

him were the tempest and the storm? The sea was his home; a wave-tossed ship was but a rocking cradle; the oceans roar a happy cradle song. He loved the sea.

And loving it, he wondered what lay beyond the horizon—beyond the realm where men had dared explore. He wondered. And as he wondered he dreamed. If men could not answer him, nature and his fancy could. He dreamed. And what pictures of fancy they were, painted on the fabric of a thousand slender facts, outlined by the theories of the boldest adventurers, and tinted and perfected by his own personality. These were the dreams that became realities—magnificent realities which needed no proving to him, Christopher Columbus.

Here then was the opportunity of ages; here the man who saw it. Here was a test for the mettle of a man; here a man who dared to try it.

He saw an opportunity. What was it? Vast and grand as the New World is, yet through all historic ages it had been unknown to the old. For the Egyptian legend, narrated by Plato, concerning the "Islands of Atlantis," had been at best but a fable. And tho' it is not impossible that in some time, "beyond the reach of either history or tradition,—when, as some imagine, the arts may have flourished in a degree unknown,—there existed an intercourse between the shores of the Atlantic," but if so, then all such knowledge had been lost even to the Ancients. And so as the people of Europe stood upon its shores gazing to westward, they were filled with awe and terror at the vast waters of the ocean, "which seemed to bound the world as with a chaos, into which conjecture could not penetrate and enterprise feared to adventure." For imagination had pictured it as a region of death,

Where the waves rolled high,
And the clouds rolled low;
Where wave followed fast on wave,
And underneath was the undertow,
And underneath the grave.