

the road, having no guide nor any knowledge of the compass.

I own, that it is not impossible to traverse the high seas without a compass, and that very resolute people might have undertaken to seek after the new world by conducting themselves simply by the stars. The Astrolabe being known to the ancients, it might strike them they could leave France or Spain, and sail to the west, by keeping the polar star always to the right, and by frequent soundings might have kept nearly in the same latitude; without doubt the Carthaginians, of whom Aristotle makes mention, found the means of returning from these remote countries by keeping the polar star to the left; but it must be allowed that a like voyage would be looked upon as a rash enterprize, and that consequently we must not be astonished that the ancients had not even conceived the project.

Previous to Christopher Columbus's expedition, the Azores, the Canaries, and Madeira were discovered. It was remarked, that when the west winds lasted a long time, the sea brought pieces of foreign wood on the coast of these islands, canes of unknown species,
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