

Lydia Huntley Sigourney

Columbus

By Lydia Huntley Sigourney

ST. STEPHEN'S cloistered hall was proud
In learning's pomp that day,
For there a robed and stately crowd
Pressed on in long array
A mariner with simple chart
Confronts that conclave high,
While strong ambition stirs his heart,
And burning thoughts of wonder part
From lip and sparkling eye.

What hath he said? With frowning face,
In whisper tones they speak,
And lines upon their tablets trace,
Which flush each ashen cheek;
The Inquisition's mystic doom
Sits on their brows severe,
And bursting forth in vision gloom,
Sad heresy from burning tomb
Groans on the startled ear.

Courage, thou Genoese! Old Time
Thy splendid dream shall crown;
Yon Western Hemisphere sublime,
Where unshorn forests frown
The awful Andes cloud-wrapt brow,
The Indian hunter's bow,
Bold streams untamed by helm or prow,
And rocks of gold and diamonds, thou
To thankless Spain shalt show

Courage, World-finder! Thou hast need!
In Fates' unfolding scroll,
Dark woes and ingrate wrongs I read,
That rack the noble soul.

On! on! Creation's secrets probe,
Then drink thy cup of scorn,
And wrapped in fallen Caesar's robe,
Sleep like that master of the globe,
All glorious, -yet forlorn.

Activities

Creative Thinking/ Working Independently or Collaboratively

- In conjunction with the art teacher, or in your own classroom, make poetry posters using the poem, "Columbus," by Lydia Huntley Sigourney.
- Paint, color or use collage to illustrate the poem.

Learning Resources and Information Technology/ Reading/ Writing

- Research Lydia Huntley Sigourney. Find out why she was named the "Sweet Singer of Hartford" and other interesting facts. Write a report using your research.

Creative Thinking

- Write a poem about an explorer you know something about.

Reading

- Learn about different types of poetry – iambic pentameter, onomatopoeia, alliteration etc. Does Sigourney's poem reflect any particular poetic technique?
- Is there anything else you notice about the poem, "Columbus"? What do you understand? What seems unclear or ambiguous?