

The King and Queen of Spain to Columbus

For as much of you, Christopher Columbus, are going by our command, with some of our vessels and men, to discover and subdue some Islands and Continent in the ocean, and it is hoped that by God's assistance,



some of the said Islands and Continent in the ocean will be discovered and conquered by your means and conduct,

therefore it is but just and reasonable, that since you expose yourself to such danger to serve us, you should be rewarded for it.

vessels = ships

subdue = to control with force

Continent = North America and South America

assistance = help

conquer = to defeat

conduct = behavior

just = fair

Journal of Christopher Columbus, Describing the Taino “Indians” that he met on Hispaniola

...these people are very simple [in] the use of arms, as your Highnesses will see from the seven that I [have] taken, to bring home and



learn our language and return; unless your Highnesses should order them all to be brought to Castile, or to

be kept as captives on the same island; for with fifty men they can all be subjugated and made to do what is required of them....

arms = weapons

Castile = city in Spain

captives = prisoner

subjugated = defeated (or conquered)

Hernan Cortez describing Tenochtitlan (the Aztec capital)

This great city of Tenochtitlán is built on the salt lake.... It has four approaches by means of



artificial causeways.... The city is as large as Seville or Cordoba. Its streets... are very broad and straight.... There are bridges, very large,

strong, and well constructed.... The city has many squares where markets are held... In the service and manners of its people, their fashion of living was almost the same as in Spain, with just as much harmony and order; and



considering that these people were barbarous, so cut off from the knowledge of God and other civilized peoples, it is admirable to see to what they attained in every respect.

artificial causeways = bridges

Seville and Cordoba = large cities in Spain

well constructed = well built (strong)

barbarous = having poor manners, uncivilized

attain = to accomplish