

*Epistola Christofori Colom . . . de insulis Indie supra Gangem, March 14, 1493. Published in Rome, April 1493. (Letter from Christopher Columbus: to whom our age owes much; on the recently discovered islands of India beyond the Ganges)*

*A Letter addressed to the noble Lord Raphael Sanchez, Treasurer to their most invincible Majesties, Ferdinand and Isabella, King and Queen of Spain, by Christopher Columbus, to whom our age is greatly indebted, treating of the islands of India recently discovered beyond the Ganges, to explore which he had been sent eight months before under the **auspices [authorization]** and at the expense of their said **Majesties**.*

...In that island also which I have before said we name Española, there are mountains of very great size and beauty, vast plains, groves, and very fruitful fields, admirably adapted for **tillage, pasture, and habitation**. The convenience and excellence of the harbours in this island, and the abundance of the rivers, so indispensable to the health of man, **surpass** anything that would be believed by one who had not seen it. The trees, herbage, and fruits of Española are very different from those of Juana, and moreover it abounds in various kinds of spices, gold, and other metals.

...On my arrival at that sea, I had taken some Indians by force from the first island that I came to, in order that they might learn our language, and communicate to us what they knew respecting the country; which plan succeeded excellently, and was a great advantage to us, for in a short time, either by gestures and signs, or by words, we were enabled to understand each other. These men are still travelling with me, and although they have been with us now a long time, they continue to **entertain the idea** that I have **descended from heaven**; and on our arrival at any new place they published this, crying out immediately with a loud voice to the other Indians, “Come, come and look upon beings of a **celestial race**”: upon which both women and men, children and adults, young men and old, when they got rid of the fear they at first entertained, would come out in **throng**s, crowding the roads to see us, some bringing food, others drink, with astonishing affection and kindness.

Such are the events which I have briefly described. Farewell.

Lisbon, the 14 of March.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS,

*Admiral of the Fleet of the Ocean.*