned men believed the world round, he proposed to sail straight west to Asia, braving all the dangers of the known Atlantic. He thought the world much smaller than it is, and he supposed that he should find Asia about as far west of Europe as America is. He did not dream of finding a new world.

As Portugal was the leading country in making discoveries, Columbus first proposed to find this new way to Asia for the king of that country. If the good Prince Henry had been alive, he would probably have adopted the plan with joy. But "Henry the Navigator," as he was called, had died long before, and the advisers of the King of Portugal ridiculed the plan, and laughed at the large reward which Columbus demanded if he should succeed. However, the king secretly sent out one of his own vessels, which sailed westward a little way, and then came back and reported that there was no land there. When Columbus heard of this, he left Portugal, not liking to be cheated in this way.



He went to Spain and appeared at court, a poor and friendless stranger. Spain was ruled at this time by King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella. They were very busy in their war with the Moors, who then occupied a great part of Spain. Columbus followed the court from place to place for years.

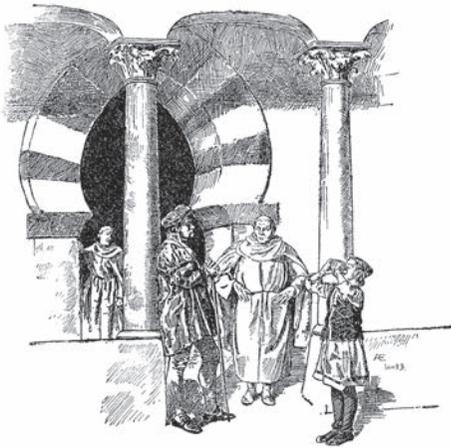
But the king and queen paid little heed to the projects

## THE EARLY LIFE OF COLUMBUS

of this foreigner. They were too much employed with battles and sieges to attend to plans for finding a new way to India.

Most of those who heard of Columbus ridiculed his plans. They did not believe that people could live on the other side of the world, and walk with their feet up and their heads down. The very children tapped their foreheads when Columbus passed, to signify their belief that the fellow was crazy.

In 1491 Columbus, whose plans were at last rejected, left the court, traveling on foot like the poor man that he was, and leading his little boy by the hand.



A MOORISH SOLDIER

He stopped one day at the convent of La Rabida to beg a little bread and water for the child. The good prior of the convent, happening to pass at that moment, was struck with the foreign accent of the stranger's speech. He began to talk with him, and soon learned of the project that had so long filled the mind of Columbus. The prior was deeply interested. He had once been the confessor, or religious adviser, of Isabella, and he now

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wrote the queen a letter in favor of the plan of Columbus. The queen sent for the prior, and he persuaded her to bring back Columbus. She sent the great navigator a mule and some decent clothes.

But Columbus, when he got back to court, still demanded such high rewards if he should succeed that he was again allowed to depart. He set out to offer his plan to the King of France; but now his friends again interceded with the queen, lamenting



that Spain should lose his services. The queen sent a messenger after him, who overtook him in a pass of the mountains and brought him back, with the assurance that, at last, he would be sent forth on his voyage.



MONSTERS SUPPOSED TO LIVE IN THE OCEAN  
AS DRAWN ON OLD MAPS

*THE EARLY LIFE OF COLUMBUS*

*Navigator*, one who sails or directs the course of ships. *Convent*, a house in which monks or nuns dwell. *Prior*, the head of a company of monks.

Tell in your own words—

Where Columbus was born.

What Columbus learned.

What is said of Prince Henry.

What happened to Columbus in Portugal.

What happened to him in Spain.

Place to be remembered—

*Genoa*, the birthplace of Columbus.

## CHAPTER II

# HOW COLUMBUS DISCOVERED AMERICA



ABOUT two hundred years before Columbus sailed, there arrived in the city of Venice one day three travelers, coarsely dressed in Chinese fashion. They said that they were three gentlemen named Polo, who had left Venice many years before. They had almost forgotten how to speak Italian, and at first their own relatives thought them foreigners and impostors. But they gave a magnificent banquet at which they all appeared in rich robes. They changed their garments again and again as the feast went on. Every robe taken off was cut up and given to the servants. At last they took their old garments and ripped them open, and poured out before the guests a collection of precious stones of untold value.

## HOW COLUMBUS DISCOVERED AMERICA

One of these gentlemen, Marco Polo, whose portrait you see here, wrote a book of his travels, describing the vast riches of Eastern countries, before unknown to people in Europe. Columbus had read this book, and it was to find a new way to reach the rich countries seen by Polo that he was now resolved to sail partly round the globe.



In spite of the power which the King of Spain gave him to force ships and seamen to go with him, Columbus found the greatest trouble in fitting out his expedition, so much were the sailors afraid of the ocean. But at last all was ready. Those who were to sail into “The Sea of Darkness” with Columbus took the sacrament and bade a solemn farewell to their friends, feeling much like men condemned to death. They embarked in three little vessels, only one of which had a deck over it.

Columbus went to the Canary Islands first. Then with bitter lamentations the men took leave of the last known land, and sailed into seas in which no ship had ever been. Columbus tried to cheer them with the stories he had read in Marco Polo’s book, of the riches of the great country of China. But he also deceived them by keeping two separate accounts of his sailing. In the one which he showed to his



COLUMBUS READING  
POLO’S BOOK

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companions he made the distance from Spain much less than it really was.

But they were greatly alarmed to find that, as they went west, the needle of the compass did not point directly to the north star. This change, though well known now, was probably as surprising to Columbus as to his men, but he did his best to keep up their courage.

The weather was fine, and the winds blew always from the east. This alarmed the sailors more than ever, for they were sure they would get no wind to come back with. One day the wind came around to the southwest, which was a great encouragement.

But presently the ships struck great masses of seaweed, and all was grumbling and lamentation again. The frightened sailors remembered old stories of a frozen ocean, and imagined that this must be the very place. When the wind fell to a calm, they thought the ships might lie there and rot for want of wind to fill the sails.

They were getting farther and farther away from Europe. Where would they find food and water to last them till they got home? They thought their commander a crack-brained fool, who would go on to their destruction. They planned, therefore, to throw him into the sea, and go back. They could say that, while he was gazing at the stars, after his fashion, he had tumbled over.

But the worst disappointments were to come. One day the glad cry of "Land!" was raised. Columbus fell on his knees to return thanks, while the men scrambled up into the rigging. But it proved to be only a cloud. On

## HOW COLUMBUS DISCOVERED AMERICA



the 7th of October another false alarm disheartened the sailors more than ever.

From the first Columbus had pointed to seaweed, and other supposed signs of land, until the men would no longer listen to his hopeful words. Now the appearance of some song birds, a heron, and a duck, could not comfort them. The great enterprise was about to end in failure, after all, when, on the 11th of October, the sailors found a branch of a thorn-tree with berries on it. At length a carved stick was found, and the men began to believe that they were really near to some inhabited land.

During the night which followed this discovery no one on the ships slept. About ten o'clock Columbus saw a glimmering light appearing and disappearing, as though someone on shore were carrying a torch. At two o'clock a sailor sighted land.

The morning light of Friday, October 12, 1492, showed the Spaniards a beautiful little island. Columbus dressed himself in scarlet, and planted the Spanish standard on the shore, throwing himself on the earth and kissing it, while the naked Indians wondered whether these men in bright armor had flown from the skies in their winged boats or had sailed down upon the clouds. The sailors, lately so ready to cast Columbus into the sea, now crowded about him, embracing him and kissing his hands.



When the Indians had recovered from their first surprise, they visited the ships, some of them in canoes, and others by swimming. They brought with them a ball of cotton yarn, bread made from roots, and some tame parrots, which, with a few golden ornaments, they exchanged for caps, glass beads, tiny bells, and other trifles, with which they could adorn themselves.

The island which Columbus first discovered was a small one, which he called San Salvador, but we do not now know which of the West India



## HOW COLUMBUS DISCOVERED AMERICA

Islands it was. He thought that he was on the coast of Asia. But where were the rich islands and great cities and houses roofed with gold, of which Marco Polo had written two hundred years before?

From island to island Columbus sailed, looking for these things, not knowing that they were thousands of miles away. Finding the island of Cuba very large, he concluded that it was a part of the mainland of Asia.

*Impostors*, people who pretend to be what they are not. *Crack-brained*, crazy. *Standard*, national flag. *Armor*, a dress to protect the person in battle, usually made of metal.

Tell in your own words—

About the return of the Polos.

What Marco Polo wrote.

What Columbus was looking for.

About his departure.

His voyage. (See Map at the top of page 1.)

The discovery.

Date to be remembered—

1492, the year of the discovery of America. About how many hundred years ago?

## CHAPTER III

# COLUMBUS AFTER THE DISCOVERY OF AMERICA

COLUMBUS was very kind to the natives. At one time a poor savage was captured by the sailors and brought to Columbus, who was standing on the high after-castle of the ship. The terrified Indian sought to gain his favor by presenting the great man with a ball of cotton yarn. Columbus refused the present, but he put upon the Indian's head a pretty colored cap; he hung bells in his ears, and tied strings of green beads about his arms. Then he sent the simple creature ashore, where his friends were afterward seen admiring his ornaments.

At another time the sailors picked up an Indian who was



GOURD  
BOTTLE

crossing in an open canoe a wide tract of water from one island to another. This man had a piece of cassava bread and a gourd of water for his sea stores. He also had a bit of red paint with which to decorate his face before appearing among strangers, and a string



## *COLUMBUS AFTER DISCOVERY OF AMERICA*

of beads procured from the white men. He was rowing to a neighboring island to carry the news of the coming of the Spaniards. His canoe was taken on board, he was fed with the best food of the ship, and put ashore at his destination.

Having got one of his vessels ashore on the coast of Haiti, which he called Hispaniola, Columbus built a fort of the timber from the wrecked vessel and left here a little colony.

But now he began to think of carrying home the good news of his great discovery. In January, 1493, he set sail for Spain. On the 12th of January, when all were looking forward to a joyful return, a terrific storm threatened to wreck the ship and to bury in the ocean all memory of the great discovery. Prayers were said and vows were made, for the safety of the ship.



To preserve the memory of his discovery if all else should be lost, Columbus wrote two accounts of it, which he enclosed in cakes of wax and put into two barrels. One of these was thrown into the sea; the other was set upon the stern of the vessel, that it might float off if the ship should go down. He hoped that one of these barrels might drift to the coast of Europe and be found.

Columbus at length reached the islands called the

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Azores. Here, when the storm had abated, some of his men went ashore to perform their vows at a little chapel, and were made prisoners by the Portuguese governor. Having got out of this difficulty, Columbus put to sea and met another gale, which split his sails and threatened to wreck the vessel. He finally came to anchor in a Portuguese port, where he no doubt felt some exultation in showing what Portugal had lost by refusing his offers.



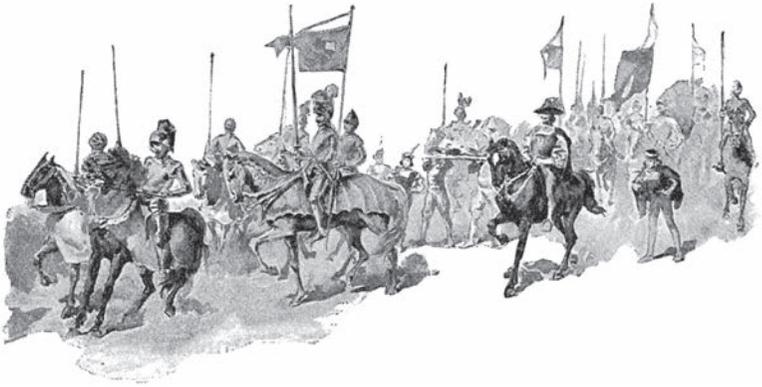
COLUMBUS RETURNS IN TRIUMPH

In April he reached Barcelona, a Spanish city, and made his entry in a triumphal procession. At the head marched the Indians whom he had brought back with him. These were well smeared with paint and decorated with the feathers of tropical birds and with golden ornaments. Then parrots and stuffed birds were borne in

## *COLUMBUS AFTER DISCOVERY OF AMERICA*

the procession with articles of gold. Columbus followed, escorted by Spanish knights proud to do him honor. Ferdinand and Isabella received him under a canopy of gold brocade. As a mark of special honor, they caused him to sit down while he related his discoveries.

This was the happiest moment in the troubled life of Columbus. He who had been thought insane was now the most honored man in Spain.



The rest of his story is mostly a story of misfortunes. The people in his first colony on the island of Hispaniola quarreled among themselves and maltreated the Indians, until the latter fell on them and killed them all. The second colony was also unfortunate. Columbus was not a wise governor, and he had many troubles in trying to settle a new country with unruly and avaricious people.

An officer sent out to inquire into the disorders in the colony sent Columbus home in chains. The people were shocked at this treatment of the great navigator, and so were the king and queen, who ordered the

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COLUMBUS IN CHAINS

chains removed. When Columbus appeared before Isabella and saw tears in her eyes, he threw himself on his knees, while his utterance was choked by his sobs.



COLUMBUS BEFORE ISABELLA

After this he was not permitted to return to his colony; but in 1502 he made his fourth voyage to America, trying to find a way to get through the mainland of South America in order to reach India, which he thought must lie just beyond. He was at length forced to run his worm-eaten vessel aground near the shore of the island of Jamaica. Thatched cabins were built on the deck of the stranded ship, and here

## *COLUMBUS AFTER DISCOVERY OF AMERICA*

Columbus, a bed-ridden invalid, lived miserably for a year.

One faithful follower, named Diaz, traded a brass basin, a coat, and his two shirts, to an Indian chief for a canoe, in which after horrible suffering Diaz reached Hispaniola. Meantime the men on the wrecked ship got provisions from the Indians in exchange for trinkets. Some of the men ran away from Columbus and lived with the Indians.

The Indians now got tired of providing food in exchange for toys, and Columbus and his men were at the point of starvation. Knowing that an eclipse of the moon was about to take place, he told the Indians that a certain god would punish them if they did not provide for him, and, as a sign, he said the moon would lose its light and change color that very night. No sooner did the eclipse appear, than the Indians brought him all the provisions at hand, and the Spaniards did not lack after that.

Help at length reached Columbus, and he returned to Spain broken in health and spirits. Queen Isabella, who had been his best friend, died soon after his return. Columbus died on the 20th of May, 1506. He believed to the last that he had discovered the eastern parts of Asia. He never knew that he had found a new continent.

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*After-castle*, a cabin built above the deck at the stern of a ship in ancient times, to enable the sailors to shoot down upon the deck of an enemy's vessel. *Cassava*, a sort of bread made of the root of the tapioca plant. *Gourd*, the fruit of a vine of the same family as the pumpkin, with a hard and woody shell, which is still used as a dipper or bottle in many parts of America. *Canopy*, a covering or awning spread overhead. *Brocade*, silk goods with gold or silver thread woven in it, or woven with raised figures. *Avaricious*, fond of money, eager for gain.

Tell in your own words about—

Columbus and the Indians.

The voyage home.

The triumphant reception.

The colonies planted by Columbus.

Columbus in chains.

His last voyage and shipwreck.

His return and death.

The pupil may be asked to write out briefly his impression of the usefulness, the character, and the fate of Columbus.

## CHAPTER IV

# JOHN CABOT AND HIS SON SEBASTIAN

THE food eaten four or five hundred years ago was mostly coarse and unwholesome. The people were therefore very fond of all sorts of spices which they mixed with almost everything they ate. These spices were brought from Asia by caravans. It was chiefly to get to the land of spices by sea that Prince Henry the Navigator tried to send ships around the southern point of Africa. Columbus had also tried to reach the "Spice Islands" of Asia in his voyage to the west.

Now another Italian was to try it. This man was John Cabot. Like Columbus, he was probably born in or near the city of Genoa; like Columbus, he thought much about geography as it was then understood; and, like Columbus, he was a great traveler. He moved to Venice and then to Bristol in England.

The Italian merchants traveled farther than any others in that day. One of Cabot's long trading journeys had carried him into Arabia as far as the city of Mecca. Here he saw the caravans that brought their loads of

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costly spices on the backs of camels from the countries of the East. Now the people of Europe in Cabot's time, having very few printed books, knew almost nothing about these far-away Eastern countries.

“Where do these spices come from?” Cabot asked of the men belonging to the caravan.



They answered that they brought them from a country far to the east of Mecca, where they bought spices of other caravans which brought them from a land yet farther to the east. From this Cabot reasoned as Columbus had done, that, if he should sail to the west far enough, he would get round the world to the land of spices. It would be something like going about a house to come in by the back door.

While Cabot was living in England there came great news out of Spain. One Christopher Columbus, it was said, had discovered the coasts of India by sailing to the westward, for Columbus thought the land he had found a part of India. When this was told in England, people thought it “a thing more divine than human to sail by the west into the east.” And when Cabot heard the story, there arose in his heart, as he said, “a great flame of desire to do some notable thing.”

While Columbus had waited in discouragement for Ferdinand and Isabella to accept his project, he had sent his brother Bartholomew Columbus to Henry

## *JOHN CABOT AND HIS SON SEBASTIAN*

the Seventh, then King of England, to offer the plan to him. What answer the king gave to Bartholomew is not known, for, before the latter got back to Spain, Christopher Columbus had returned from his first voyage.

But now for this same King Henry of England Cabot offered to make a voyage like that of Columbus. As the Atlantic had already once been crossed, the king readily agreed to allow Cabot to sail under his authority.

In May, 1497, Cabot set sail from Bristol in a small vessel with eighteen men, mostly Englishmen. Cabot sailed much farther north than Columbus, and he appears to have discovered first the island of Cape Breton, now part of the Dominion of Canada. He went ashore on the 24th of June, and planted a large cross and the flag of England, as well as the flag of St. Mark, the patron saint of Venice. He also discovered the mainland of North America. Cabot was thus the first to see the American continent. Columbus discovered the mainland of South America a year later. Cabot did not see any Indians, but he brought back some of their traps for catching wild animals.

He got back to England in August, having been gone but three months. He brought news that he had discovered the territory of the Emperor of China. The king gave him a pension, he dressed himself in silks, and was called "The Great Admiral." It is to be feared this sudden rise in the world puffed him up a great deal. To one of his companions he promised an island, and another island he was going to bestow on his barber!

On the strength of these promises, both of these men set themselves up for counts!



CABOT AND HIS TWO COUNTS

That there were many fish on the new coast was a fact which impressed the practical Bristol people, though Cabot had no thought of engaging in fishery. He imagined that by sailing a little farther south than before he might come to the large island that Marco Polo called Cipango, and we now call Japan. He did not know that the far-off country he had seen was not half so far away as Japan. Cabot believed that all the spices and precious stones in the world came from Cipango.

King Henry the Seventh fitted out Cabot with another and much larger expedition. This expedition went far to the north along the coast of America, and then away to the south as far as the shores of what is now the State of North Carolina. Cabot found Indians dressed in skins, and possessing no metal but a little copper. He found no gold, and he brought back no spices. The island of Cipango and the territories of the

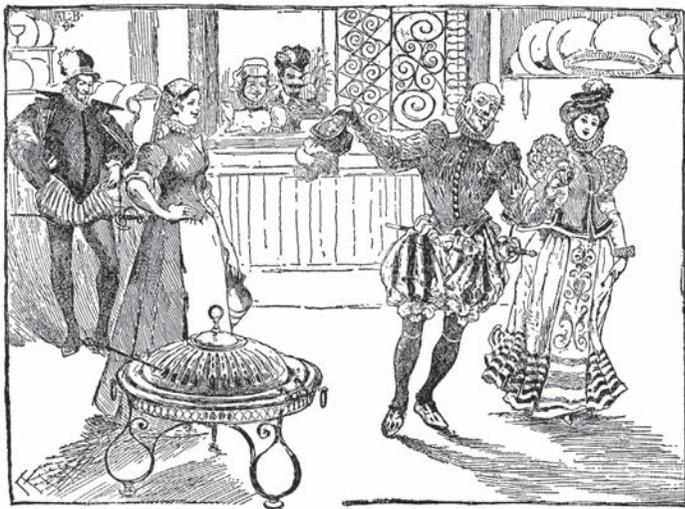
## JOHN CABOT AND HIS SON SEBASTIAN

Emperor of China he looked for in vain, though he was sure that he had reached the coast of Asia.

Cabot's crew brought back stories of seas so thick with codfish that their vessels were made to move more slowly by them. They even told of bears swimming out into the sea and catching codfish in their claws. But the English people lost interest in voyages that brought neither gold nor spices, and we do not know anything more about John Cabot.



John Cabot's second son, Sebastian, who was with him on this voyage, became, like his father, famous for his knowledge of geography, and was sometimes employed by the King of Spain and sometimes by the King of England. He promoted expeditions to try to find a way to China by the north of Europe. When a very



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old man he took a great interest in the sailing of a new expedition of discovery, and visited with a company of ladies and gentlemen the *Search-thrift*, a little vessel starting on a voyage of exploration to the northeast. Having tasted of “such good cheer” as the sailors could make aboard the ship, and after making them liberal presents, the little company went ashore and dined at the sign of the “Christopher,” where the lively old gentleman for joy, as it is said, at the “towardness” of the discovery, danced with the rest of “the young company,” after which he and his friends departed, “most gently commending” the sailors to the care of God.

*Caravan*, a company of merchants, or others, traveling together for safety. *Notable*, worthy of notice. *Admiral*, a title given to the commander of a fleet, and also in old times to a man who had performed some great exploit at sea. *Towardness*, forwardness. *Count*, a title of nobility.

Tell in your own words about—

- Caravans of spices.
- The travels of Cabot.
- The news from Columbus.
- John Cabot's first voyage.
- John Cabot's second voyage.
- Sebastian Cabot.

## CHAPTER V

### CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH



ON the estate of Lord Willoughby, in the eastern part of England, there was a family of poor tenants named Smith, who had a son born in 1579. They named him John. John Smith is the most common of names, but this was the most uncommon of all the John Smiths. He was apprenticed to learn a trade, but he ran away from his master and became, for a while, a servant to Lord Willoughby, who was going to Holland.

Like most runaway boys, he found the world a hard place, and had to lead a very rough-and-tumble life. He enlisted as a soldier; he was shipwrecked; he was robbed and reduced to beggary; and, if we may believe his own story, he was once pitched into the sea by a company of pilgrims, who thought that he had caused the storm, like Jonah in the Bible. This must have happened not far from shore, for he reached land without the aid of a whale, and went into the war against the Turks. There he killed three Turks in single combat, and cut off their



heads, but Captain John Smith came near losing his own head in the fight with the last one.

The Turks captured Smith afterwards and made him a slave. His Turkish master was

very cruel, and put an iron collar on his neck. While Smith was thrashing wheat one day with his dog collar on, the Turk began to thrash him. Smith grew angry, and, leaving the wheat, hit his master with the flail, killing him on the spot. Then he took a bag of wheat for food, mounted his master's horse and escaped to the wilderness, and got out of Turkey.



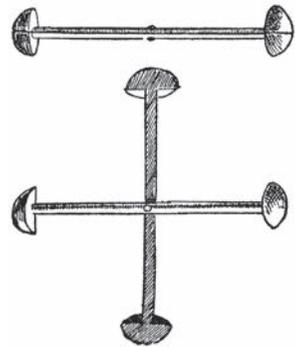
When, at last, Captain Smith got back to England with his wonderful budget of stories about narrow escapes and bloody fights, he probably found it hard to settle down to a peaceful life. The English people were

## CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH

just then talking a great deal about settling a colony in North America, which was quite wild and almost wholly unexplored. Nothing suited the wandering and daring Captain Smith better. He joined the company which set sail for America, in three little ships, in 1606. The largest of these was called the *Susan Constant*.

I am sorry to say the people sent out in this first company were what we should call nowadays a hard set. They were most of them men who knew nothing about work. They had heard how the Spaniards grew rich from the gold and silver in South America, and they expected to pick up gold without trouble.

The colony was settled at a place called Jamestown. Soon after the settlers landed the Indians attacked them while they were unarmed, and the settlers might all have been put to death with the bows and arrows and war clubs of the Indians, if the people on one of the ships had not fired a cross-bar shot—such as you see in the picture. This cross-bar shot happened to cut down a limb of a tree over the heads of the Indians. When they heard the noise of the cannon, like thunder, and saw the tree tops come tumbling on their heads, the Indians thought it was time to make good use of their heels.



CROSS-BAR SHOT,  
CLOSED AS PUT  
INTO A GUN AND  
OPEN AFTER FIRING

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The people of that day did not know how to plant colonies, and the lack of good food and shelter caused the death of more than half of the Jamestown settlers. The Indians who lived near them had fields of Indian corn, whose streaming blades and waving tassels were a strange sight to Englishmen. When at last the corn was ripe, Captain John Smith set sail in a small boat and traded a lot of trinkets to the Indians for corn, and so saved the lives of many of the people.



JOHN SMITH

The English thought America was only a narrow strip of land. They were still looking for a way to India, as Columbus had looked for one more than a hundred years before. The King of England had told them to explore any river coming from the northwest. Smith therefore set out to sail up the little Chickahominy River to find the Pacific Ocean, not knowing that this ocean was nearly three thousand miles away.

The daring captain left his two men in charge of the boat while he went on farther. The Indians killed the men and then pursued Smith. Smith had taken an Indian prisoner, and he saved himself by putting

## CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH

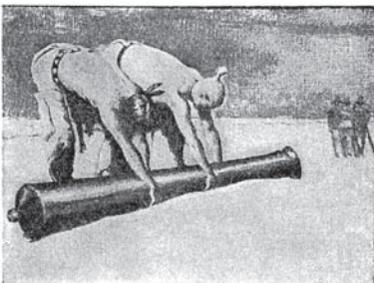


SMITH FIGHTS THE INDIANS

this prisoner between him and his enemies. But the Indians caught Smith after he had fled into a swamp, where he sank up to his waist in the mud, so that he could neither fight nor run. He made friends with the head Indian of the party by giving him a pocket compass and trying to explain its use.

As all the Indians had a great curiosity to see a white man, Smith was marched from one Indian village to another; but he was treated with a great deal of respect. Perhaps the Indians thought that men who sailed in big canoes and discharged guns that blazed and smoked and made a noise like thunder and knocked the trees down, must have some mysterious power. But they also thought that if they could persuade the white people to give them some big guns they could easily conquer all the Indian tribes with which they were at war.

The Indians surrounded Smith with curious charms



by way of finding out whether he was friendly to them or not. They fed him very well; but Smith, who was as ignorant of Indians as they were of white people, thought

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that they were fattening him to eat him, so he did not have much appetite.

Powhatan was the name of the great chief of these Indians. This chief set Smith free. He sent some men along with him on his return to Jamestown to bring back two cannons and a grindstone in exchange for the prisoner; but the Indians found these things rather too heavy to carry, and they were forced to return with nothing but trinkets.

Captain Smith seems to have been the best man to control the unruly settlers and manage the Indians. The people in England who had sent out this colony thought they could make the chief, Powhatan, friendly by sending him presents. They sent him a crown, a wash basin, and a bedstead, also a red robe, and other things quite unnecessary to a wild Indian. But when Powhatan for the first time in his life had a bedstead and a wash basin and a red gown, he thought himself so important that he would not sell corn to the settlers, who were in danger of starving. Captain Smith, however, showed him some blue glass beads, pretending that he could not sell them because they were made of some substance like the sky, and were to be worn only by the greatest princes. Powhatan became half crazy to get these precious jewels, and Smith bought a large boat-load of corn for a pound or two of beads.

## CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH

*Apprenticed*, bound to serve a master in order to learn a trade. *Pilgrim*, a traveler going to visit some holy place. *Single combat*, a duel, a fight between two men only. *Explore*, to visit and examine a country before unknown or little known. *Unexplored*, not yet visited or examined by civilized people. *Trinket*, a toy; something of small value.

Tell in your own words—

What you can remember of Captain Smith's curious adventures before he went to Turkey.

His adventures in the war with the Turks.

His escape from slavery.

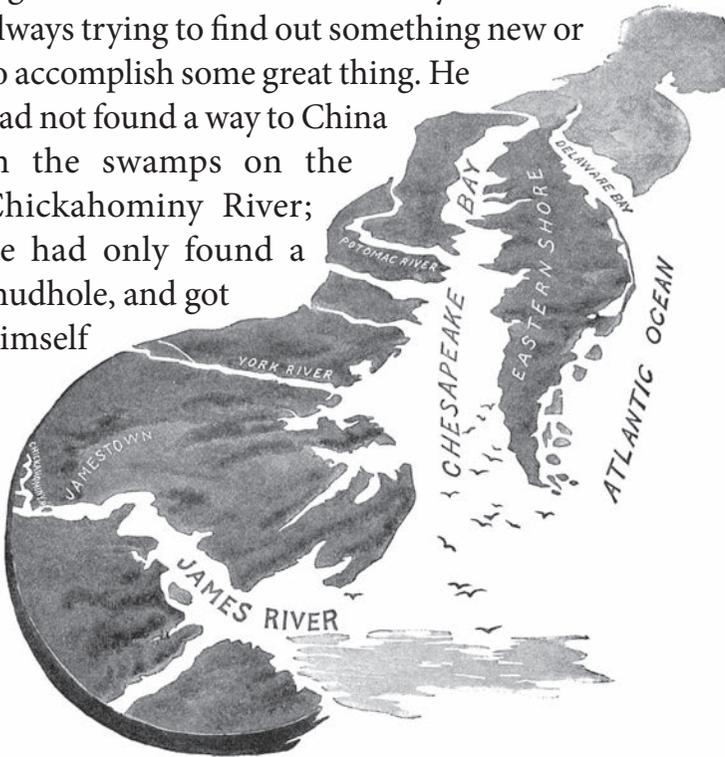
His captivity among the Indians.

Date and place to be remembered: First English colony settled in America, at *Jamestown*, in the year 1607.

## CHAPTER VI

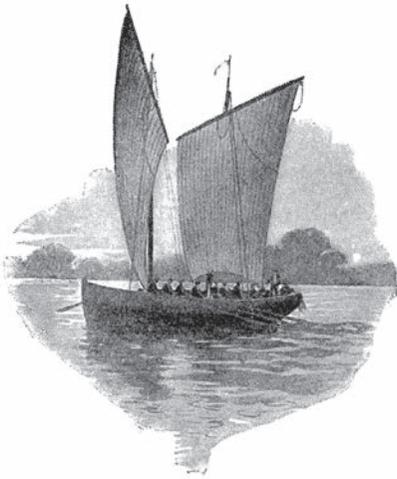
# MORE ABOUT CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH

THE two best things about Captain John Smith were, that he was never idle and he never gave up. He was a good man to have in a colony, for he was always trying to find out something new or to accomplish some great thing. He had not found a way to China in the swamps on the Chickahominy River; he had only found a mudhole, and got himself



## MORE ABOUT CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH

captured by the Indians. But he thought he might find the Pacific Ocean by sailing up the Chesapeake Bay. So he went twice up this bay, exploring at last to the very head of it. Of course, he did not find a way into the Pacific Ocean. We know well enough nowadays that China is not anywhere in the neighborhood of Baltimore. But Smith made a good map of the great bay, and he bought corn from the Indians, and so kept the colony alive. This was better than finding a way to China, if he had only known it.



In living in an open boat and sailing among Indians that were very suspicious and unfriendly, Smith and his men had to suffer many hardships. They were sometimes nearly wrecked by storms, and once when their sail had been torn to pieces they patched it with the shirts off their backs. Their bread was spoiled by the splashing of the salt water, and they suffered so much from thirst that at one time they would have been willing to give a barrel of gold, if they had only had it, for a drink of puddle water. Sometimes, when sleeping on the ground, they got so cold that they were forced to get up in the night and move their fire, so that they could lie down on the warm earth where the fire had been.



SMITH AND HIS MEN IN CAMP

At one place the Indians shot arrows at them from the trees. Then they tried to get the Englishmen to come on shore by dancing with baskets in their hands. Captain Smith says that he felt sure they had nothing in their baskets but villainy. So he had his men fire off their guns. The noise of the guns so frightened the Indians that they all dropped to the ground and then fled into the woods. Smith and his men now ventured ashore and left presents of beads, little bells, and looking-glasses in their wigwams. Pleased with these things, the Indians became friendly and fell to trading.

Once, when many of Captain Smith's men were ill, the Indians attacked him. Smith put his sick men under a tarpaulin, and mounted their hats on sticks among his well men, so that the boat appeared to have its full force. Having procured Indian shields of wickerwork, Captain Smith put them along the side of his boat, so as to fight from behind them. But he generally made

## *MORE ABOUT CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH*

friends with the Indian tribes, and he came back to Jamestown with plenty of corn and furs.

Powhatan, the greatest of the Indian chiefs, wanted to get the arms of the white men. Muskets, swords, and pistols were now and then stolen by the Indians, and Captain Smith tried to put a stop to this thievery. Two Indians who were brothers stole a pistol. They were captured, and one of them was put into prison, while the other was sent to get the pistol. The one in the prison was allowed a fire of charcoal, to keep him from freezing. When his brother came back the prisoner was found smothered by the gas from the charcoal fire. The other poor fellow was heartbroken; but Captain Smith succeeded in reviving the one that had been smothered. From this the Indians concluded that he was not only a great brave, but a great medicine man as well, who could bring dead people to life.

At another time an Indian stole a bag of gunpowder, which was a thing of wonder to the Indians. He also stole a piece of armor at the same time. He had seen white men dry their powder when wet by putting it into a piece of armor and holding it over the fire. He tried to do the same thing; but the fire was too hot for



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the powder, and the Indian was treated to a very great surprise. This terrified the Indians for a time.

In 1609 there were many newcomers, and Captain Smith's enemies got control of the colony. They sent Smith home, and he never saw Virginia again.

Captain Smith afterwards sailed on a voyage to New England in 1614. While his men caught and salted fish to pay for the expense of the voyage, Smith sailed in an open boat along the New England coast. He traded with the Indians, giving them beads and other trinkets for furs. He also made the first good map of the coast. After he had returned to England with furs, Hunt, who was captain of his second ship, coaxed twenty-four Indians on board and then sailed away with them to Spain. Here he made sale of his shipload of salted fish, and began to sell the poor Indians for slaves. Some good monks, finding out what he was doing, stopped him and took the Indians into their convent to make Christians of them. One of these Indians, named Squanto, afterwards found his way to England, and from there was taken back to America.

Captain Smith tried very hard to persuade English people to plant a colony in New England. He finally set out with only sixteen men to begin a settlement there. He had made friends with the New England Indians, and he was sure that with a few men he could still succeed in planting a colony. But he had very bad luck. He first lost the masts of his vessels in a storm. He returned to England again and set sail in a smaller ship. He was then chased by a pirate vessel. Smith found,

### *MORE ABOUT CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH*

on hailing this ship, that some of the men on board had been soldiers under him in the Turkish wars. They proposed to him to be their captain, but he did not want to command such rogues.

Smith's little vessel had no sooner got away from these villains, than he was chased by a French ship. He had to threaten to blow up his ship to get his men to fight. He escaped again, but the next time he was met by a fleet of French privateers. They made Smith come aboard one of their vessels to show his papers. After they had got him out of his ship they held him prisoner and took possession of his cargo. They afterwards agreed to let him have his vessel again, as he was still determined to sail to New England; but his men wanted to turn back; so, while Smith was on the French ship, his own men ran away with his vessel and got back to England. Thus his plan for a colony failed.

Smith spent his summer in the French fleet. When the French privateers were fighting with an English vessel they made Smith a prisoner in the cabin; but when they fought with Spanish ships they would put Smith at the guns and make him fight with them. Smith reached England at last, and had the satisfaction of having some of his runaway sailors put into prison. He never tried to plant another colony, though he was very much pleased with the success of the Plymouth colony which settled in New England a few years later than this. This brave, roving, fighting, boasting captain died in 1631, when he was fifty-two years old.

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*Villainy*, wickedness. *Tarpaulin*, waterproof canvas for covering goods. *Wigwam*, an Indian house. *Wickerwork*, woven of twigs, like a basket. *Piece of armor*, one of the plates formerly worn on the breast, back, or other part of a soldier for protection. *Pirate*, a sea robber. *Privateer*, a war ship belonging to private owners, with authority from a government to capture the vessels of an enemy. *Medicine man*, a priest and doctor among the Indians who pretends to work by charms.

Tell what you can about—

Captain Smith in Chesapeake Bay.

Captain Smith's dealings with the Indians.

The Indians and the gunpowder.

Captain Smith's attempt to settle New England.