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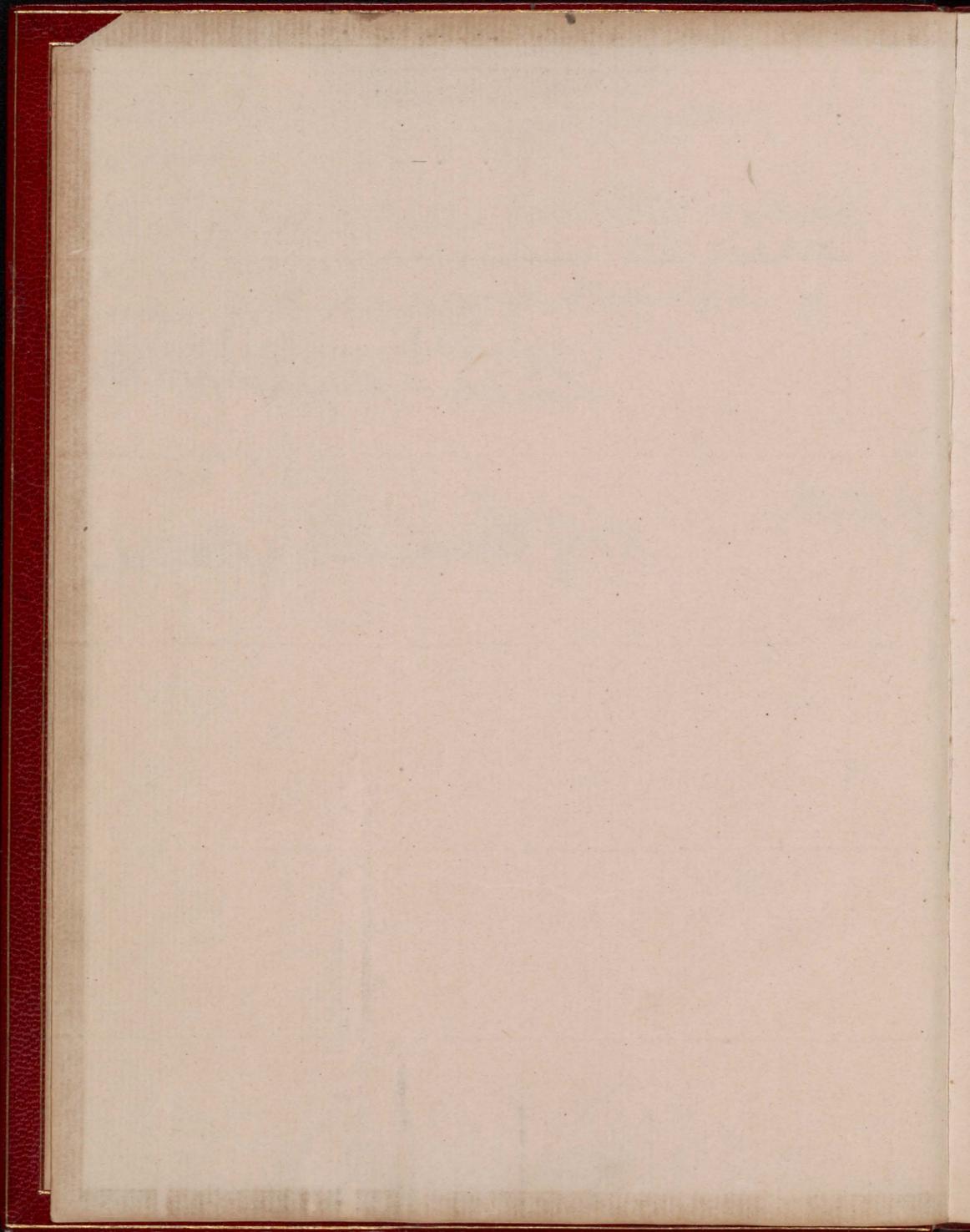
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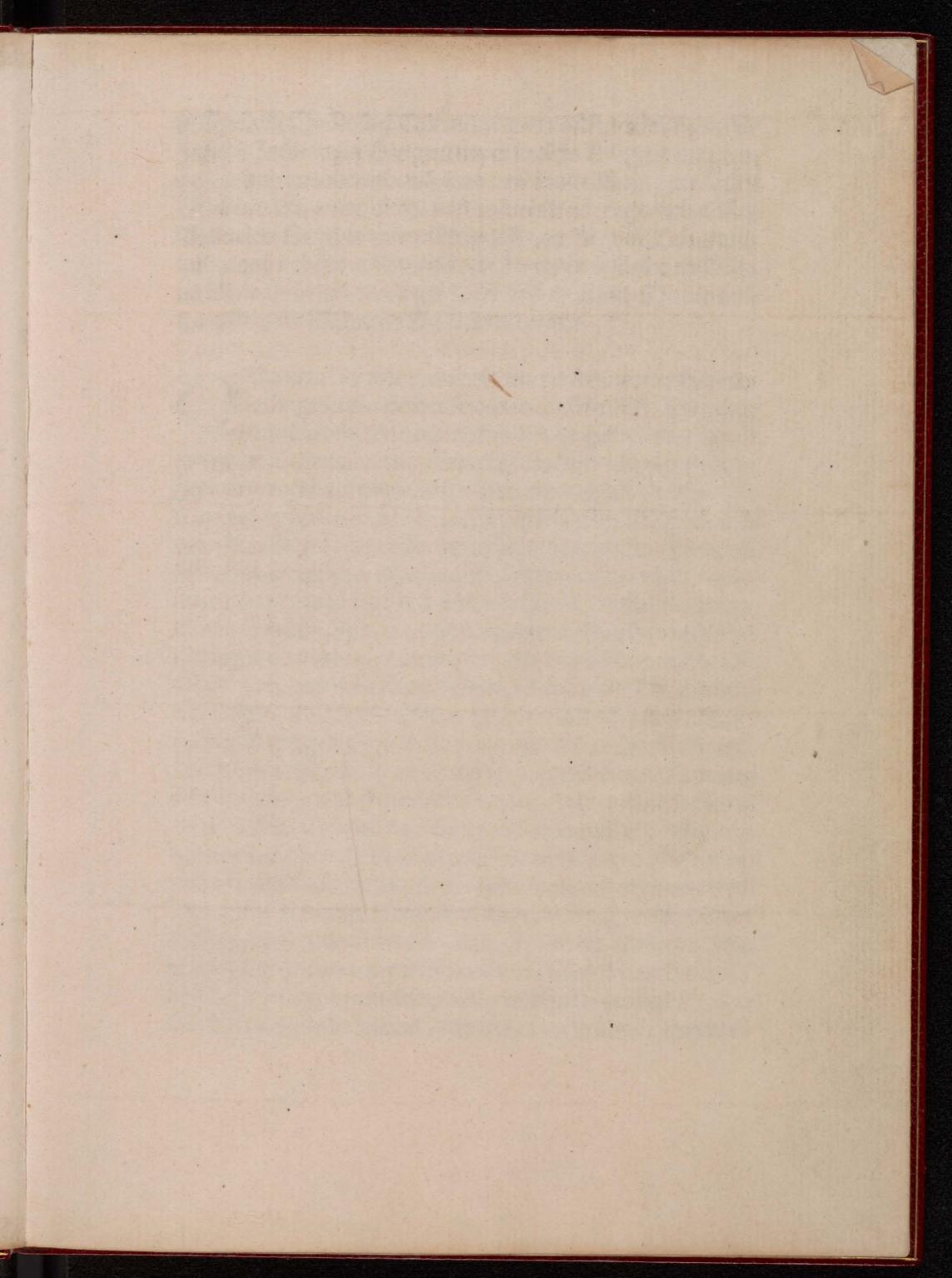
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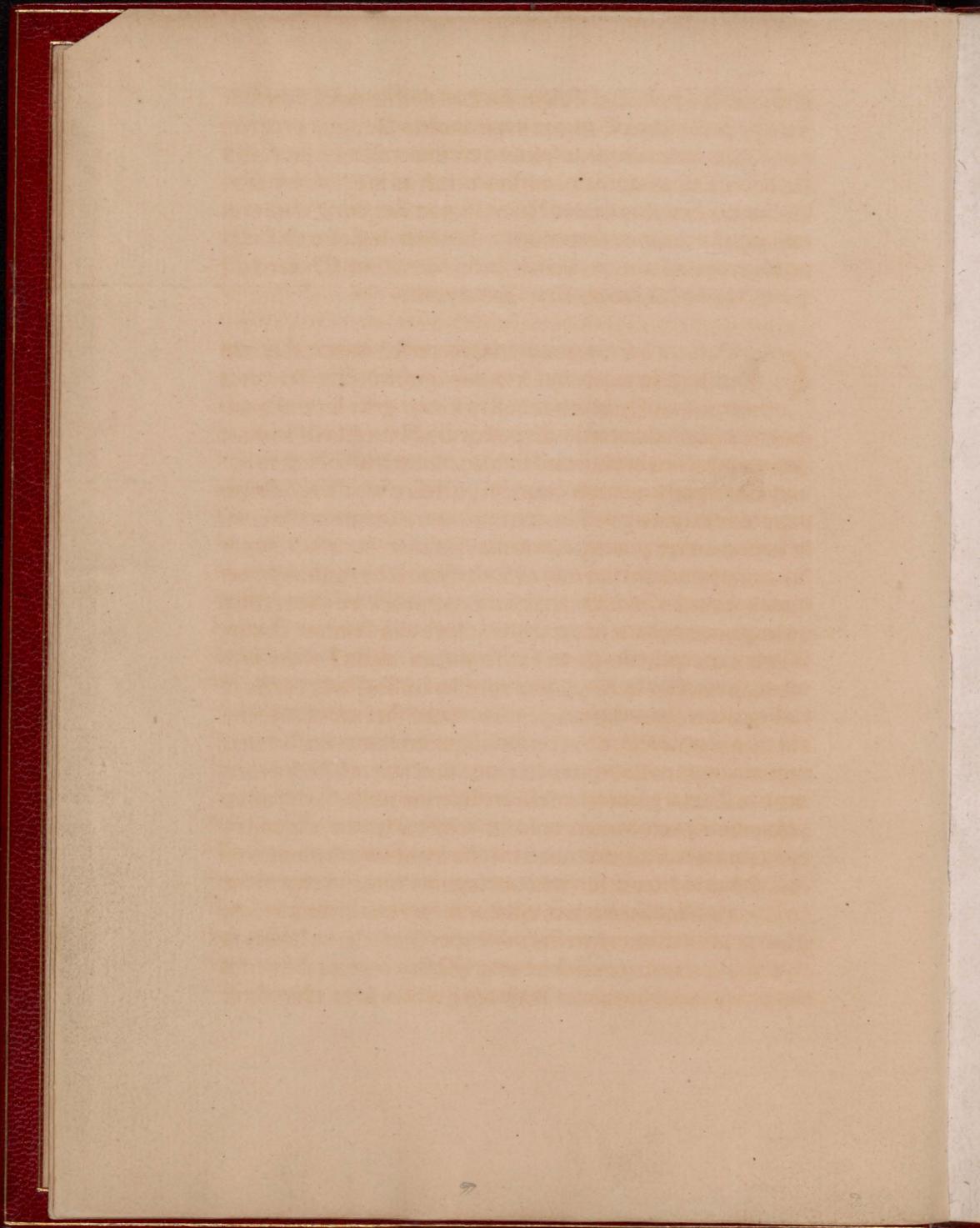
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ms.







Epistola Christofori Colom: cui etas nostra multū debet: de
Insulis Indię supra Gangem nuper inuētis. Ad quas pergren-
das octauo antea mense auspiciis ⁊ ere inuictissimorū Fernadi ⁊
Delisabet Hispaniarū Regū missus fuerat: ad magnificū dñm
Gabrielem Sanchis eorundē serenissimorū Regum Tesaurariū
missa: quā nobilis ac litteratus vir Leander de Cosco ab Hispa-
no idiomate in latinum cōuertit tertio kal's Maii. M. cccc. xciii
Pontificatus Alexandri Sexti Anno primo.

Quoniam susceptę prouintie rem perfectam me p̄secutum
fuisse gratum tibi fore scio: has constitui exarare: que te
vniuscuiusq; rei in hoc nostro itinere geste inuentęq; ad-
moneant. Tricesimotertio die postq̄ Gadibus discessi in mare
Indicū perueni: vbi plurimas insulas innumeris habitatas ho-
minibus repperi: quarum omnium pro felicissimo Rege nostro
preconio celebrato ⁊ vexillis extensis contradicente nemine pos-
sessionem accepi: primeq; earum diui Saluatoris nomen impo-
sui: cuius fretus auxilio tam ad hanc: q̄ ad ceteras alias perue-
nimus. Eam ho Indi Guanabanin vocant. Aliarū etiā vnā
quāq; nouo nomine nuncupauī: quippe aliā insulam Sanctę
Marie Conceptionis. aliam fernandinā. aliam Dysabellā.
aliam Joanā. ⁊ sic de reliquis appellari iussi. Cū primū in
eam insulam quam dudum Joanā vocari dixi appulimus: iux-
ta eius littus occidentem versus aliquantulum processi: tamq;
eam magnā nullo reperto sine inueni: vt non insulā: sed conti-
nentem Chatai prouinciā esse crediderim: nulla tñ videns op-
pida municipiāue in maritimis sita consinib; p̄ter aliquos vi-
cos ⁊ p̄dia rustica: cū quorū incolis loqui nequibam. quare si
mul ac nos videbant surripiebant fugam. Progrediebar ultra:
existimans aliquā me urbem villasue inuenturū. Deniq; videns
q; longe admodum progressis nihil noui emergebat: ⁊ hmoi via
nos ad Septentrionem deferebat: q; ipse fugere exoptabā: terris
etenim regnabat bruma: ad Austrumq; erat in voto cōtendere:

nec minus venti flagrantibus succedebant constitui alios non ope-
riri successus: et sic retrocedens ad portum quendam quem signane-
ram sum reuersus: unde duos boies ex nostris in terram misi: qui
inuestigarēt esset ne Rex in ea prouincia vrbesue alique. Hi per
tres dies ambularunt inueneruntque innumeros populos et habitas-
tiones: paruas tamen et absque ullo regimine. quapropter redierunt.
Interea ego iam intellexeram a quibusdam Indis quos ibidem sus-
ceperam quod huiusmodi prouincia insula quidem erat: et sic perrexi ori-
entem versus eius semper stringens littora usque ad miliaria cccxxii
vbi ipse insule sunt extrema: hinc aliam insulam ad orientem pro-
spexi distantem ab hac Joana miliaribus liiii. quam protinus Hispaniam
dixi: in eamque concessi et direxi iter quasi per Septentrionem
quemadmodum in Joana ad orientem miliaria dliiii. que dicta
Joana et alie ibidem insule que fertilissime existunt. Nec multis atque
tutissimis et latis nec aliis quos vnumquam viderim comparandis por-
tibus est circumdata. multi maximi et salubres hanc interfluunt
fluvii: multi quoque et eminentissimi in ea sunt montes. Omnes
be in insule sunt pulcherrime et variis distincte figuris: pueri: et ma-
xima arborum varietate sidera lambentium plene: quas nunquam foliis
priuari credo. Quippe vidi eas ita viuentes atque decoras ceu mense
Maio in Hispania solent esse: quarum alie florentes alie fructuo-
se: alie in alio statu sine vniuscuiusque qualitate vigeant: garru-
bat philomela et alii passeris variis ac inumeris mense Nouembriis
quo ipse per eas deambulabam. Sunt preterea in dicta insula Joana
septem vel octo palmarum genera que proceritate et pulchritudine
quemadmodum cetera omnes arbores: herbe fructusque nostras facile ex-
perant. Sunt et mirabiles pinus agri et prata vastissima: varie aues:
varia mella: variaque metalla ferro excepto. In ea autem quam Hispaniam
supra diximus nuncupari maximi sunt motes ac pulchri: va-
sta rura: nemora: campi feracissimi seri pascique et pendens edifici-
is aptissimi. Portum in hac insula commoditas et prestantia flumi-
num copia salubritate admixta hominum que nisi quis viderit: credulita-
tem superat. Huiusmodi arbores pascua et fructus multum ab illis Joane

differunt. Nec preterea Hispana diuerso aromatis genere auro-
metallisq; abundat. cuius quidem ⁊ oīum aliarū quas ego vidi ⁊
⁊ quāz cognitionē habeo incole vtriusq; sexus nudi semper ince-
dunt quēadmodū edunt in lucem: preter aliquas feminas: q̄ fo-
lio frondeue aliqua aut bombicino velo pudenda operiunt: qđ
ipse sibi ad id negociū parant. Carent iī oēs (vt supra dixi) quo-
cūq; genere ferri. carēt ⁊ armis vtpote sibi ignotis nec ad ea sūt
apti: nō ppter corporis deformitatem cū sint bene formati: sed
q̄a sunt timidi ac pleni formidine. gestant tñ pro armis arundī-
nes sole pūstas: in quāz radicib⁹ hastile quoddā lignēū siccū et
in mucronem attenuatū figunt. neq; iīs audēt iugiter vti: nā se-
pe euenit cū miserim duos vel tris hoīes ex meis ad aliquas vil-
las vt cū earū loquerent incolas: exisse agmen glomeratū ex In-
dis: ⁊ vbi nros appropinquare videbant fugā celeriter arripuis-
se despreti a patre liberis ⁊ econtra: ⁊ hoc nō q̄ cuiuspiam eorū dā-
num aliqđ vel iniuria illata fuerit: imo ad quoscūq; appuli ⁊ quī-
bus cū verbum facere potui: quicqđ habebā sum elargit⁹: pan-
num aliaq; p̄ multa nulla mihi facta versura: sed sunt natura pa-
uidi ac timidi. Ceterū vbi se cernunt tutos oī metu repulso: sunt
admodum simplices ac bone fidei ⁊ in oib⁹ que habēt liberalissī-
mi: roganti qđ possidet inficiat nemo: quin ipsi nos ad id poscē-
dū in utar. Maximū erga oēs amorē prefeferunt: dant queq; ma-
gna pro paruis: minima lz re nihiloue ptenti. ego attñ phibui ne-
tā minia ⁊ nulli⁹ precii hisce darent: vt sunt lancis. parapsidū.
v. tri p̄ fragmenta. itē clauī ligule. quanq; si hoc poterāt adipisci
videbat eis pulcherrima mūdi possidere iocalia. Accidit. n. quē-
dam nauitam tantū auri pōdus habuisse pro vna ligula quanti
sunt tres aurei solidi. ⁊ sic alios pro aliis minoris precii: p̄sertim
pro blanquis nouis: quibusdā nūmis aureis: p̄ qb⁹ habēdis da-
bant quicquid petebat vēditō: puta vnciam cū dimidia ⁊ duas
aurei: vel triginta ⁊ quadraginta bombicis pondo: quā ipsi iam
nouerant itēz arcuum. amphoze. hydrie. doliiq; fragmenta bom-
bice ⁊ auro tanq; bestie comparabant. quod quia iniquum sane

miges. In omnibus iis insulis nulla est diuersitas inter gentis
effigies: nulla in moribus atq; loquela: quin oēs se intelligunt
ad inuicem: que res perutilis est ad id qđ serenissimos Reges no-
stros exoptare precipue reor: scz eoz ad scđam xp̄i fidem puerfio-
nem. cui qđem quantū intelligere potui facillimi sunt et prouē.
Dixi quēadmodū sum progressus antea insulam Joanam per re-
ctum tramitem occasus in orientem miliaria. cccxxii. sm quā viā
7 interuallum itineris possum dicere hanc Joanam esse maiorē
Anglia 7 Scotia simul. nāq; yltra dicta. cccxxii. passuū milia in
ea parte que ad occidentem prospectat due: quas nō petii: super
sunt prouincie: quarū alterā Indi Anan vocant cuius accolē cau-
dati nascuntur. Tendunt in longitudinez ad miliaria. clxxx. vt
ab his quos vebo mecū Indis percepi: qui oīs has callent insu-
las Hispanie ho ambit? maior est tota Hispania a Colonia vsq;
ad fontem rabidum. Hincq; facile arguit qđ quartum eius latus
quod ipse per rectā lineā occidentis in orientem traieci miliaria
continet. dxi. Nec insula est affectanda 7 affectata nō spernenda
In qua 7 si aliaz oīm vt dixi pro inuictissimo Rege nostro solen-
niter possessionem accepi: earūq; imperium dicto Regi penitus
cōmittitur: in oportuniori tñ loco atq; omni lucro et cōmercio
condecēti cuiusdā magne ville: cui Aatiuitatis dñi nomen de-
dimus: possessionem peculiariter accepi: ibiq; arcem quandam
erigere extemp'o iussi: que modo iam debet esse pacta: in qua ho-
mines qui necessarii sunt visi cū omni armorū genere 7 yltra an-
num victu oportuno reliqui. Item quandā carauellā 7 pro aliis
construendis tam in hac arte qđ in ceteris peritos: ac eiusdē in-
sule Regis erga eos beniuolentiam 7 familiaritatē incredibiles
Sunt enim gentes ille amabiles admodum 7 benigne: eo qđ Rex
predictus me fratrem suū dici gloriabatur. Et si aium reuocarent et
his qui in arce manserunt nocere velint: nequeunt: qa armis car-
rent: nudi incedūt 7 nimum timidi: ideo dictā arcem tenētes dun-
taxat p̄nt totā eam insulam nullo sibi imminere dāscrimine popu-
lari: dum nō leges quas dedim? ac regimen nō excedāt. In oib?

his insulis ut intellexi quisque vni tamen coniugi acquiescit: preter principes aut reges: quibus viginti hinc licet. femine magis quam viri laborare videntur. nec bene potui intelligere an habeant bona propria: vidi enim quod vnus habebat aliis impartiri: presertim dapes obsonia et hmoi. Nullum apud eos monstrum reperi ut plerique existimabant: sed homines magne reuerentie atque benignos. Nec sunt nigri velut ethiopes. habent crines planos et demissos. non degunt vbi radiorum solaris emicat calor: magna namque hic est solis vehementia: propterea quod ab equinoctiali linea distat. Vbi videntur quod adus sex et viginti ex montium cacuminibus. Maximam quoque viget frigus: sed id quod dem moderantur. Indium loci consuetudine tum rerum calidissimarum quibus frequenter et luxuriose vescuntur presidio. Itaque monstra aliqua non vidi. neque eorum alicubi habui cognitionem. excepta quadam insula Charis nuncupata: que secunda ex Hispania in Indiam transfretantibus existit. quam gens quedam a finitimis habita ferocior incolit. Hi carne humana vescuntur. Habent predicti biremium genera plurima quibus in omnes Indiarum insulas traiciunt. depredant. surripiunt quecumque possunt. Nihil ab aliis differunt nisi quod gerunt more femineo longos crines utuntur arcibus et spiculis arundineis feris ut diximus in grossiori parte attenuatis hastilibus. ideoque habent feroces: quare ceteri Indii inerbantur metu pretercunt: sed hos ego nihili facio plus quam alios. Hi sunt qui coherunt cum quibusdam feminis: que sole insulam Mareurinum primam ex Hispania in Indiam traicientibus habitant. De autem femine nullum sui sexus opus exercent: utuntur enim arcibus et spiculis sicut de earum coniugibus diximus muniunt sese laminis eneas quarum maxima apud eas copia existit. Aliam mihi insulam affirmant super dicta Hispania maiorem: eius incolae carere pilis. auroque inter alias potissimum exuberat. Huius insule et aliarum quas vidi homines mecum porro qui horum que diximus testimonium perhibent. Denique ut nostri discessus et celeris reuersionis compendium ac emolumentum breuibus astringam hoc polliceor: me nostris Regibus inuictissimis paruo eorum fultu auxilio: tantum auri daturum quantum eis fuerit

rit opus. tñ vero aromatum. bomicis. massicis: q̄ apud Chium
duntaxat inuenitur. tantūq; ligni aloes. tantum seruoꝝ hydo-
latrarum: quantum eorum maiestas voluerit exigere. it. in reu-
barbarum ⁊ alia aromatum genera que ii quos in dicta arce reli-
qui iam inuenisse atq; inuenturos existimo. qñquidem ego nul-
libi magis sum mortuus nisi quantum me coegerunt venti: ⁊ 2/
terꝫ in villa Platiuitatis: dum arceꝝ condere ⁊ tuta oia esse pro-
uidi. Que ⁊ si maxima ⁊ inaudita sunt: multo tñ maiora forent
si naues mihi vt ratio erigit subuenissent. Vtꝫ multum ac mira-
bile hoc: nec nostris meritis correspondens: sed sancte Eb. istia-
ne fidei: nostrorumq; Regum pietati ac religioni: quia quod hu-
manus consequi nō poterat intellectus: id b. manis cōcessit di-
uinus. Solet enim deus seruis suos: quicq; sua p̄cepta diligūt
⁊ in impossibilibus exaudire: vt nobis in presentia contigit: qui
ea consecuti sumus que hactenus mortalium vires minime at-
gerant: nam si harū insularū quipiam aliquid scripserunt aut lo-
cuti sunt: omnes per ambages ⁊ cōiecturas. nemo se eas vidisse
asserit. vnde prope vi debatur fabula. Igitur Rex ⁊ Regina prin-
cepsq; ac eoz regna felicissima cuncteq; ali. Christianoz provin-
cie Saluatori dño nostro Jesu Christo agam⁹ gratias: qui tan-
ta nos victoria munereq; donauit: celebrentur processiones. per-
agantur solennia sacra: festaq; fronde velentur delubra. exultet
Christus in terris quemadmodum in celis exultat: quom tot po-
puloꝝum perditas ante hac animas saluatum iri p̄uider. Lete-
mur ⁊ nos: cum propter exaltationem nostre fidei. tum propter
rerum temporalium incrementa: quoz non solum Hispania sed
vniuersa Christianitas est futura particeps. Nec vt gesta sunt
sic breuiter enarrata. Vale. Vlis bone p̄idie Idus Martii.

Christoforus Colom Oceane classis P̄fectus.

**¶ Epigramma. R. L. de Coibaria Episcopi Montispaluffi.
Ad Inuictissimum Regem Hispaniarum.**

Jam nulla Hispanis tellus addenda Triumphis

Atq; parum tantis viribus orbis erat.

Nunc longe Cois regio deprensâ sub vndis.

Auctura est titulos Beticæ magne tuos:

Unde repertori merito referenda Colombo

Gratia: sed summo est maior habêda deo.

Qui vincenda parat noua Regna tibiq; sibiq;

Teq; simul fortem prestat et esse pium.

A LETTER
OF
Christopher Columbus.

AVING now accomplished the undertaking upon which I set out, I know that it will be agreeable to you to be informed of all that I have done and discovered in my voyage. On the thirty-third day after I had left Cadiz, I reached the Indian Ocean, where I found a great many islands, peopled by innumerable inhabitants, of all which I took possession, without resistance, in the name of our most illustrious King, with public proclamation and hoisting our colours. To the first of these islands, I gave the name of the Divine Saviour, trusting to whose protection I had reached it and all the rest. Its Indian name, however, is Guana-hanyx. In like manner, I gave new names to the whole. One was named from Holy Mary of the Conception, another Fernandina, another Isabella, another Joanna, and in like manner of the rest. When we landed upon that island, which, I have just said, was named Joanna, I proceeded along its shore, somewhat towards the west, and found it of so great an extent, without any apparent termination, that I conceived it not to be an island, but part of the Continent, a province of Cathay. However, you see neither cities nor towns situated on its shores, only a few villages and rural farms. I could not enter into conversation with its inhabitants; and, accordingly, as soon as they saw us they took flight. I advanced forward, thinking that I should find some town, or country houses; but, at length, perceiving that nothing new was likely to appear, however far we might go, and that our progress was carrying us directly north, which I was particularly desirous to avoid, as winter was now set in, and the winds were besides favourable for our voyage southwards, the direction which I wished, I determined to make no further search, but returned to a harbour, whose situation I had marked. I notwithstanding sent from hence two of our men into the country, to inquire, whether there were any king or cities in the province. They

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They pursued their course for three days, and met with innumerable people and inhabitants, a paltry race, however, and without any government; so they returned. I had, in the mean time, been informed by some Indians, whom I found there, that the country was in fact an island. I accordingly proceeded towards the east, always keeping along the shores, for three hundred and twenty-two miles, where the island is terminated. From hence I saw another island to the east, distant from this of Joanna 54 miles, to which I immediately gave the name of Hispania, and made for it. As I had before done at Joanna, I coursed along it to the east, by the north, for 564 miles. Joanna, and the rest of these islands, are astonishingly fertile. This one is surrounded by the safest and most admirable harbours which I ever saw: there are likewise in it many very lofty mountains. All these islands are very beautifully shaped; in a great diversity of forms. They abound in the finest variety of trees, so lofty that they seem to reach the stars, never, I believe, without foliage; for, when I saw them, they were as beautiful and green as our trees in Spain are in the month of May; some in flower, others bearing fruit, others in a different state, but each most suited to its quality. The nightingale, and innumerable other birds of all kinds, sung amidst their shades: and yet it was the month of November when I passed under them. In the above mentioned island of Joanna, there are moreover seven or eight kinds of palm-trees; which, for stature and beauty (as indeed may be said of all their other trees, herbs, and fruits), far surpass ours. There are pines, too, of an admirable beauty, fields and meadows of the utmost extent, birds of many different species, honey of various flavours, metals of all kinds, except iron. In that one which, as I have already said, I called Hispania, the mountains are the highest, the country and woods are of great extent, the meadows very fruitful, and particularly well adapted for corn, pasture, or the situation of houses. The convenience of the harbours in this island, and the abundance and salubrity of the rivers, must almost exceed the belief of those who have not seen them. Its trees, pastures, and fruits, are very different from those in Joanna. It abounds besides in various sorts of aromatics, in gold and metals. Of this island, and of all the others which I have seen or obtained any knowledge of, the inhabitants go naked, both sexes alike, just as they were born; except that some of the women have a leaf, or some sort of cotton covering, which they themselves prepare

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prepare for that purpose, about their middle. As I have already said, all these people are utterly without iron of any sort; they are also without arms, of which they know not the use, and indeed would be ill adapted to make use of them; not from any bodily defects, for they are well formed, but because they are remarkably timid and fearful. The only kinds of arms they possess are canes parched in the sun, on the roots of which they fix a sort of spearhead of dry wood sharpened into a point: yet these they do not often dare to use, for it frequently happened that when I had sent two or three of my men to some of the villages that they might have communication with their inhabitants, a whole body of Indians would come out; but no sooner did they see our men approach, than off they set, parents deserting their children, and children their parents without any scruple. Nor was this owing to any violence on my part, as I was particularly anxious that they should meet with no injury; on the contrary, among whatever people I landed, or whom I could bring to a conference, I always imparted to them, in quantities, whatever I happened to have, such as cloths and many other things, nor took any thing from them in return. But they are by nature of a very timid disposition. Whenever they know themselves to be in safety however, and get over their fears, they are an uncommonly simple and honest people, very liberal in bestowing whatever they possess. They never refuse a request; nay they themselves invited us to make demands of them. They have in truth a show of the greatest good will to all: they give things of great value for what is of scarce any, and are indeed content with very little or almost nothing in exchange. I however made a point that they should not be imposed upon by the very trifling and worthless articles which were apt to be given them, such as broken bits of earthenware, or of glass, likewise nails; although the truth is, if they might but obtain these, they thought themselves possessed of the most beautiful ornaments in the world. A sailor, on one occasion, got for one nail as great a weight of gold as would have made three golden nobles: and in the same way, for other articles of still less value, they gave whatever the purchaser was inclined to ask them. But because I felt this to be an unjust species of traffic, I forbid it; and gave them many useful and beautiful articles which I had brought along with me, without any return being asked, that I might render them more friendly to me, that I might gain them over to the Christian faith, that they
might

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might be well affected towards our King, Queen, Nobles, and the whole Spanish people, and search out for those things in which themselves abound, and of which we are much in want, and, laying up stores of them, have wherewithal to enter into traffic with us. They have no idolatry amongst them; but seem to have a firm persuasion, that all force, power, and all good things, are from Heaven, from whence indeed they imagined that I had come down with my ships and sailors; as I discovered from them, after they had so far lost their apprehensions as to converse with us. They are neither sluggish, nor rude; on the contrary, they are of an intelligent and piercing mind; and the relations which those of them who ferry across the seas give of the various particulars which they have seen, are very distinct and lively. But none of them had ever before seen any people clothed, or ships such as ours. As soon as I had come into that sea, I carried off by force from the first island which I reached, a few of the inhabitants, who might be instructed by us, and instruct us in the course of our voyage, concerning the matters with which they were conversant; and the plan turned out remarkably well. In a very short time, we understood them, and they us by gestures and signs, and even words; and they were of great use to us. They never, however, gave up the impression, however long they remained with us (and indeed they still are with us) that I had lighted down from Heaven; and they spread the notion wherever we landed, calling out with a loud voice, which was repeated from one to another, Come, Come, and you will see a race of ethereal people! The consequence has been, that, laying aside their fears formerly entertained, vast crowds of men and women, children and adults, young and old, came round us from all quarters; some offering us meat, others drink, with the utmost and most incredible kindness. All these Islands possess many boats made of solid wood, and although very narrow, yet resembling our boats both in length and form, only considerably more rapid in their course. They are managed by oars only. Some of them are large, others small, and others again of a middling size. With the larger ones they pass from one island to another, and carry on a traffic throughout them all, innumerable as they are. I have seen some of these boats or barges which carried seventy or eighty rowers. In all these islands there is no diversity in the appearance of the people; their manners and speech are alike, so that they all understand one another; a circumstance peculiarly

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liarily important for the purpose which our most Serene King had principally in view, their conversion, I mean, to the holy faith of Christ. As far as I can make out, they are very far from being disinclined to it. I already mentioned how I coasted along the island Joanna 322 miles to the east; and I am persuaded, from what I saw and heard, that this island is greater than England and Scotland together. It contains two other provinces which I did not see, one of which the Indians call Anan, where there are men with tails, and that province is 180 miles long, according to the report of those Indians whom I carry along with me, and who are very well acquainted with these islands. The circumference of Hispania I take to be greater than that of all Spain, *a Colonia usque ad fontem rabidum*, if I may reckon as a fourth of the whole, that side, which I passed along in a right line from west to east, about 540 miles. On this island of Hispania, although I had solemnly taken possession of all these islands in the name of our invincible King, I yet fixed upon a spot more advantageous than any other for commerce, and every opportunity of wealth, with a view to the erection of a metropolis, to which I have given the name of our Lord's Nativity, and of which, in a more peculiar manner, I have taken possession for the King. There I immediately gave orders for the building a fort, which will soon be finished, in which as many men as may be necessary, with all sorts of arms, and more than a year's provision, may be left. Here likewise I shall establish a carpenter's workshop, and leave people skilled, not only in this, but in other arts, partly on account of the great friendship and kindness which I have experienced from the King of this island, the inhabitants of which have been most amiable and well-affected; and the King has even gloried in styling me his brother. If they should change their dispositions, they yet cannot hurt those who are left in the fort, however desirous they might be of doing so. They have a great dread of arms, are themselves naked, and remarkably timid, so that the possessors of the fort may in fact be said to possess the whole island, without any hazard to themselves, if they will keep within the laws and regulations which I have prescribed for them. In all these islands, according to my information, no man has more than one wife, except the Chiefs and Kings, who may have as many as twenty. The women seem to work more than the men; and I have not been able to discover, whether there is any such thing as separate property; for I have always seen these

A Letter of Christopher Columbus.

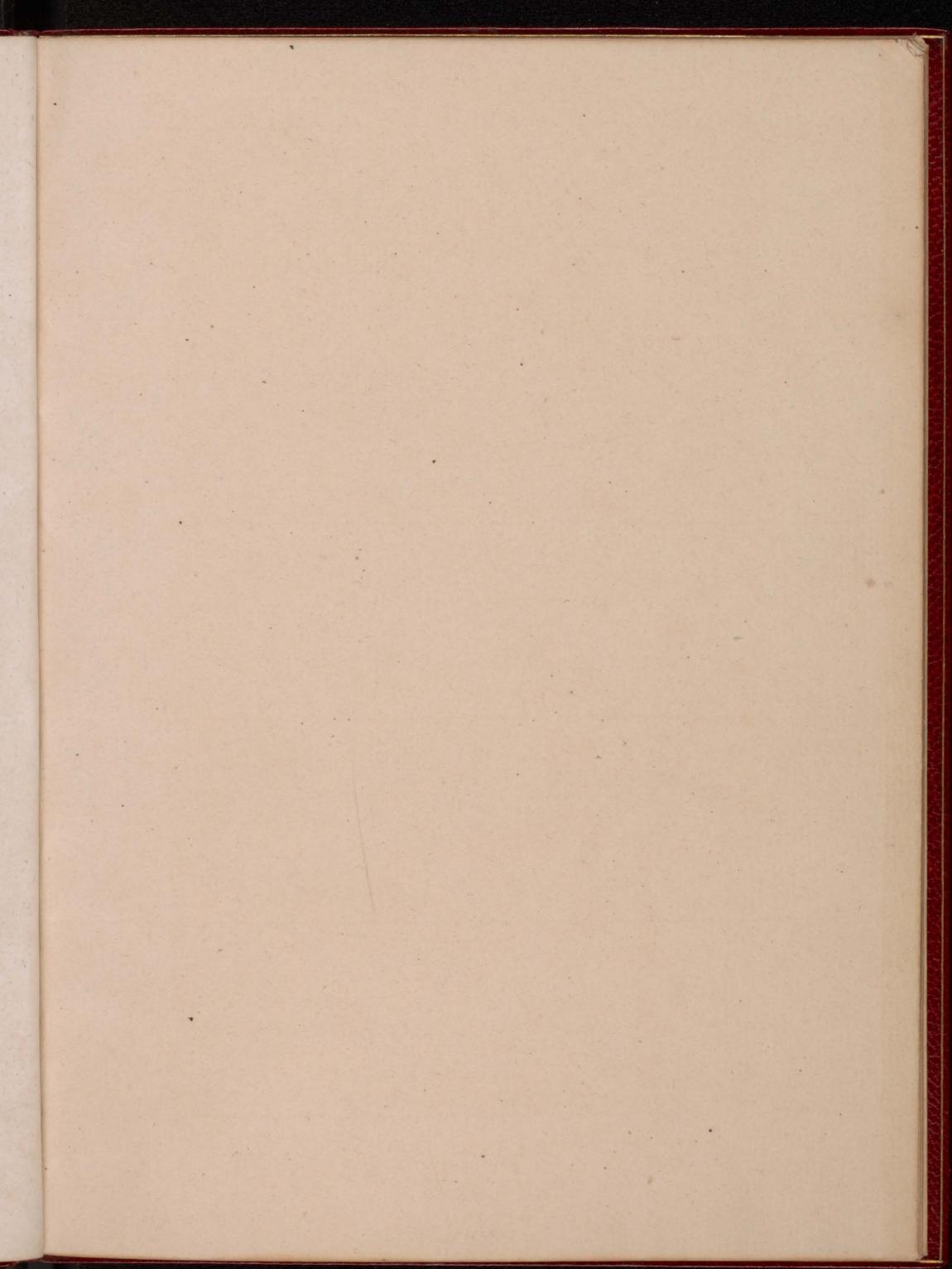
these people impart to each other whatever they had, particularly food, and things of that sort. I found no monsters among them, as some have imagined, but everywhere men of a very estimable and benign aspect. Neither are they black, like the Africans: their hair is smooth and long. Indeed, they do not live in a country where the solar rays are particularly powerful, being distant from the equator about six-and-twenty degrees. The cold is very severe on the tops of the mountains. Yet the Indians of these regions prevent its most disagreeable effects, partly by the use of very high seasoned food, of which they are extremely fond; and custom inures them to the climate. There are then, as I have said, no monsters, at least that I saw; and the only information I received of any such, was of the inhabitants of an island called Charis, which, to those who are sailing for India, follows second in order immediately after the island of Hispania. This people are looked upon by their neighbours as very ferocious, so as even to eat human flesh. They have many various sorts of boats, with which they pass into all the Indian islands, and carry off whatever they lay their hands on. They differ in no respect in appearance from the other islanders, except that they have long hair like women. They make use of bows, and cane spears with whetted points, fixed, as I have already described, in the thicker part. From their ferocity, they are objects of great terror to the rest of the Indians; but, for my part, they do not seem to me more formidable than the others. They cohabit with a race of women who are the sole inhabitants of another island immediately succeeding Hispania, as you sail for India. These women are not employed in the common occupations of their sex, but, like their husbands, carry bows and spears, and are protected by plates of brass, with which their island abounds. I have been told that there is another island still larger than Hispania: its inhabitants have no spears, but, like all the others, are overflowing with gold. Some of the inhabitants of this, and of the other islands which I have seen, I have along with me, who confirm, by their testimony, the above particulars.

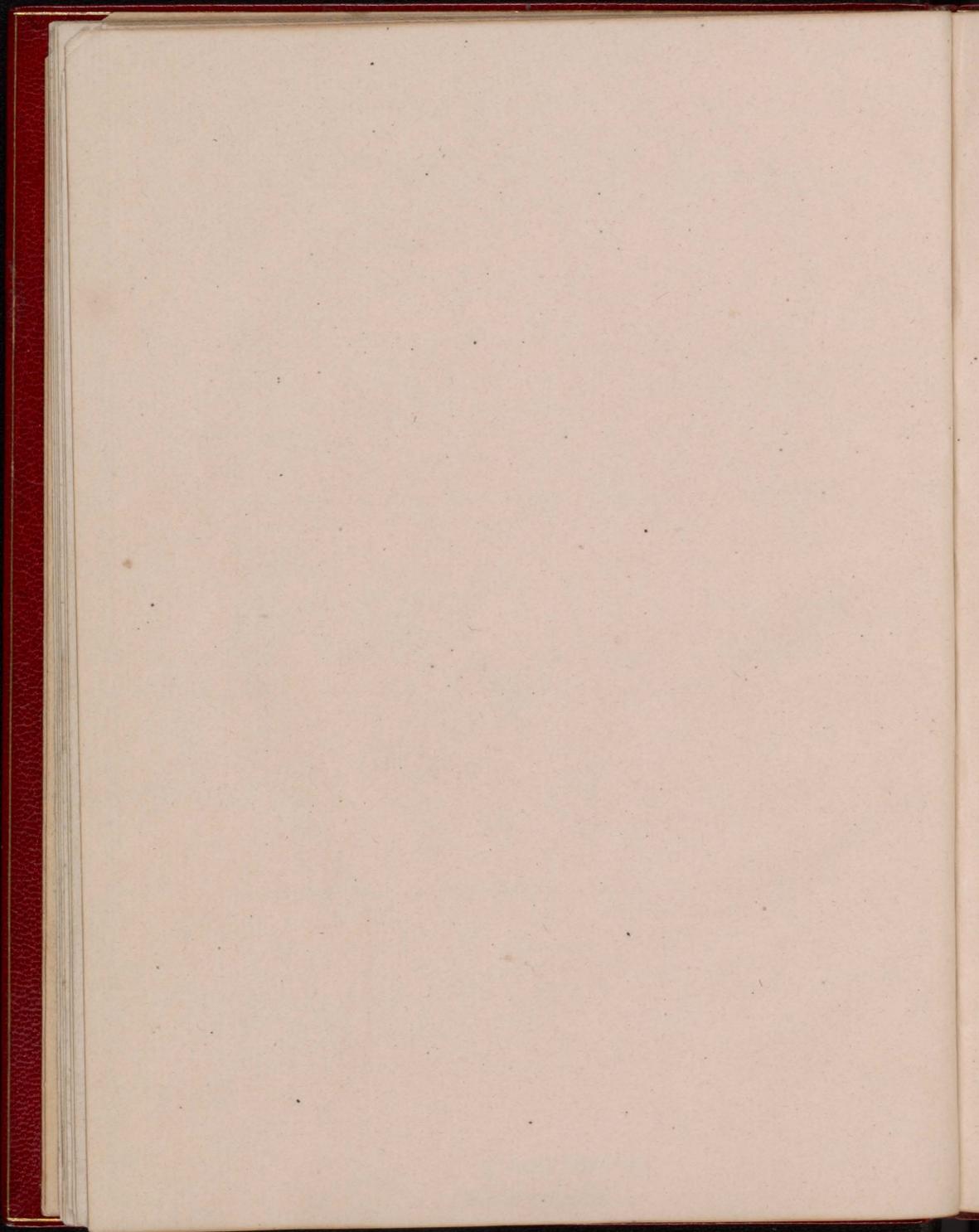
To conclude with summing up, in a few words, the advantages to be derived from this our short voyage and speedy return, I may fairly promise, that I can supply our invincible Sovereigns, if I am supported by their kind assistance, with as much gold as they can have occasion for, and as great a quantity of aromatics and aloes and rhubarb, as their Majesties may
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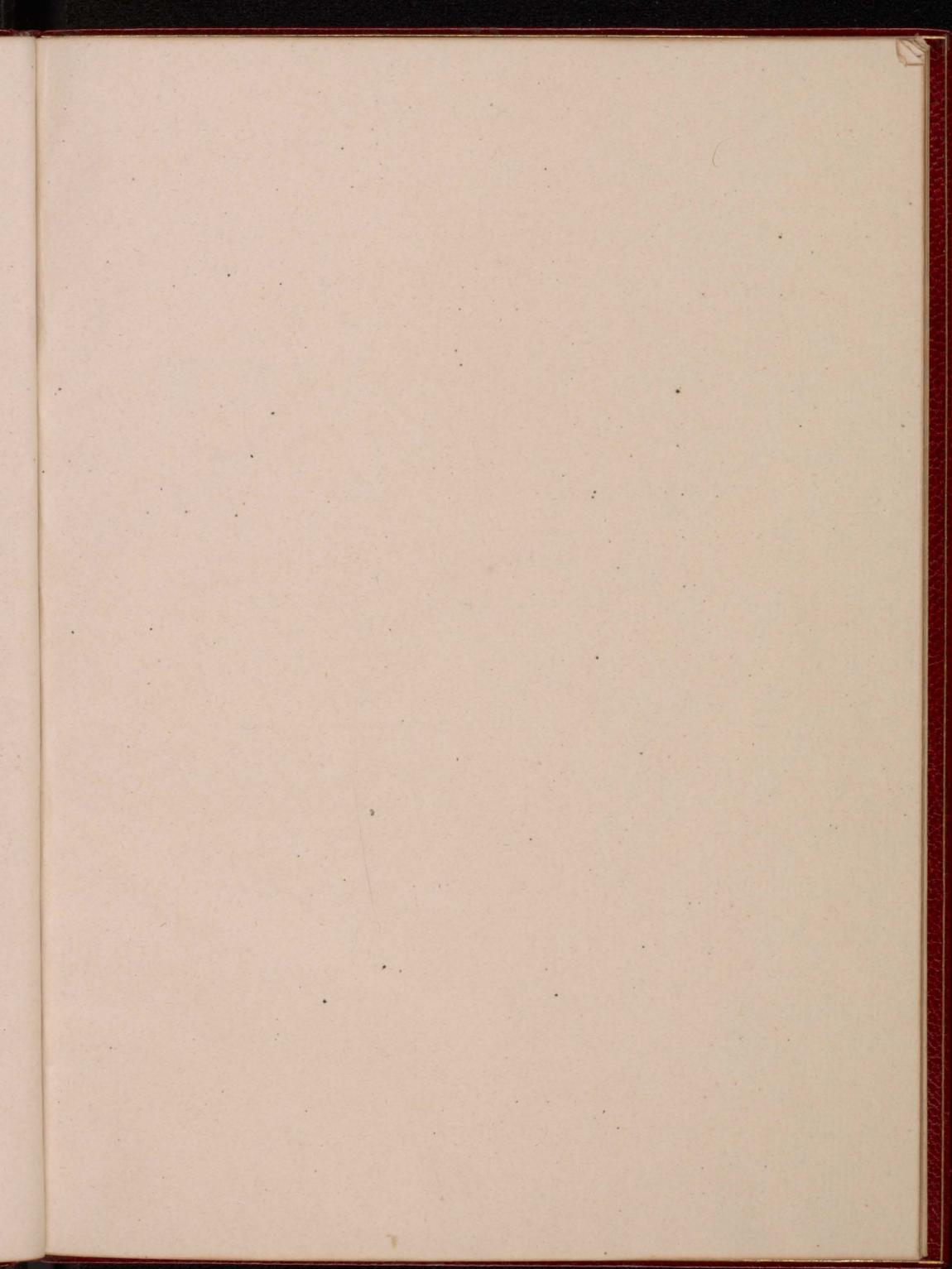
A Letter of Christopher Columbus.

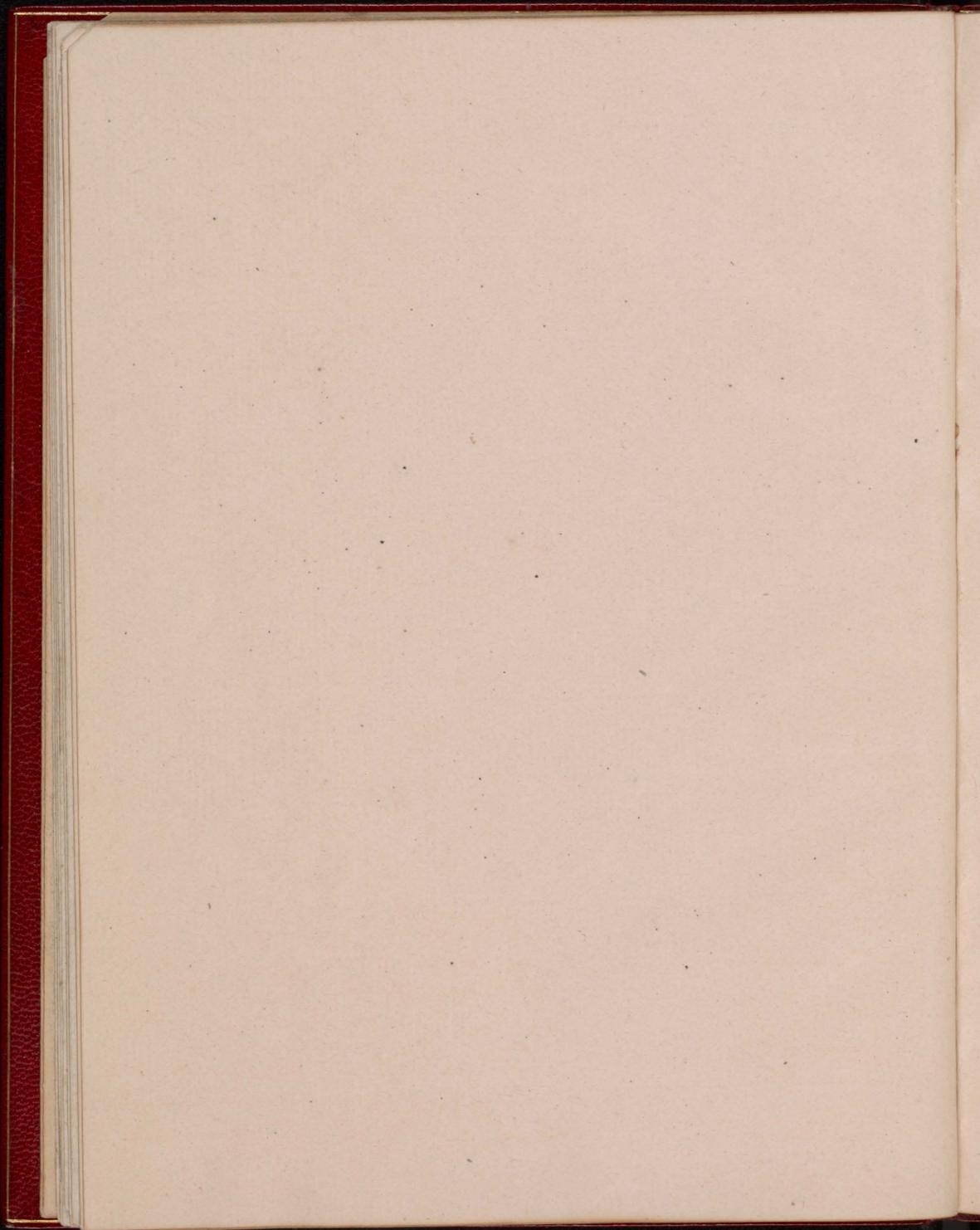
think proper to require. I have no doubt that these will be collected in great abundance by the men whom I have left in the fort, for I myself made no longer stay than the winds forced me, except the time I remained in the city of the Nativity while the fort was building, and I was providing for the safety of those who were to be left. These are very great, and, as yet, unheard-of advantages: but they might be much further extended, if, as would be reasonable, a supply of ships should be given me. This great and wonderful field of discovery is far beyond our merit, and can correspond only to the magnificence of the Christian Faith, and to the piety and religion of our Sovereigns. It is not the accomplishment of an human intellect, but is truly the gift of the Divine Mind. It is not unusual indeed with God to listen to the entreaties of his servants who love his precepts, even when they seem to be asking impossibilities, as appears to have been his dealing with us, who have been permitted to perform what the powers of men had never before so much as bordered upon. For whatever may have been hinted in former times of the existence of these islands, either in writing or in discourse, it is certain that it was only by obscure conjecture, and that no one ever asserted that he had seen them; and accordingly their existence appeared merely fabulous. Let then our King and Queen, their Nobles, and all their happy realms, and indeed all the nations of Christendom, return thanks to our Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ, because he has magnified us with so great bounty and victory: let solemn procession and other holy offices be celebrated: and let the temples be veiled with festive boughs. Glory be henceforth to Christ on the earth, as there is glory in the Heavens, for he is advancing forth to bring salvation to the perishing souls of the Heathen. Let us too rejoice, both on account of the exaltation of our Faith, and of the increase of our temporal advantages, in which not only Spain but all Christendom will participate. This then is a short narration of our performances. Farewell.—Lisbon, the day before the Ides of March.

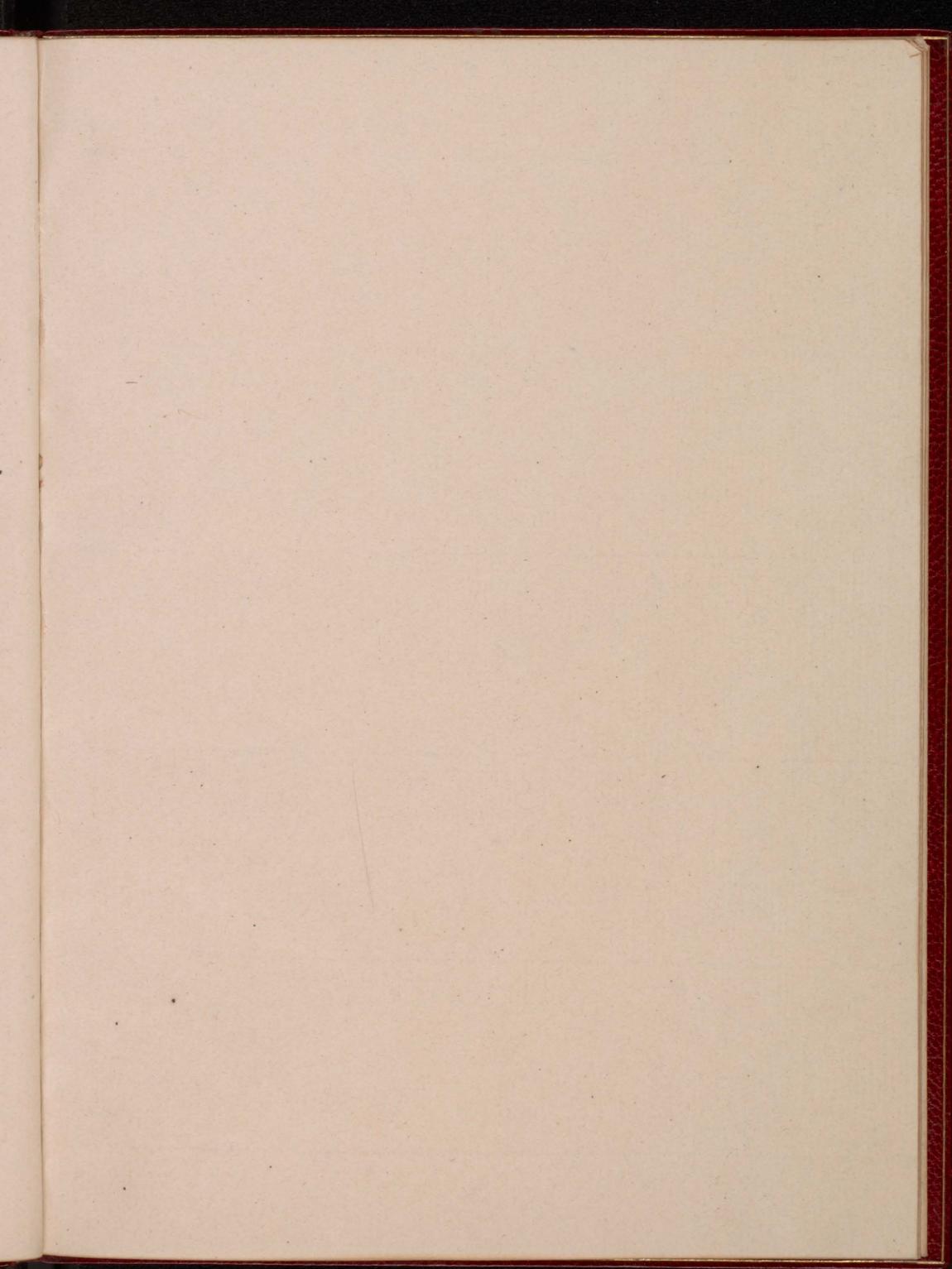
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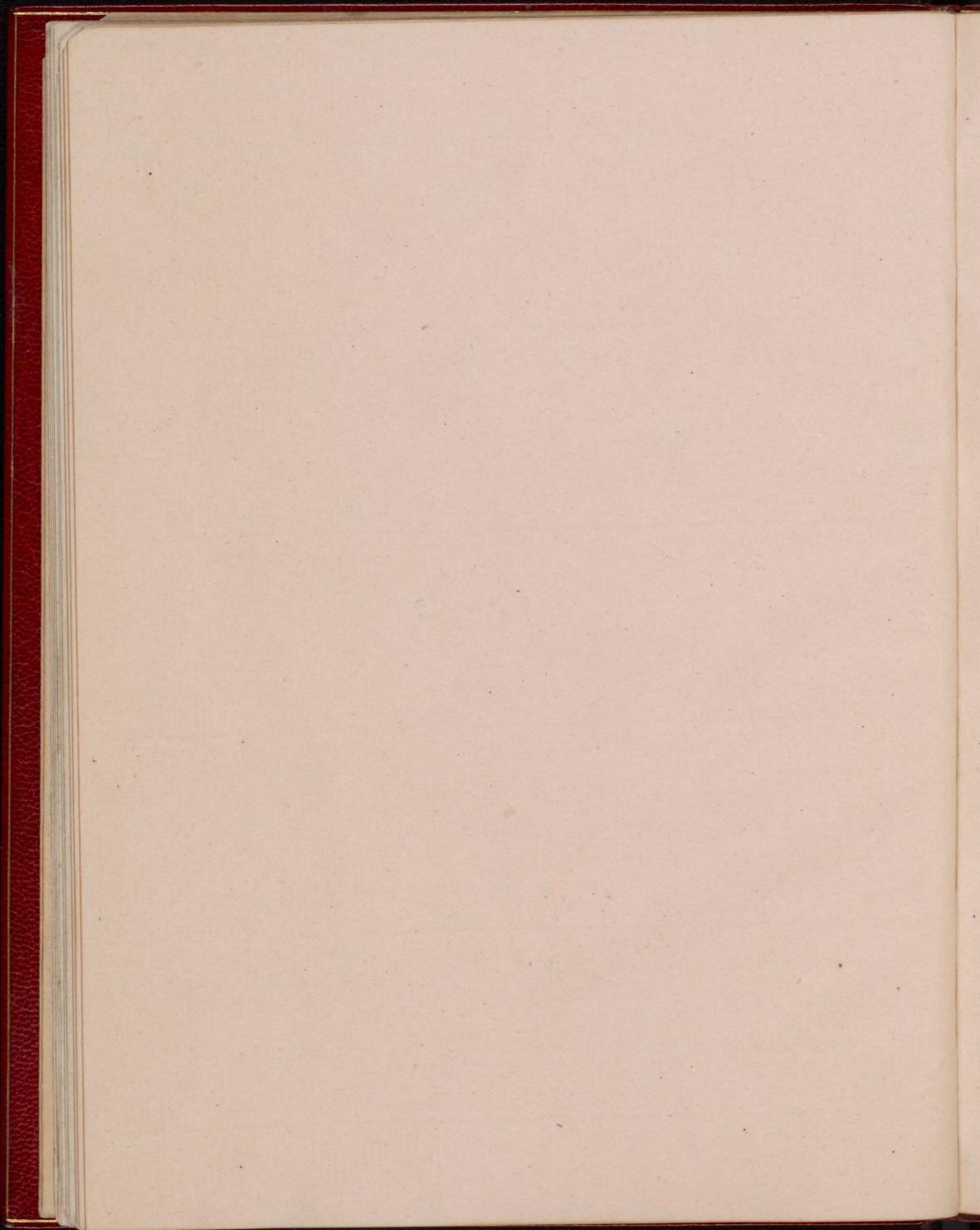


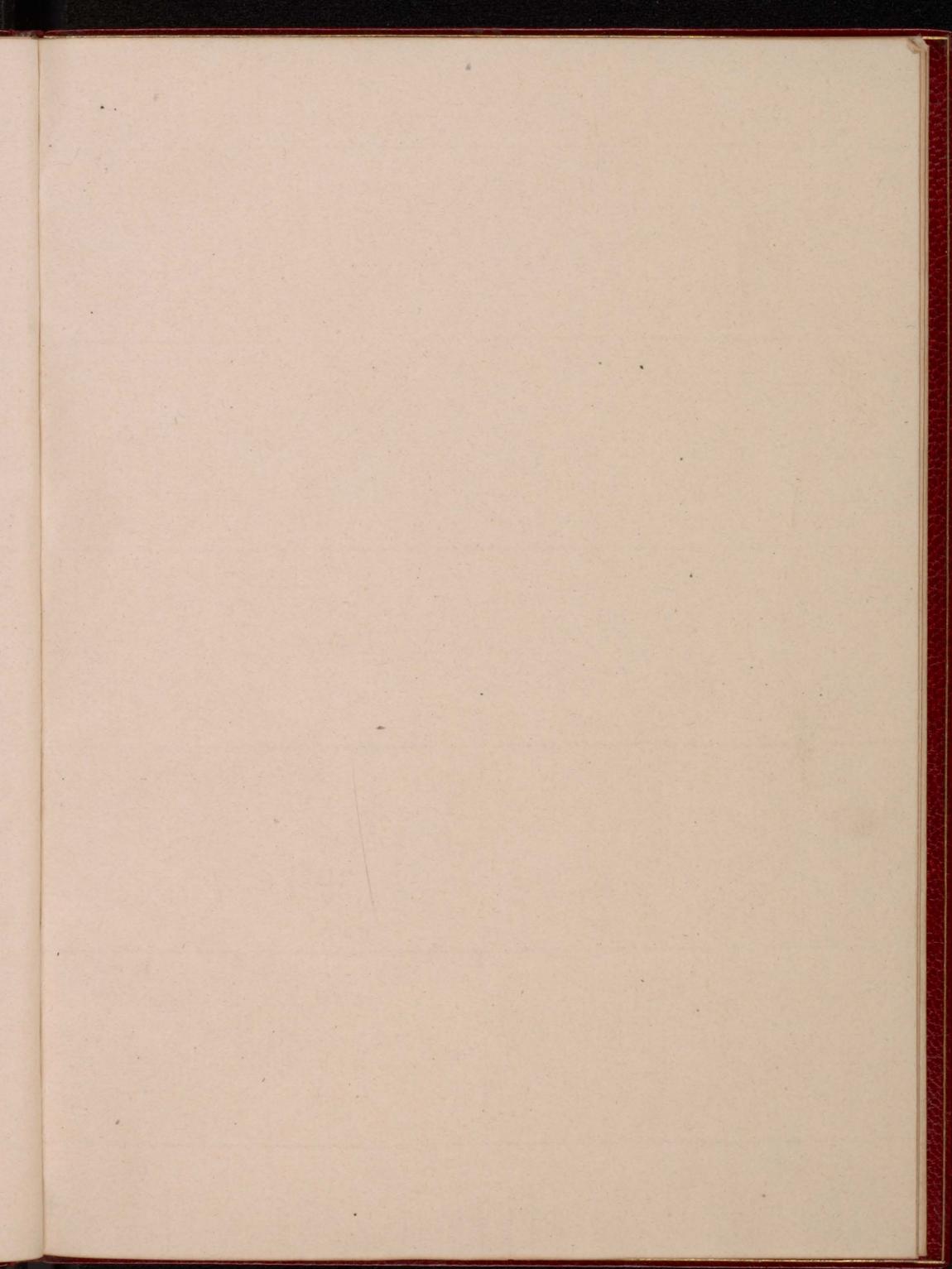


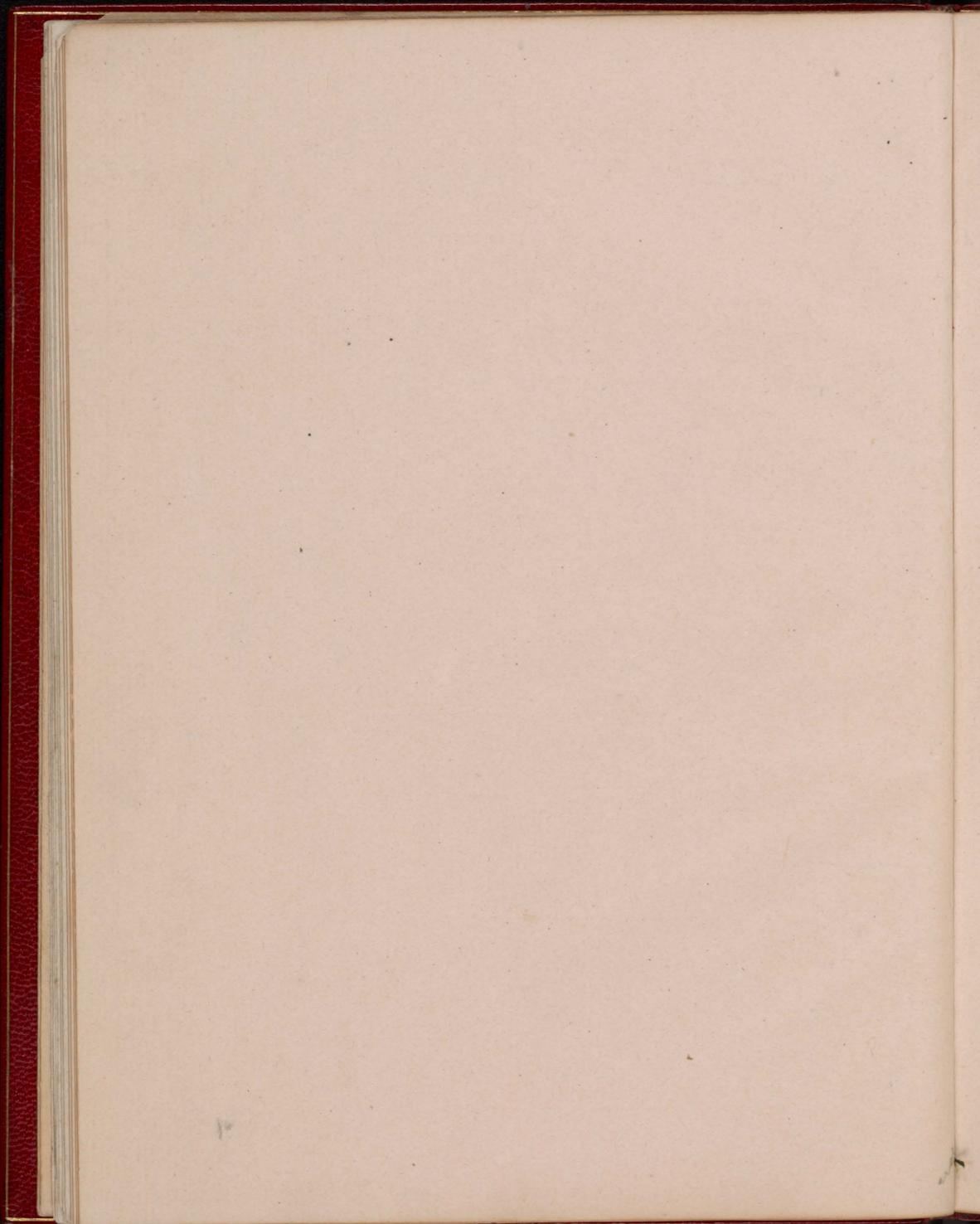


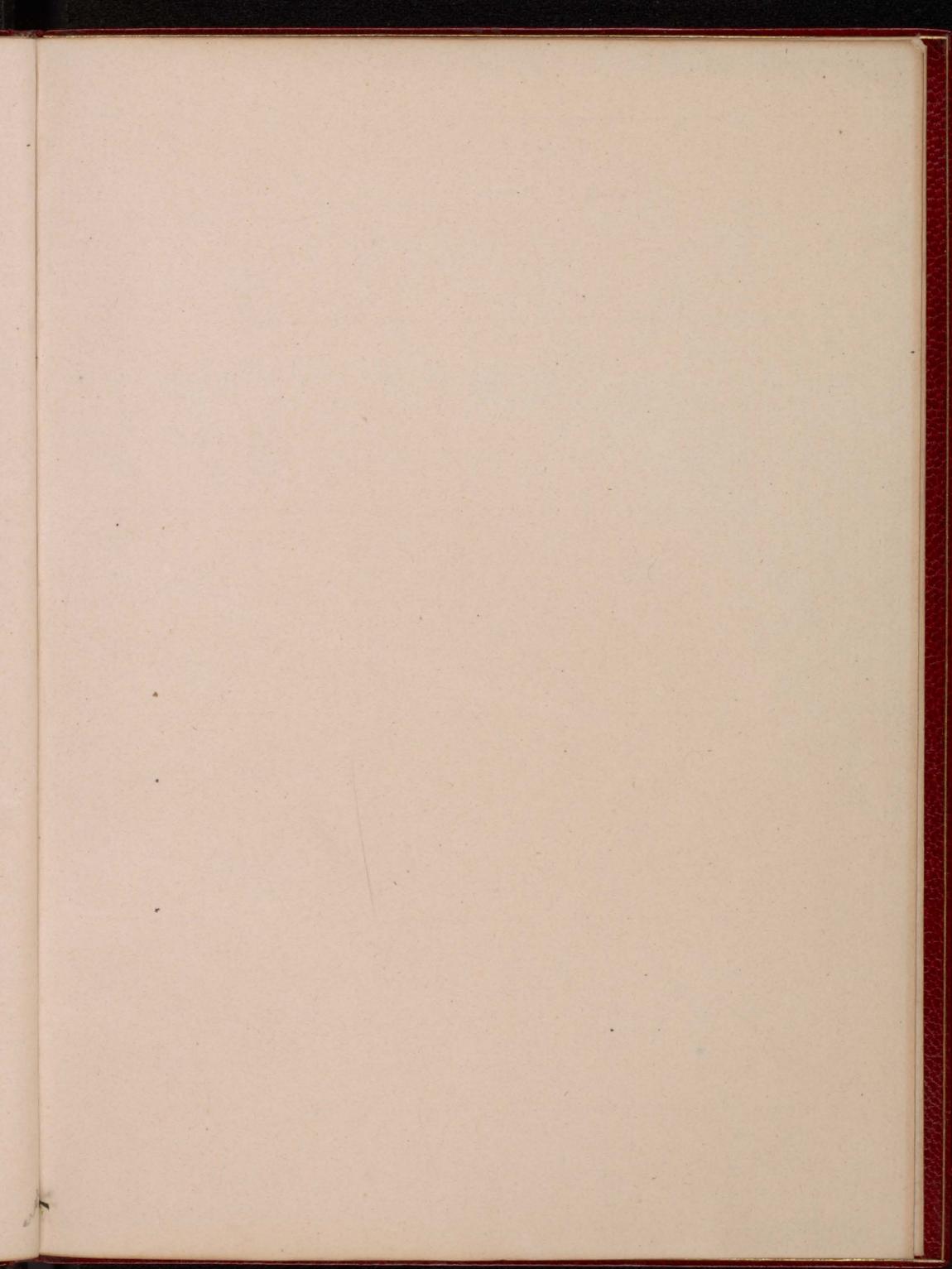


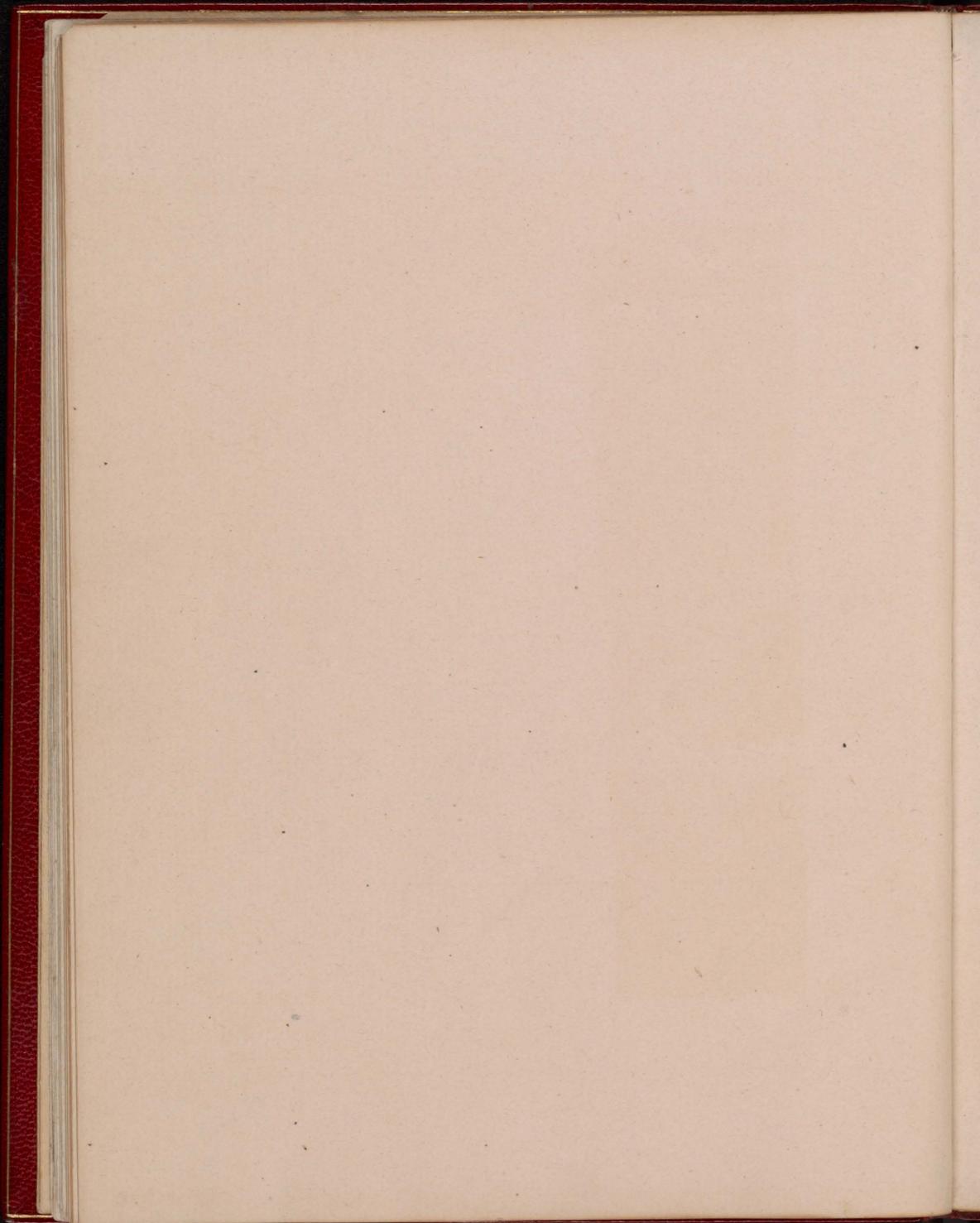


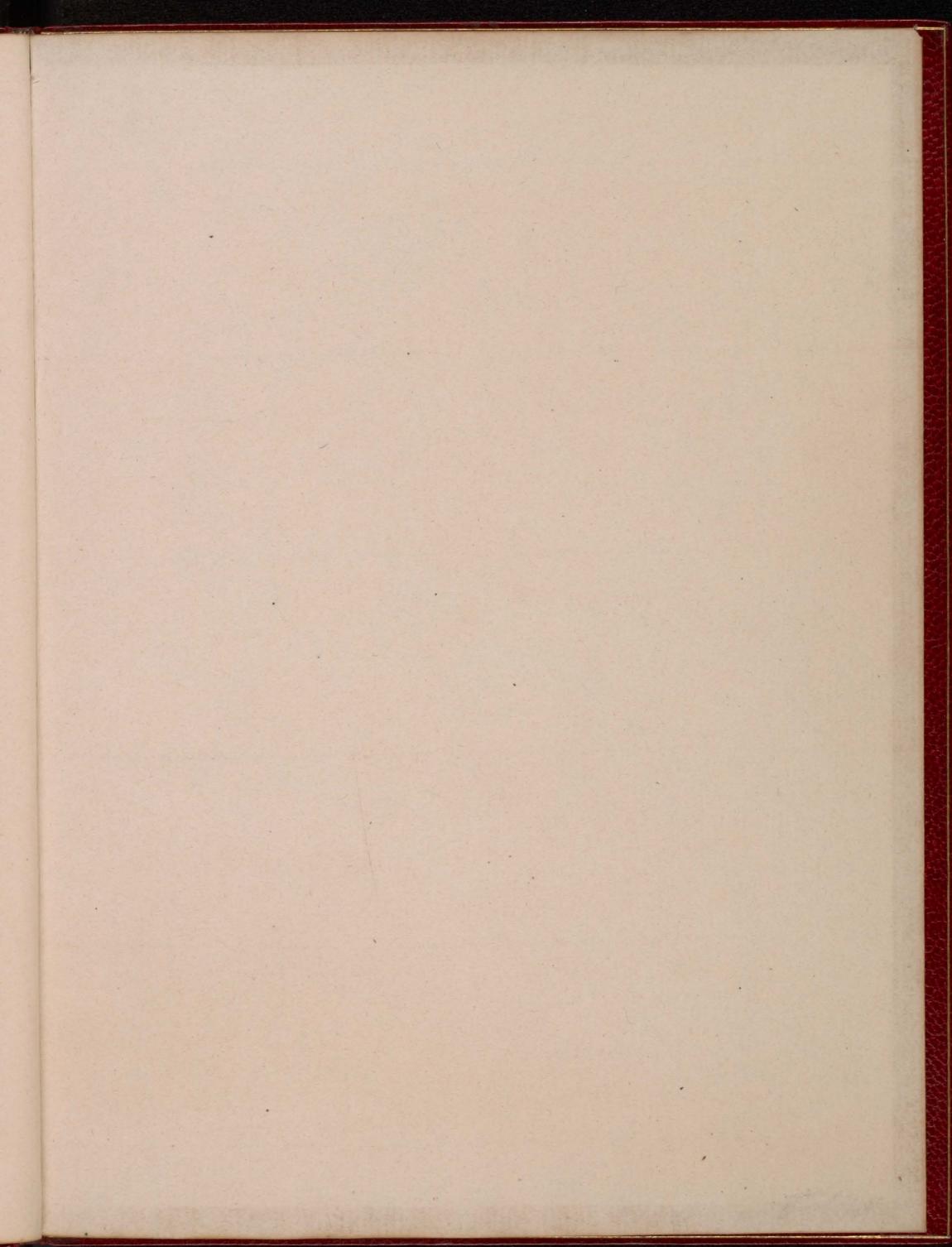












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