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## **In the Track of the Admiral: The Voyage of the Niña II**

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plications throughout the text. The content is there, but somehow the spirit of physics seems to have been lost in the engineering approach.

It is always so easy to criticize, and so much more difficult to construct. The authors are to be congratulated for what they have done. The book is a start, and there may be future editions of this same text. The book is the first response to a long felt need, and it will no doubt stimulate others to enter the field of text-book writing on the college level, an often thankless task and an almost always financially unprofitable undertaking. Yet the growth of our nation is intertwined with the growth of our economy and our technology. The present book is, hopefully, the first of a long series of technical publications which will follow in the days and years to come, and which will set the pace for the development of the economy of our nation.

FRANCIS N. GLOVER

## IN THE TRACK OF THE ADMIRAL

THE VOYAGE OF THE NIÑA II. By Robert F. Marx. Cleveland, Ohio: The World Publishing Company, 1963. 249 pp. \$4.95.

This account of an actual voyage, undertaken in 1962, will be of particular interest to arm-chair wanderers. Nine adventurers using a replica of Columbus' *Niña* attempted to follow the great admiral's track from Spain to the New World. The men sought to use only authentic materials—a 15th century astrolabe, flint and steel for fire making, an hour glass, and wooden water and wine barrels were among the items insisted upon.

The purpose of the voyage was to re-create history while quenching a thirst for adventure. "In the end, if not from the very beginning," organizer Marx writes, "it was for us, not a duplication of the Columbus voyage, for that was very quickly lost sight of, but an age-old struggle of man against his self doubts."

Marx, presently adventure editor for *The Saturday Evening Post*, gives a brief sketch of his early years and travels. He tells us that while digging through Spanish archives for data on sunken treasure ships, he met and joined forces with the owner of a nearly completed replica of Columbus' smallest vessel. With a hastily recruited and inexperienced crew they set out for the Americas.

Thirst and hunger constantly dog the crew of *Niña II*. Disorder reigns throughout the voyage, as might be expected in view of the

inadequate provisions, mismatched temperaments, and cramped quarters. They encounter storms, brush with death on several occasions, but miraculously arrive at their destination after 77 days at sea.

Through some misinformation, the *Niña II* was built only half the size of the original. From the start the ship could not sail. A rudder modification improved her sailing ability somewhat, enabling her to flounder south to the trade wind belt where she was literally blown across the ocean.

Marx writes clearly and simply. He does not strive for the spectacular nor indulge in the superlative. The reader comes to know each of the crew members, their faults and virtues, through Marx's frank presentation of their experiences. "We were an almost explosive but finely adjusted society of nine, which moved along just short of the breaking point," he writes.

Thirty-two pages of excellent photographs are included and help the reader follow the voyagers on their journey. Here is a chronicle of nine men bravely plunging back in time to perform a daring feat.

RAYMOND P. EKERN

## ANCIENT MARINERS

THE AGE OF RECONNAISSANCE. Exploration, discovery and settlement, 1450-1650. By J. H. Parry. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1963. 365 pp.

Those familiar with John Parry's earlier *Europe and a Wider World, 1450-1650*, will recognize in his recent *Age of Reconnaissance* a further expansion of the subject he dealt with. The intellectual and technical antecedents of the 15th and 16th century discoveries, the means used to bring the unknown world into the European orbit, and the results of these efforts are vividly narrated. Perhaps most significant of all is the impression conveyed (a correct impression) that the great discoveries from Vasco da Gama on were not the absolute starting point in the Age of Reconnaissance, but merely a continuation of the vast enterprise of overseas trade begun by the Greeks and the Phoenicians from Tyre and Sidon. But whereas the ancient mariners were driven to the sea out of economic necessity, the voyage of the Reconnaissance were inspired by an elusive element of religious proselytism as well. However, even in this latter age, the initial impetus was provided by an economic mainspring.