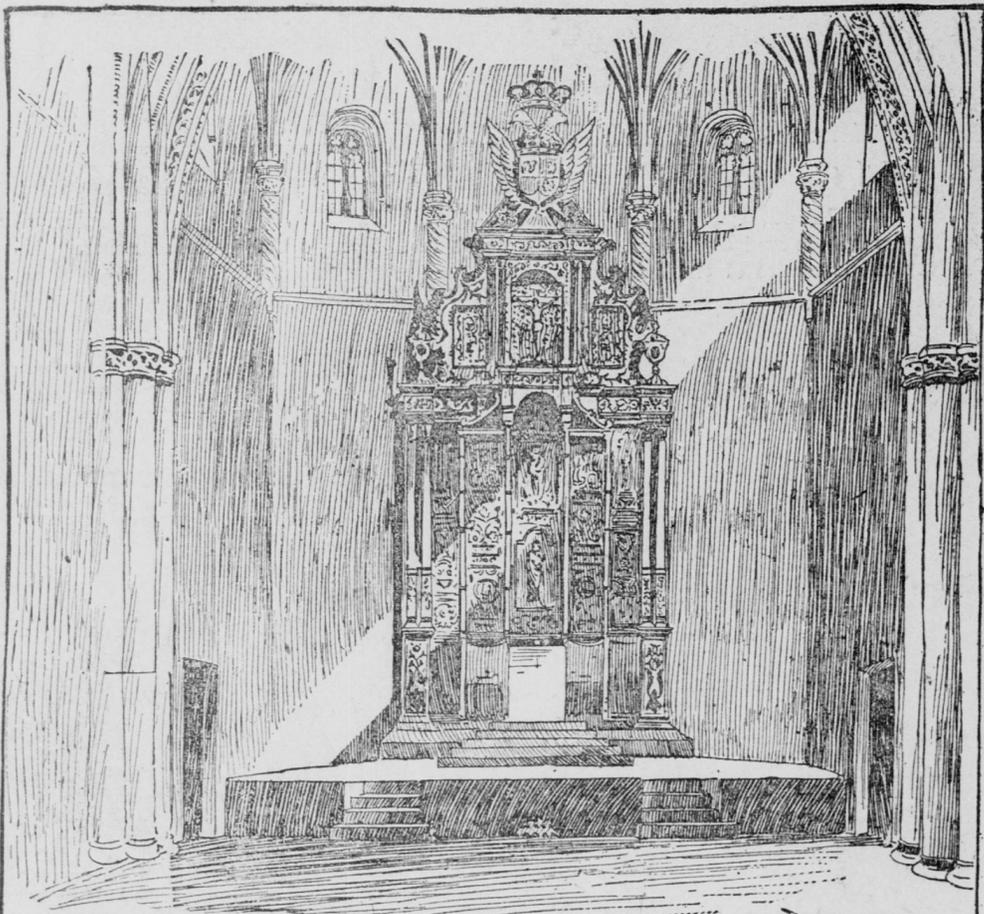


# WHERE ARE THE ASHES OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS?

RUDOLPH CRONAU, a Member of the American Historical Association, Who Has Carefully Investigated the Disputed Question, Declares That the Ashes Removed to Havana and Entombed With Such Great Ceremony, Were Not Those of the Great Admiral.



The Columbus Monument in Havana

The sanctuary of the Cathedral at San Domingo. The vault of Columbus is indicated by the stroke of sunlight.



Statue of Columbus.

The Cathedral in San Domingo

place that the site of the admiral's resting place had no mark whatever and was known only by tradition.

When, in 1783, and again in 1787, the celebrated French historian, Moreau de St. Mery, endeavored to determine the exact location of the grave, he expressed his disappointment in these eloquent words: "What a subject for the reflection of the philosopher! Scarcely are three hundred years past since the discovery of the new world and already we hardly know what are become of the precious remains of the sagacious, enterprising and intrepid discoverer. We see him expressing an anxious solicitude that his ashes may repose in the capital of the immense island which first established the truth of his opinion with respect to the existence of a western hemisphere; they are transported hither posterior to the construction of the principal edifice, the cathedral, and yet—oh supine indifference for all that is truly noble!—not a mausoleum, not a monument, not even an inscription to tell where they lie!"

A few years after the French writer's visit, in 1785, Spain was compelled by the treaty of Basle to cede San Domingo to France. The Duke of Veraguas, a descendant of the Columbus family, now remembered the ashes of the great admiral. Arguing that it would be unworthy to Spain that the bones of its greatest admiral should rest under a foreign flag, he requested the removal of the remains to the cathedral at Havana. As the treaty of Basle gave to Spain the right to remove from San Domingo such property as she might desire, on December 20, 1785, the Spanish Lieutenant General Aristazabal appeared on the island with a group of distinguished Spaniards in the cathedral, to receive the remains.

On the right or gospel side of the altar, where, according to traditions, Christopher Columbus had been laid to rest, a small vault was found. The official document written at the same day states:

"The vault was opened, which is in the sanctuary on the gospel side, main wall and platform of the high altar, one cubic yard in size, and therein were found some thin pieces of lead about a third of a yard wide, showing that there had been a box of said metal and pieces of bones, as it were of shin bones or other parts of some deceased person; these were collected in a salver, into which was filled also the dust, which resulted from the fragments of some small bones and its color was seen to belong to that corpse. The whole was placed in a gilt leaden case with an iron lock, etc."

After a high mass had been celebrated with great ceremony, the remains were taken to Havana and deposited in a niche opened in the wall of the presbytery of the cathedral. Later the niche was closed with a slab, showing an entirely imaginary portrait of Columbus, and beneath the inscription in Spanish:

"Oh, remains and image of the great Columbus, for a thousand ages rest secure in this urn, and in the remembrance of our nation."

Eighty-one years passed by. Then the conviction that the ashes of Columbus were at rest in Havana suddenly was shaken. In the year 1877 some repairs and changes were undertaken in the sanctuary of the cathedral at San Domingo. During the progress of this work on the left or epistle side of the sanctuary a small vault was discovered containing the remains of a leaden case with an inscription indicating that the human bones enclosed in the casket were those of Don Luis Colon, the grandson of Christopher Columbus.

This discovery invited the authorities of the church to extend investigations over the whole ground of the sanctuary. On September 9, at the right or presbytery side, the vault was found which had been emptied by the Spaniards in 1785. The next day the space between that vault and the wall of the cathedral was sounded and resulted in the discovery of another somewhat larger vault, covered by a large, rough stone slab. After breaking away a piece of that slab an object could be seen in the box like a square box.

At this stage Archbishop Coccochia, under whose directions the investigations had been prosecuted, was notified, and by introducing his arm into the opening he discovered that the object in the vault was a leaden case having an inscription upon its top. Not allowing any one to go further, the Archbishop summoned the President and Cabinet of the Dominican Republic, as well as all foreign Consuls and civic and ecclesiastical dignitaries. In the

presence of this high assemblage the stone slab was removed, the box taken out and carefully examined. As it had rested in the absolutely dry vault upon two bricks, it proved to be in a state of fair preservation, but dull in color and covered by a coating of oxide, unmistakable indications of old age. The closed box was nine inches high, sixteen and three-quarters inches long and eight and one-half inches wide. The hinged and overlapping cover had on its top an inscription, which was interpreted to mean "Descubridor de la America, primero Almirante," that is, "Discoverer of America, first admiral." On the left side, and also on the front side, of the box the letter C was engraved and on the right side the letter A. They are believed to be initials of the words "Cristobal Colon, almirante."

After opening the hinged lid on the inside of it another inscription appeared, which was interpreted to mean "Ilustre y esclarecido varon, Don Cristobal Colon," illustrious and famous man, Don Christopher Columbus.

An examination of the contents of the box revealed human bones, with the exception of a few parts reduced to dust. Later, during a more careful examination of the bones, among the mold and dust a bullet of lead, two small iron screws and a little silver plate were found. The screws and corresponding holes in the silver plate, as well as in the back of the case, proved that in former times the silver plate had been affixed inside of the case, but had become loosened there-

from. The little plate contained inscriptions on both sides.

Without doubt both inscriptions were intended to give the same idea, but it seems the author, not satisfied with the two meager first abbreviations, tried to give in the second inscription a fuller expression of his meaning, as if he would take care that the abbreviations might be better understood. The meaning of the abbreviations is as follows: "Ultima parte de los restos del primer Almirante Cristobal Colon Descubridor."—"Last part of the remains of Christopher Columbus, Discoverer."

The news of the important discovery, which seemed to indicate that the remains removed in 1785 to Havana were not those of Christopher Columbus, but that his grave had been found undisturbed, created a great sensation in the scientific world, especially when Spain, finding that its claim to the true relics of Columbus was endangered, accused the Archbishop, Coccochia, and the other dignitaries of the cathedral at San Domingo of being the "authors and accomplices of a pious fraud."

Spain stoutly denied that any mistake could have been made in 1785, when Lieutenant General Aristazabal undertook to remove the remains of Columbus. The Archbishop of San Domingo, of course, rejected the accusation of fraud with great heat, and firmly maintained that a mistake had been made by Aristazabal, and that only those remains newly discovered were those of Christopher Columbus.

great historical places in the West Indies, Mexico and other American countries. Besides, intended to try to solve, among other questions, those of the true resting place of the bones of Columbus. San Domingo I visited during December, 1896, and January, 1897. Highest credentials from the German Government opened me a way; besides, the ecclesiastical and civil authorities of San Domingo consented gladly that a foreign and entirely disinterested stranger might judge upon their case. Since the discovery of the remains such an investigation had never been made nor permitted, as only a few days after the first investigation the remains, together with their leaden case, had been placed in a glass case and sealed up with many official seals of the Government and the church, as well as of all the foreign Consuls.

My investigation took place Sunday, January 11, 1891, in the cathedral, in the presence of all the ecclesiastical dignitaries, Consuls and military and civil officers, each of whom had been convinced that his seal, stamped upon the glass case in 1877, was untouched, all seals were broken and the leaden case taken out. My examinations were scrupulous care the copies, reproductions of the most important objects to obtain exact copies of all inscriptions to be found on the casket, as Spanish authorities had declared the character of those inscriptions to be quite modern, and therefore unmistakable proofs of imposture. It should be stated, however, that most of those authorities based their opinions upon poor and incorrect copies, which served as illustrations in one of the first reports upon the discovery. Those copies I found differed very much from the originals, and therefore I made with most scrupulous care the copies, reproductions of which are presented herewith.

The question now arises, Does the character of the inscriptions resemble the writing of the first half of the sixteenth century, the time when the casket and its inscriptions are supposed to have been made? I give here a few autographs of celebrated Spaniards who lived in the first half of the sixteenth century, by means of which from the same period may be found in Winsor's "Narrative and Critical History of America." Very easily the reader may point out every letter of the casket inscriptions in the autographs of Cortes, King Ferdinand and others.

In general: When the removal of the remains of Christopher Columbus and his son Diego took place the ashes of both were transferred from the original coffins to two small leaden cases of the same make. Now, can it be imagined that the case of such an illustrious man as the discoverer of the New World had been left without any visible marks or inscriptions by means of which mistakes might be avoided? This thought must be strongly rejected. It is only natural that the case in which repose the remains of the great admiral was distinguished by fitting inscriptions which might enable easy identification also in later centuries. As in no official document it is stated that the leaden tablets taken by the Spaniards out of the vault in 1785 had any mark or inscription, it must therefore be regarded as strongest proof that the tomb emptied at that time never inclosed the precious ashes of the discoverer of America.

Mention should be made of the ball which was found, together with the small silver plate, among the mold and dust in the case. Nobody has hitherto given great importance to its being there. But it seems to me that some weight must be attached to it. Describing the awful hardships of his fourth and last voyage, Columbus says: "My wound opened again, and for nine days all hope was gone to keep me alive."

This shows that Columbus in some former days was wounded. At what time this happened we do not know. It was probably during his earlier voyages in the Mediterranean Sea or to Guinea. It may be that during those adventurous trips he received a gunshot, and that the ball remained in his body till his end.

If, as the Spanish authorities would have us believe, fraud was committed by the Archbishop of San Domingo, why reasons could have induced him to put such a ball into the casket, which ball, up to my investigations, never before was brought in any connection with the above mentioned passage of Columbus' letter? Furthermore, what interest should lead the Archbishop and the other dignitaries of the cathedral at San Domingo to commit such grave fraud, by which neither they nor their church would gain any profit?

To sum up, all reasons point most strongly to the probability that Lieutenant General Aristazabal, in 1785, when he dug for the remains of Christopher Columbus, made a mistake and opened not the vault of the admiral but that of his son Diego, buried only a few inches distant from his father. The error of the Spaniards lay in their ignorance that there were two vaults close together, and that, as Moreau de St. Mery only a few years before had stated, "not a mausoleum, not a monu-

ment, not even an inscription" indicated where the true resting place of Christopher Columbus was.

There is not the slightest reason to doubt that the remains of the discoverer of the New World are still at San Domingo, the place he himself selected for his last resting place.

RUDOLPH CRONAU.

Here are some characteristic anecdotes of Lord Beaconsfield. Lord Randolph Churchill vouched for the first: "Toward the end of Lord Beacons-

field's second Premiership a younger politician asked the Premier to dinner. It was a domestic event of the first importance, and no pains were spared to make the entertainment a success. When the ladies retired the host came and sat where the hostess had been, and to his distinguished guest, "Will you have some more claret, Lord Beaconsfield?" "No, thank you, my dear fellow. It is admirable wine—true Falernian—but I have already exceeded my prescribed quantity, and the gout

holds me in its horrid clutch." When the party had broken up the host and hostess were talking it over. "I think the chief enjoyed himself," said the host, "and I know he liked his claret." "Claret?" exclaimed the hostess; "why, he drank brandy and water all dinner time."

"To Matthew Arnold, the great Jew Premier, in the last year of his life, confessed: "You have heard me accused of being a flatterer. It is true. I am a flatterer. I have found it useful.

D. de la A. P. A. A.

NO. 1.—INSCRIPTION UPON THE TOP OF THE LID.

Every one likes flattery; and when you come to royalty you should lay it on with a trowel."

Paris policemen have been supplied with electric dark lanterns, by means of which they can see 150 feet away. They are employed so successfully in raids in the Bois de Boulogne on the homeless persons who sleep there at night that Saint Cloud, Sevres and Ville d'Avray are overrun with vagrants.

## The Czar's Peace Union and the Anglo-Saxon Alliance

(Continued From Page Seventeen.)

able between the two great English speaking countries. I do not undervalue the deep significance of the present entente cordiale between our two countries, but any future alliance between Great Britain and the United States would probably have to be preceded by an agreement or some practical action on the part of the former guaranteeing the fair treatment of Ireland, and any new cause of ill feeling between England and Ireland would be the immediate cause of a break in this Anglo-American alliance.

Of course many of your people and mine, too, for that matter, would deny this, but I hold their view to be a partial one. I do not mean to say that America is morally or practically pledged to the cause of Irish freedom, but I do believe from a long and careful study of conditions and sentiment in America that there is a strong moral opinion back of America's sympathy for the Irish cause, and that this attitude will continue.

There is no reason to doubt, however, that the international relations between Great Britain and the United States may continually grow closer and more friendly. There is no probability that the United States has any idea of ever interfering with our possession of Canada, and Lord Salisbury's extraordinary and breathless charge of front regarding the Venezuela question compelled us to accept henceforth the leadership of the United States in all policies relating to America. Nor is this position likely to change. The Clayton-Bulwer treaty is dead, you know.

The Anglo-American alliance may possibly be the outcome of either one of two things. The most obvious is that, in case any European power should attack America, by any unforeseen result of her war with Spain, we, in this possibility, should espouse her cause and assist her in enforcing her policy. But this possibility is remote. I can think of no conceivable instance at all likely to occur save the improbable one that France might regard this as a favorable opportunity to seize portions of Morocco (which she has long coveted), but even then I doubt if the United States would regard it seriously enough to make it a casus belli.

The other possibility for a formal Anglo-American alliance, in due course of time, is a far more interesting one on which to speculate. The vital relations between the two great English speaking peoples are those of thought and moral purpose. Our intellectual, our religious life are one. Ideas, perhaps I may say also ideals, are our common tie. Our literature is a common bond. Now, as action always follows ideas undeviatingly, the fact of our mutual literary and ethical ideas conduces so inevitably to common action that this may be taken for granted in the future, wholly without any formal declarations. It is one of those trends of life that follow great natural laws.

The precipitation of some great moral question might create and fuse a formal declaration of alliance at once—such a question, for instance, as that of the Armenian atrocities which should vitally touch the religious feeling of both peoples. It is from the close relations of moral sentiments rather than from any consideration of political advantages that the Anglo-American alliance may at last be expected to come.

CHARLES DILKE.

FROM Cuba comes the news that the Spanish authorities are preparing to remove the so-called remains of Christopher Columbus from the cathedral at Havana to Spain. This again awakens interest in that oft-discussed question, "Where are the remains of Columbus?"

Two cities, San Domingo and Havana, strenuously assert their possession of the mortal remains of the great discoverer of the New World. Hot disputes have arisen over the subject, and at different times it really became an international affair. Having taken an active part in this dispute and being

Meantime the remains of the great admiral were deposited at the Chartreuse Monastery at Sevilla. When Diego, the son of Columbus, died, in 1536, his remains were also deposited there, to be transferred later to San Domingo. Emperor Charles V had granted permission that the great chapel of the cathedral at San Domingo be used as sepulture of the Columbus family.

At what time the removal of the ashes of the great admiral and his son took place we don't know. As the cathedral at San Domingo was consecrated in 1541 it may be that the transference occurred in the same year. We know that in 1549 the first Archbishop of San Domingo wrote: "The tomb of Don Cristobal Colon, which contains his

Mery Es de Vaxon  
Don Cristoval Colon

NO. 2.—INSCRIPTION UPON THE LOWER SIDE OF THE LID.

the only foreign and therefore entirely disinterested observer who was ever allowed a thorough investigation of the so-called Columbus remains at San Domingo, I may be permitted to give my views in regard thereto.

Columbus died May 20, 1506, at Valladolid, in Spain. A few days before his departure he expressed the wish to be buried in Espanola, the island he loved most. Before this wish could be fulfilled many years passed by. San Domingo, the capital of Espanola, had no place to enshrine the precious ashes. The cathedral was not yet begun and was not finished till 1540.

bones, is much venerated in this cathedral." In later documents we hear that when Sir Francis Drake invaded San Domingo the Archbishop Francisco Pio ordered the tombs in the cathedral to be covered with earth, to prevent their profanation, "especially that of the admiral, which is on the gospel side of my church and chapel."

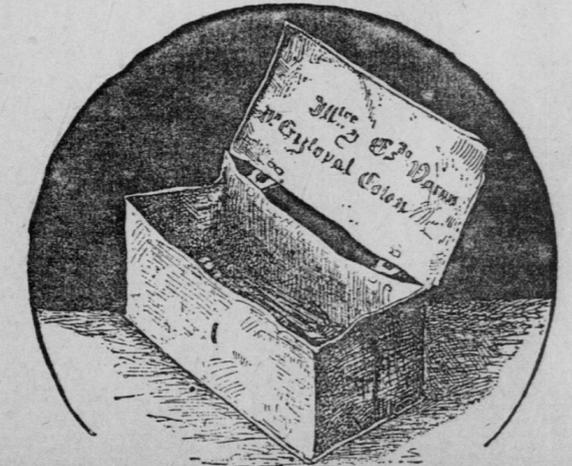
Again, in 1633, the Diocesan Synod states: "The bones of C. Colon are there in a leaden case in the Presbytery," according to the traditions of the old inhabitants of the island. This last sentence, "according to the traditions," indicates undoubtedly

U. de la A. P. A. A.  
del p. m. h. k. 4. 0. 1.  
Cristoval Colon Descub.

No. 3.—INSCRIPTION UPON THE SMALL SILVER PLATE AT THE BACK.

U. de la A. P. A. A.  
Cristoval Colon

No. 4.—INSCRIPTION UPON THE SMALL SILVER PLATE IN FRONT.



CASE IN WHICH THE BONES SAID TO BE THOSE OF COLUMBUS REPOSE