













SEBASTIAN CABOT.

# JOHN AND SEBASTIAN CABOT.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE,

WITH DOCUMENTS.

BY FRANCESCO TARDUCCI.

*TRANSLATED FROM ITALIAN*

BY HENRY F. BROWNSON.



DETROIT:

H. F. BROWNSON, PUBLISHER,

33 AND 35 CONGRESS STREET, WEST.

1893.

E189  
CIT2

Entered according to Act of Congress in the year Eighteen Hundred and Ninety Three.

BY HENRY F. BROWNSON.

In the Office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington, D. C.

TO THE  
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

---

THE original edition of this work in Italian is published at the charge of the Royal Commission of National History of Venice. This translation is authorized by that Commission as well as by the Author.

A comparison of the translation with the original publication will show that they vary in some places. In every instance of the sort, the variance has been suggested or authorized by Professor Tarducci, and will be conformed to in the next Italian edition.

The Author's letter of Dedication shows how he was led to write this story of the Cabots; and points out the propriety of such work after the publication of his "Life of Christopher Columbus," and the seasonableness of the work as his contribution to the Festivals now celebrating in honor of the great Genoese and the discovery of America.

Next in time, as in importance, to the discovery of the Bahamas and West Indies by Columbus, was the discovery of the northern part of America by the Cabots. I may be pardoned for adding that the latter discovery must be regarded by the historian as infinitely more beneficial to mankind than the former.

These two discoveries, the first by a Genoese, the second by Venetians, transferred the control of the world's commerce from Genoa and Venice to the Iberian peninsula and the British Isles. Genoa and Venice gave birth to the heroes whose achievements were to

strip them of the glorious rank they had previously enjoyed, and raise two other states to the pinnacle of greatness, where they vied with each other in ingratitude to their great benefactors.

The importance of the discovery of John Cabot, and its continuation by his son Sebastian, can hardly be over-estimated. It is nothing derogatory to the glory of Christopher Columbus, who must ever be honored as the greatest of discoverers, to say that John Cabot preceded him in the attempt at trans-Atlantic discovery, and although San Salvador was discovered nearly two years before the English possessions were, Cabot would have succeeded had Columbus never lived.

Nor does it amount to any thing to say that the discovery to the north would have been the inevitable result of European acquaintance with the West Indies; for it is equally true that the discovery of these and of all south would have followed the discovery of "Newfoundland." Cabot had been for years looking for land to the west, led by a course of reasoning similar to that which influenced Columbus, and had Columbus never lived, would have been Columbus.

Columbus and Cabot looked for a land of gold and spices. Columbus found the lands rich in precious metals, and the result there has been four centuries of cruelty, slavery, and oppression, of despotism and anarchy. Cabot found a land whose only wealth was in the cod-fish that swarmed on its coasts; but that land became the cradle of liberty and justice, of resistance to tyranny and oppression, the refuge of the enslaved and down-trodden of every clime. The world, humanity, is better, nobler, happier, for the discovery made by Cabot; has any real benefit to mankind resulted from the lands south of us ?

Let not this be taken as casting any slur on the character or sentiments of Christopher Columbus. What happened was against his will, and in spite of all he could do to prevent it. Cabot was, appar-

ently, a man of his times. Columbus was above and beyond all times. No pent-up notions contracted his heart ; his aspirations were sublime; his affections as broad as the universe. The man who wrote, as Columbus did in one of his letters, "I say that the Holy Ghost works in the Christian and in the Jew ; in the Moor and in every one in every religion;"\* may have lived in the Fifteenth Century, but his soul is at home in the Nineteenth.

Columbus sought for a new world that the Gospel might be made known to millions who had never heard the glad tidings of salvation; and for gold that he might subsidize hosts for the delivery of the Holy Land. The Cabots sought to discover unknown regions for the sake of the discovery and the extension of commerce and geographical knowledge.

The untiring industry of our author in the examination of the records and documents has enabled him to fix the date of the discovery of the American Continent by John Cabot and his sons as June 24, 1494. His acuteness in historical criticism has established the Venetian nationality of both John and Sebastian; the discovery by Sebastian of Hudson Strait, Hudson Bay, and Fox Channel. He has successfully defended Sebastian Cabot from the only serious charge ever brought against him, and given a faithful portrait of him as a leader who may have made a mistake in his policy towards the mutinous officers he was obliged to take with him on his expedition of 1526 ; but was always just and fair, and only deficient at times in the severity he should have exhibited. This expedition, in the light of the new documents used by Tarducci, takes on quite another aspect than it previously presented.

It is further claimed for Sebastian Cabot that to him is due the

---

\* Let not Columbus, nor the present writer be misapprehended. There are other workings of the Holy Ghost besides that of sanctifying grace.

commercial greatness of England ; and if so, of course also that of the United States.

Sebastian Cabot, moreover, was the first to propose, and to attempt to solve the great problem of the north-west passage,—a problem which may yet remain unsolved till the next century; but to which we owe some of the most sublime examples of heroism and endurance the human race can boast of.

Columbus stands on a solid pedestal as the greatest of the world's discoverers, but Tarducci claims for the Cabots a rank above all others except Columbus himself, and it is most conformable to the fitness of things that the same author should have written the life of all three.

DETROIT, Jan. 16, 1893.

H. F. BROWNSON.

TO THE

COUNTESS GABRIELLA SPALLETTI,

ROME.

MOST NOBLE COUNTESS :

As the Centenary Festival of the Discovery of America is near at hand, I have pondered much what I could do to take an active part in it, it seeming to me that, after writing the Life of Christopher Columbus, I was almost under a moral obligation to be something more than a mere spectator. After much reflection I resolved to write about the Cabots. I saw plainly that the task was serious, and one that might well affright greater ability than mine ; but the subject entered so opportunely, or rather so rightfully, into the Festival, that its seasonableness overcame my hesitation. In fact, the Cabots were the first to discover the mainland of America, less than two years after Christopher Columbus's discovery ; so that, after the great Genoese, no one has an equal claim to be remembered and celebrated at these centenary Festivals. I set myself therefore to work with all the vigor I am capable of ; and all the time which the obstinate malady of my eyes allowed me to employ, and which the occupation of teaching left me free from the duties of the school, I have dedicated to the Story of the Cabots. Nor has the difficulty of the path, great as it has been, ever lessened my zeal or tired my energy while I had it ever in view to arrive in time and not fail to make some contribution to this Festival. I had already travelled a great part of my way, and the hope of finishing all began to become a certainty, when an unforeseen difficulty threatened to render useless all my care and labor. In the scarcity of

documents on the Cabots, it was most important for me to have the records of the suit against Sebastian Cabot, which are preserved in the Spanish archives, and never published nor studied by any one, and a few other documents, either known only by name, or erroneously known, which are kept in the same archives. My anxiety to procure copies of them, or at least to know somewhat fully their contents, was as great as their importance. But wherever I turned to knock, I found people too busy to attend to me. I thus found myself on the point of either giving out my work sadly defective, or putting off its publication indefinitely. The former I would not do, and the latter was painful to me. But in a happy moment I thought of you and of your many connections and I wrote to you explaining my case. You took the matter to heart, and soon afterwards I received beautiful copies of the coveted documents.

Now, then, that I reach the bank at last, and present to the Public my history of the Cabots, such as it is, it is right that I should place your name in front of it, for you have been in a certain fashion a colaborer in my work. I know that what I present you is too little, but the Poet said : \*

"I give thee all, I can no more.  
Though poor the offering be."

But though my book lack the merit that would make it a worthy offering to a polished and noble Lady, I trust that the attestation it bears of my gratitude will render it acceptable in your eyes.

PIOMBICO. August 1, 1892.

Your most Dev. and Obt.

FRANCESCO TARDUCCI.

\* " Nè che poco io vi dia da imputar sono;  
Chè quanto io posso dar tutto vi dono. "

## CONTENTS.

---

Translator's Preface, . . . . .	iii
Dedicatory Letter, . . . . .	vii

### CHAPTER I.

John Cabot's Native Land, . . . . .	PAGE 1
-------------------------------------	-----------

### CHAPTER II.

Venice.—Its Relations with England.—Voyages of the People of the North in the North Seas.—Youth of John Cabot.—His Endowments of Mind and Heart, . . . . .	29
--	----

### CHAPTER III.

The First Discovery of 1494, . . . . .	39
--	----

### CHAPTER IV.

What Point in North America it was that John Cabot first discovered in 1494 —Attempt to deprive him of the honor, . . . . .	50
--	----

### CHAPTER V.

The First Letters Patent.—Expedition of 1497, . . . . .	64
---	----

### CHAPTER VI.

The second Letters Patent.—Preparations for the expedition of 1498, —John Cabot's Death, . . . . .	73
---	----

### CHAPTER VII.

Sebastian Cabot, . . . . .	78
----------------------------	----

### CHAPTER VIII.

Expedition of 1498, . . . . .	90
-------------------------------	----

### CHAPTER IX.

A Period of Obscurity, . . . . .	110
----------------------------------	-----

### CHAPTER X.

Sebastian Cabot passes to the service of Spain, . . . . .	116
---	-----

	PAGE
CHAPTER XI.	
Sebastian Cabot back in England, . . . . .	121
CHAPTER XII.	
Sebastian Cabot discovered the Strait and Bay which were afterwards named from Hudson, . . . . .	128
CHAPTER XIII.	
Return to Spain, . . . . .	138
CHAPTER XIV.	
Repeated attempts to find a passage through the new lands of America to reach the eastern shore of Asia.—Magellan.—Resentment of Portugal against Spain on account of his voyage. . . . .	147
CHAPTER XV.	
Sebastian Cabot put at the head of an expedition to the Moluccas,	151
CHAPTER XVI.	
Sailing of the expedition, . . . . .	161
CHAPTER XVII.	
Continuation of the voyage, . . . . .	177
CHAPTER XVIII.	
Exploration of the River La Plata, . . . . .	196
CHAPTER XIX.	
Diego Garcia, . . . . .	214
CHAPTER XX.	
Cabot's Return to Spain, . . . . .	226
CHAPTER XXI.	
Arrival in Spain, . . . . .	245
CHAPTER XXII.	
Return to England, . . . . .	261
CHAPTER XXIII.	
Project of navigation to the North-East, . . . . .	272
CHAPTER XXIV.	
Expedition to the North-East, . . . . .	283
CHAPTER XXV.	
Sebastian Cabot's Death, . . . . .	302
Appendix, . . . . .	313



# JOHN AND SEBASTIAN CABOT.

---

## CHAPTER I.

### *John Cabot's native land.\**

AUGUST 11th, 1472, the senate of Venice, Nicholas Trono Doge, conferred citizenship of Venice, by virtue of a new naturalization law, on one Luigi Fontana of Bergamo. Many others, after Fontana, obtained the same Venetian naturalization, but in their case the secretary of the senate instead of registering the whole decree each time, merely recorded that the same privilege as to Fontana was granted to such a one on such a day and year : *simile privilegium factum fuit provido viro* etc. Among the names so mentioned we find that of John Cabot for the year 1476, and this is the first appearance of that name in history. †]

The naturalization conferred by Venice, not considering ordinary citizenship which had its special duties and rights, was of two sorts, one inferior, called *de intus*, the other greater, and called *de intus et extra*: both had to be voted by the senate. The citizenship *de intus* only admitted to certain inferior employments and the exercise of certain rights within the city; that of *intus et extra* extended also to all the rights of a Venetian citizen outside of Venice. John Cabot received this latter

---

\* See Appendix 1.

† *Simile privilegium factum fuit Joanni Caboto sub duce suprascripto 1476.*

and by unanimous vote on March 28, 1476.\* To acquire this citizenship, besides services to the Republic, only two conditions were at that time requisite, namely, uninterrupted residence in Venice for 15 years at least, and to have borne during that period the burdens and imposts of the Venetian government.†

But whence did he come? where was he born?

Till within a few years this question had not aroused the curiosity of the learned; and as the few documents concerning him spoke of him as a Venetian, he was always called so without further inquiry. The question was started by a document discovered by a Prussian, G. A. Bergenroth in the archives of Simancas.‡ This document is a cypher despatch which Don Pedro de Ayala, Spanish ambassador to the English court, sent to his sovereigns July 25, 1498, informing them of the discovery made by the English of *certain islands and continents*, encroaching, as he believed, on the rights of Spain. Now Ayala in his despatch calls the discoverer of these islands *a Genoese like Columbus*, and in two other places where he mentions him, he calls him a Genoese. The discoverer of whom he is speaking is John Cabot. Later, the searches of Henry Harrisse brought to light from the same archives two despatches of Ruy Gonzales de Puebla, another Spanish ambassador to England, in which John Cabot is also given as a Genoese. Moreover, he is likewise called a Genoese in some English chronicles, which words had escaped the atten-

\*1476 die 28 Martii, Quod fiat privilegium civilitatis de intus et extra Joanni Caboto per habitationem annorum xv. juxta consuetum. De parte 149. De nou O. Nou sinceri O. This document is taken from the records of the Venetian Senate, series called Senato-Terra, as relating to the government of the main-land, and commencing in 1440. It was first published by Romanin, *Storia Documentata* T. iv. p. 453.

† Quicumque annis xv. vel inde supra, Venetiis continue habitasset; factiones et onera nostri dominii ipso tempore subeundo a modo civis et Venetus noster esset.

‡ Simancas is a small city in the province of Valladolid, in the castle of which the Spanish archives are kept, not only those of the Peninsula and the adjacent islands, but also those of the former Spanish states in Flanders, Italy, and Portugal.

tion of historians until Bergenroth's discovery started the question as to the native land of John Cabot.

The learned Prussian's discovery was joyfully received by the patriotic Ligurians who labored with praiseworthy zeal to find further support for the vague assertions of the Spanish ambassadors and the English chronicles. On the other side, the Venetians, who had always before been proud of John Cabot as a fellow-countryman were not idle, but wiped the dust off charters and documents to combat the pretensions of Genoa and confirm their own claims. But the result of the researches was not satisfactory to the zeal of either side. At Venice tradition would have him born in an insignificant place called Castello, peopled mainly by sea-faring men, and the zealous inhabitants inscribed this tradition on a stone for the information of strangers; but it had no better or older confirmation than an anonymous article in a Venetian journal of the last century containing these words: "It is the constant and undoubted report that he was a Venetian, and we are able to assert that he was born at Castello."\* Carlo Bullo patriotically claims for his own Chioggia the honor of being the cradle of John Cabot, but only his love of his own country could have discovered any argument or indication in support of his claim; for here too all depends on the authority of an anonymous writer in an annual of 1786, who says: "Cabot, a Venetian, born at Chioggia discovered North America for the English."† What proof do these anonymous writers bring of their assertion? None whatever.

Federico Stefani expressed a doubt that the name Caboto was originally written Cha' Botto or Ca Botto,‡ which would be a strong proof that he was a Venetian, for this cha' or ca', an abbreviation of *Casata* (house or family), is very common in Venetian surnames, as may be seen in the historic sur-

---

\* *Minerva*, a Venetian journal, 1763, cited by Pasini. *I Navigatori al Polo Artico*, Venezia, 1880.

† C. Bullo, *La Vera Patria di Nicolò ãe' Conti e di Giovanni Caboto*, Chioggia, Duse, 1880.

‡ See *Archivio storico di Venezia*—Essay by Rawdon Brown. Venezia, Antonelli, 1865, p. 143.

names, Ca'da Mosto, Ca'da Pesaro, and also in those of many city families. The doubt is ingenious, and if it could be supported by any instance of ancient spelling it might be of some weight in favor of Venice, but no such instance can be found.

The investigation has, then, been wholly fruitless, so far as concerns Venice.

On the part of Genoa, the most pains-taking investigator has been Cornelio Desimoni, but at the conclusion of his labor he was forced to confess that he had unfortunately been able to find nothing.\* Reducing the matter, then, to simple induction, he is inclined to look for the birthplace of John Cabot in Savona, because he finds in that city two surnames, one not very dissimilar to, the other very like that he is in search of, namely, the patrician family of *Gavotto*, and the plebeian *Cabuto*. The former furnished masters of ships in the very days of John Cabot; the second can be traced back in the history of Genoa as far as the XII century under the name of Cabutius or Cabutus; and contemporary with John Cabot there were several persons named *Cabutto*, amongst others one Sebastian. Again we meet a Sebastian Cabutus in the XVI century.† This repetition of the name Sebastian in the same family would not be without weight in our case, as one of the three sons of John Cabot was also called by that name, considering the custom then and now, and much more then than now, of renewing in families from generation to generation the names of those who have gone before. And not only at Savona but also in many other parts of Liguria, are found surnames more or less resembling Caboto, and even at Port Maurice the same surname is sometimes met with.‡

---

\*“It will naturally be asked if any trace can be found in our documents of such events, persons, and families. Unhappily we have found nothing, or the same as nothing. Still here are at least some hints of family names.” From the *Giornale Ligustico*. Anno 1. *Sugli Scopritori Genovesi*, p. 314. Id. *Intorno a Giovanni Caboto, Genovese*, Documenti, etc. Genova Istituto dei Surdi-Muti, 1881.

† Id. *Sugli Scopritori Genovesi*, p. 314—316.

‡ “We have documents proving that the family of Caboto (written precisely as John used to sign it) exists in Port Maurice from the year 1252 and down

But similar, and even identical, surnames are found in every part of Italy, even in places the farthest apart, without any presumption of relationship. HARRISSE has found in notarial acts 115 Columbuses all living in the XIV and XV century at Genoa and in its environs; and amongst them were several with a father Domenico and a grandfather Giovanni, precisely like Christopher Columbus: and yet, in spite of the concordance of date and the identity of baptismal name, not one had any degree of consanguinity with Christopher Columbus.\* And this is easily explained when we remember the arbitrary and loose way in which surnames were formed in the middle ages. † And even if this argument based on the similarity of surname were valid, it would not help us much, for surnames resembling Caboto, are not wanting even in the dogeate of Venice‡ and a single one would invalidate the argument in favor of other places.

So that it is clear that this argument, unaccompanied by others to support it, can be no guide in the obscurity through which we are passing.

Some seem to have found a strong basis for Genoa's claims in a dispatch from Raimondo da Soncino, the Duke of Milan's ambassador to England, who when writing to his master of the return of John from his voyage of discovery, among many other things reports that the discoverer "has given an island to a certain barber of his from the neighborhood of Genoa." § By barbers, at that time, not only the vulgar, but even the law meant the lower class of surgeons. || But that possessive pronoun *his* sounded to their ears as though it had been *his fellow-countryman*, and therefore they made

through an uninterrupted series of generations as far as the end of the XV century." G. Doneaud, *I Caboto di Porto Maurizio* in the *Provincia*, a weekly journal of Port Maurice, 19 Nov. 1881. In the number for Nov. 26, the author cites in support notarial instruments of 1252, 1276, and 1434.

\* *Jean et Sébastien Cabot*, par Henry HARRISSE, Paris, Leroux, 1882, p. 12.

† See my article *Sui Sopranomi*, in the *Rassegna Nazionale*, Anno ix. Firenze, Cellini, 1888.

‡ See Bull., l. c. p. xxx.

§ See App. xiii.

|| See Desimoni, *Intorno a Giovanni Caboto* etc., p. 37.

John born in the Ligurian Castiglione, a small hamlet in the neighborhood of Chiavari.\* But such interpretation of the pronoun *his* seems to me too arbitrary; nor did any one ever, on hearing a man speak of *his* servant, suppose him to mean that the servant was born in the same place as himself.

Since, then, the most diligent research has failed to confirm or refute the generic assertions of the two Spanish ambassadors and the English chronicles cited, there is nothing left but to examine these assertions by themselves and determine what force they have or may have. To do this it will not only greatly help us, but it is even necessary to hear the others first who say John Cabot was simply a Venetian, giving the name of his adoptive country, without regard to the place of his birth.

First comes John himself, in his petition to the King of England March 5, 1496,—“To the King our sovereign lord. Please it your highnes. . . to graunt unto John Cabotto citizen of Venice.”† The King follows the same in the letters patent granted in conformity with the petition: “Be it known and manifest that we have given and granted to our beloved John Cabotto *Citizen of Venice* and his sons, etc.”‡ Next comes Lorenzo Pasqualigo, a Venetian merchant settled in Bristol who was present when John Cabot returned from his discovery, and witnessed the great demonstration made in his honor by the English. Writing of which immediately afterwards to Venice he not only calls him repeatedly a Venetian, but takes note with the lively pride of a fellow-citizen of the honor paid to the flag of Venice. “This Venetian of ours is come. . . and is with his Venetian wife . . . and planted on the lands he discovered a great‡ with an English standard and one of St. Mark, he being a Venetian, so that our ensign has been carried far.”§ Don Rai-

\*M. d' Avezac, *Les Navigations terre-neuviennes de Jean et Sébastien Cabot*, in the *Bulletin de la société de géographie*, Tome xviii, Paris, 1869.

† See Appendix xv.

‡“Notum sit et manifestum quod dedimus et coucessimus. . . dilectis nobis Johanni Cabotto, *civi Venetiarum* etc. filiis. . . dicti. . . Johannis.” See Appendix v.

§ See App. x.

mondo da Soncino ambassador of the Duke of Milan to England, also wrote at once to the duke, and in his dispatch gives the discovery as made by a Venetian :—"Item the King's Majesty had sent a Venetian some months ago."\* And writing again on the 18th of December of the same year, he continues to speak of him in the same manner : "There is a popular Venetian in this Kingdom named messer Zoanne Caboto."†

The King of England grants fresh letters patent February 3, 1498, in which, and in the address which precedes them, John is always called a Venetian citizen : "Please it your Highnesse . . . to graunte John Kabotto Veneciane . . . We graunte to our well beloved John Kabotto Venician. . ."‡

The documents mentioned are all from contemporaries who knew John Cabot personally and spoke with him, and were all written in his life-time. To these I may add the words of Sebastian Cabot, which, though written many years after the death of John, still, as those of his son, may be considered as contemporary. Sebastian, in his chart of 1544, near the newly discovered land placed this inscription : "This land was discovered by John Cabot Venetian."§

In the documents, then, which have reached us and in the public and private charts, all the contemporaries and acquaintances of John Cabot call him a Venetian. The only exceptions to this rule beginning with an unknown merchant and continued by ambassadors and ministers and the king himself, are the two Spanish ambassadors. Was it accidental, or was there a reason for it? If accidental, it is not worth discussing : if there was a reason, it should arise from the conditions of the times, the facts, or the persons. Let us then briefly recall these conditions, and let the necessity be an excuse for anticipating mention of events which must be told over again later at greater length.

After repeated attempts John Cabot had discovered a new

\* See App. xii.

† See App. xiii.

‡ See App. xiv.

§ "Esta tierra fue descubierta por *Juan Caboto, Veneciano*, y Sebastian Caboto su hijo, anno del nascimiento de nuestro Salvador Jesu Christo de mcccxciii."

land, and applied to the King of England, in reliance on this discovery, for license and privileges for further voyages and discoveries. Henry VII consented and on the 5th of March 1496 granted the letters patent asked for. Spain at this time was all eyes to guard against a surprise being attempted from any side against the privileges the bull of Alexander VI gave her over all discoveries made or to be made beyond the line of partition fixed by that pope himself.\* It was therefore natural that Puebla, her ambassador to the court of England, as soon as informed of the negotiations of John Cabot with Henry VII, should at once report them to his government. This report he sent on the 21st of January 1496, that is to say, forty days before the letters patent received the royal signature. So great had been his watchfulness to learn and make known the result. Puebla's dispatch is unfortunately lost, but its loss so far as concerns the present question is supplied by the answer of the Spanish sovereigns, which undoubtedly according to the custom of all state offices repeated in reply the very words used in the dispatch. Now the Spanish chancery made this answer: "As to what you say that *one like Columbus* has gone there to put England on an undertaking like that of the Indies. . . † This shows clearly that Puebla, when writing his dispatch, wholly intent on the danger threatening Spain, had so little in view the person of the discoverer that in order to indicate him he uses the most general and vague expressions and only says *one*; "One has gone there like Columbus," etc. And in fact what difference did it make in the danger to Spain whether he was an Englishman, or a foreigner in the service of England? What was important for the ambassador to make known, and for Spain to learn, was that an expedition like that of Columbus was preparing for the discovery of new regions for the benefit of England. The name of the leader of the expedition was so little important to be known, that it could very well be omitted entirely without at all diminish-

---

\*Fernando Colombo. *Historie*, c. xlii.—Herrera, *Hist. Ind.* Dec. 1. lib. xx. c. 4.—Navarrete, *Colec. Dipl.* xxiii.

† "Quanto a lo que desis que alla es yda *uno como colon* para poner el Rey de Inglaterra en otro negocio como el de las yndias. . ." See App. vi.



ing the danger or importance of the matter. And to have called him *one* without any addition of country or nation, is equivalent to omitting him altogether. But do not the words *like Columbus*, hint from what part he came? Not at all : they simply mean that the discoverer wished to do for England what Columbus had done for Spain, and it is easy to understand that this comparison would occur at once to the writer's mind when the purport of the dispatch was precisely to prevent any one from entering, to the injury of Spain, on the way opened by Christopher Columbus.

But the pressure and solicitation of Spain had no effect, and John Cabot continued on his road of discovery. During the expedition of 1498, Puebla writes again to his sovereigns : and in this dispatch the expression which he uses to designate him, while remaining just as uncertain as to the person of the discoverer, is a little more definite as to the place from which the discoverer came : and where he at first had simply said "One like Columbus," he now says, "Another Genoese like Columbus."\* Did this addition drop casually from Puebla's pen without any attention on his part, or did he write it with deliberate purpose? Let us first examine the second supposition. As to the fact itself of the discovery and of the danger to Spain, we have seen that it was not affected one atom either way by the person of the discoverer ; Puebla could then have had no motive for the addition on this account. Was he led to make it by any reason which he saw in the person of the sovereigns to whom he was writing? What did it matter to Ferdinand and Isabella whether that discoverer was a Genoese or a Venetian? The motive then must be looked for in the person of Puebla himself. But what could it have been? To defend this honor for Genoa? But what glory for Genoa was the discovery made by John Cabot in face of that of Christopher Columbus? And to Puebla, a Spaniard, what mattered the glory of Genoa? It was not zeal of patriotic affection. Was it a pedantic itching for historical accuracy?

---

\* El Rey de Inglaterra embio cinco naos armadas cou otro genoves como colon a buscar la isla de Brazil." See App. xv.

It is ridiculous to think so. Puebla's interest in determining accurately the person of the discoverer was so great that he never mentions his name or surname, but calls him simply *another Genoese*. And if we had not learnt from other documents that the author of the discovery reported by him to his sovereigns was John Cabot, with all his dispatches we should still be ignorant who *this other* was who was put by England on the same career as Columbus. And even admitting that Puebla, contrary to the common practice of calling him a Venetian, had wished to designate his true country, what could history gain from the accuracy, if the dispatch was in cypher and was to remain buried in the archives and hidden from all eyes? Was Puebla, again, a man to trouble himself about these historical *minutiae*? The little we know of him shows him to have been venal, grasping, and niggard to a degree hardly credible of one in his high position.\* Such are not the kind of persons to busy themselves with historical sweepings.—But he was in close relation with the Genoese merchants in London, and might have had from them exact information about Cabot.—His relation with the Genoese is very true, but the only document that records it shows that its purpose was to fill his coffers with gold, not historical research.† And in regard to these Genoese merchants, we saw a short while ago a Venetian merchant writing at once to Venice to give notice of the discovery and relating it with great satisfaction as conferring glory on his country. Is there any record of any Genoese writing about it to Genoa? And yet amongst those merchants

---

\* See in Bergenroth's *Calendar of Spanish state papers* (vol. i, No. 206, 207, p. 166), the petition of the Spanish merchants against him, and Dr. Breton's letter—From H. HARRISSE, l. c. p. 19.—Puebla was accustomed to visit the English court very often. One day King Henry asked his court if they knew why Dr. Puebla came, and they replied, "to eat." *Ib.* Rep. from London, no. 204, 207.

†The Genoese merchants had incurred a certain penalty, and employed Puebla to procure their discharge. He obtained their pardon, but demanded 500 crowns for recompense; whereupon the Spanish merchants were greatly shocked and denounced him to the commissioners sent in 1498 to inquire into his conduct.

there were some of great merit, so much so that the King of England employed them on diplomatic missions to the Pope and to the King of France.\* So that they were persons well fitted to understand the importance of the discovery made by John Cabot, and the glory that resulted from it for Genoa, if that was his country.—It may be answered that not finding any document recording it is no proof that it never occurred. That is very true; but we can find the dispatches of Don Raimondo da Soncino, ambassador of the Duke of Milan to England. And as Genoa was at this time under that duke, Soncino was naturally in closer relation with those merchants than any other diplomatist: and if any ambassador was likely to be interested in announcing that Cabot was a Genoese, it would be Soncino who in writing to his duke was relating the glory of one who would have been his subject. But we have seen that Don Raimondo in both his dispatches calls him a Venetian: and it is noteworthy that in the second he not only reports having conversed personally with Cabot, but also gives a long summary of the discourses he had heard from him concerning his plans for further voyages and discoveries. There was no want of opportunity for him to hear from the very mouth of John the real fact about his country, and he had a most natural occasion to mention the matter where he relates that Cabot had promised an island “to a certain barber of his from the neighborhood of Genoa.” Would not this name have recalled at once to his mind that Cabot too was a Genoese? But, instead, he always speaks of him as a *Venetian*, a *popular Venetian*.†

When a man has come to England as a Venetian citizen, has for 18 years enjoyed in the Venetian colony the benefits granted to Venetians by treaties and conventions, has never presented himself in public or in private but in the legal garb of a Venetian, and was known wherever he went as a Venetian, why should a man like Puebla, contrary to the custom and opinion of everybody else, call such man a Genoese?

We may revolve the matter over and over, but we shall not discover why. There only remains, then, the other supposition

---

\* See Rawdon Brown, *Calendar*, n. 785, 789. † See App. xii, xiii.

that it was merely by accident that Puebla attributed to John Cabot a Genoese nationality, and it does not seem to me hard to discover and explain how this happened. It was in his second dispatch of 1498 that he added the adjective *Genoese*, whereas in the first of 1496 he had said indefinitely *one*. Now it should be said that Puebla at this time lay under most serious charges. The most select portion of those he represented, the merchants, had presented a report against him to the Spanish government, which regarded the case as important enough to send out a commission of inquiry into his life and conduct. Meanwhile another ambassador was associated with him, on pretext of aiding him in the dispatch of business ; but the fact was clear to every one, as following close on the charges that until things were explained, no confidence was placed in him.\* Now it was in such state of feeling that Puebla informed his government of John Cabot's new departure. The dry brevity of the dispatch shows that the writer's mind was not on the matter, but he felt obliged by his charge to say a word of it. He wrote, then, that *one like Columbus* was leaving with a squadron for new discoveries ; and since this *one* was not an Englishman, but came like Columbus from Italy, without distinguishing the different provinces, but hurriedly announcing the fact, and as the Italian of Spain was a Genoese, he called the Italian of England also a Genoese.

How then about the dispatch of the other ambassador, Don Pedro de Ayala, where not once only, but three times John Cabot is called Genoese ? This was not a dispatch written in haste and almost in spite, as Puebla's evidently was, but is a long letter with many details and minute information.

Before answering this question, let us see who Ayala was and what were his duties.

Don Pedro de Ayala was the ambassador associated with Puebla when the charges preferred against the latter had determined the government to inquire into their truth. It is superfluous to say that the two ambassadors were crabbed enough to each other, and had only that intercourse together

---

\*See Bergenroth's *Calendar of State Papers*, l. c. As regards the associate ambassador we shall speak presently.

which their official relation demanded : Ayala despised his colleague, who repaid him with hatred. When John Cabot left on his new voyage Puebla thought it his duty to report it to his sovereigns, and wrote his laconic dispatch. Whether Ayala considered his colleague's account too meagre, or wanted to exhibit his superior usefulness, he gathered information concerning the voyage and its leader, and *taking his colleague's letter*, to the strictly necessary notice which this contained he added all the less important information he had gathered, which, although it might not be of any great interest to Spain to know it, bore witness to the zeal with which Ayala served his sovereigns. I say, *taking his colleague's letter*, for he repeats it in his own word for word, and the only difference in the two is that Puebla wrote drily such details as were absolutely necessary, and Ayala repeats each of these details accompanying them with such information of secondary importance as he had been able to gather. A brief comparison will show that this was really the case.

Puebla says :

“The King of England sent five armed ships with another Genoese like Columbus to seek for the island of Brazil and neighboring places : they were provisioned for a year.”

Puebla goes on :

“They say they will return in September. Considering the course they take, I find that the place they are seeking is a part of your Highnesses' possessions.”

Puebla continues :

“The King has spoken to

Ayala repeats :

“The King of England has armed a fleet for the purpose of examining certain islands and mainland . . . . the discoverer is another Genoese like Columbus. . . . the fleet was composed of five vessels with provisions for a year.”

Ayala :

“Considering the course they take . . . . I find that the place they have found or are seeking is a part of what belongs to your Highnesses by the convention with Portugal. Their return is expected in September.”

Ayala repeats :

“The King has spoken to

me of this several times ; he hopes to derive very great profit from it : I believe it is less than 400 leagues from here to those places.”\*      me of this several times : he hopes to derive very great profit from it : I believe it is less than 400 leagues from here to those places.” †

Puebla's letter is here given entire; the dots here and there in Ayala's show where he had inserted further information,—precious indeed to us who want the whole history of Cabot, but utterly worthless to Spain which was solely impressed by the fact of the discovery.

Is it not clearly evident that Ayala in writing his dispatch had before his eyes that of Puebla, and repeated not only the thoughts, but the very words ? Then, so far as the present question is concerned, Ayala's dispatch is only a duplicate, and as such has and can have no weight as authority. Puebla, in speaking of the English discoverer, had used the expression “another Genoese like Columbus” and Ayala repeats the expression without a syllable's change. Nor can it be supposed that he had had time or opportunity to inquire as to the true country of John Cabot, for he had only recently arrived in England, his permanent office being that of Ambassador to King James IV of Scotland ; and since he had been in England, we know from Soncino, his most frequent and intimate conversation was with him. ‡ So that his most natural and convenient source of information would have been Soncino, who, as we have seen, always calls Cabot a Venetian. And whatever further details con-

---

\* “ El Rey de Inglaterra embio cinco naos armados con otro Genoves como Colon a buscar la isla de Brazil y las vicinidades ; fueron proveydos por un año. Dicen que seran venidos para al el Septiembre, vista la derrota que llevan hallo que lo que buscan es lo que voestras Altezas poseen, el Re me ha hablado algunas vezes sobrello espera haver muy gran interesse. Creo que no hay de aqui alla CCCC leguas.” See App. xv.

† “. . . . el Rey de Inglaterra ha fecho armada para descubrir ciertas islas y tierra firme . . . . el inventor es otro genoves como Colon . . . . Del armada que hizo que fueron cinco naos fueron avitallados por un año . . . . vista la derrota que llevan hallo que es lo que *han hallado* o buscan lo que vuestras Altezas poseen . . . sperase seran venidos para el Septiembre. . . . El Rey de Ynglaterra me ha hablado algunas vezes sobre ello. . . . Espera aver muy gran interesse. Creo que no ay quatro cientos leguas.” See App. xvi.

‡ See Rawdon Brown, *Calendar* vol. i, n. 780, 783.

cerning Cabot are furnished by Ayala all concern him as discoverer, that is, he speaks of his activity, his genius, his influence with the seamen of Bristol ; but has not a syllable in regard to him personally as an individual. Each of the three times when he has occasion to mention him, he never uses his name or surname, but always indicates him by the general term *Genoese*, which he had found in Puebla's dispatch.

The authority of Puebla is therefore of no force in the present question; that of Ayala, of none.

Let us come now to the chroniclers.

The English chroniclers of the first half of the XVI century never mention the name of Cabot : as neither, for that matter, do they mention the name of Christopher Columbus or Americo Vespucci.\*

To them the New World and the voyages to it and the discoveries there do not seem to have existed. This silence ceases in 1559, in reference to Willoughby and Chancellor's voyage to the east by way of the northern seas. The tragic end of the brave Willoughby was probably the reason of their recording it rather than the importance of the expedition itself. This expedition, as we shall see, was principally the work of Sebastian Cabot, the son of John, and the chroniclers who re-

\* Not to be continually repeating the citation I give notice here, once for all, that in the few remarks on these chroniclers I follow HARRISSE's exposition in his *Jean et Sébastien Cabot*, p. 15 et s., and often translate his words literally.

This work of HARRISSE and BIDDLE's *Memoir* are the two greatest works written on the history of the Cabots. But neither author intended to give a complete work on the two voyagers. But the different questions they undertook to examine they investigated with much depth and learning. HARRISSE, for instance, treats at great length on the first period of the history of the Cabots, but skims over the last period of Sebastian's residence in England, and hardly mentions his thirty years' service in Spain.

HARRISSE's work is divided into four parts : the first examines, as I said, the history of the Cabots ; the second treats of the cartography of the first half of the XVI century ; the third gives a chronology of the voyages to the north of Cape Breton from that of John Cabot to John URDAIRE's in 1550 ; the fourth collects the richest appendix of documents that had so far appeared concerning the Cabots. A bibliography of the history of the Cabots is added at the end.

How much I have availed myself of these two authors is shown by the frequent references to their names and works.

late it, show the very important part which he had in it. Thus the *Epitome of Chronicles* in the third edition which was published in that year, 1559, in the second part when relating the expedition of Willoughby, says: "In this meane whyle there were three noble shippes furnyshed for the great adventure of the unknown viage into the easte by the north seas. The great encourager of this viage was Sebastian Gaboto, an Englisheman borne at Bristow, but a Genoways sonne." Ten years later, in 1569, the chronicle of Richard Grafton appeared, and in that also we read: "About this time there were three noble ships set forth and furnished for the great adventure of the unknown voyage into the east by the North seas. The great doer and encourager of which voyage was Sebastian Gaboto an Englisheman borne at Bristow, but was the sonne of a Genoway." Thirdly come the chronicles of Raphael Holinshed, repeating word for word that "About this time there were three notable ships set forth and furnished for the great adventure of the unknown voyage into the east by the north seas. The great doer and encourager of which voyage was Sebastian Gaboto, an Englisheman, born at Bristow, but was the son of a Genowaies."

It is remarkable how freely the old chroniclers copied one another without giving the source of their narrative. But even if it were a very rare occurrence, could there be the least doubt that these three accounts have the same origin?—that, Grafton copied from the third edition of the *Epitome*, or that Holinshed copied either from that edition, or from Grafton's chronicle, which is the same thing? Consequently the whole importance and authority of the account rests on the third edition of the *Epitome of Chronicles*. Now, let us see what that is, and what credit it deserves.

The *Epitome of Chronicles* is only the chronicle of Thomas Lanquet or Lanquette, continued down to the reign of Elizabeth.\* The first edition of this chronicle appeared in 1549, and naturally makes no allusion to an event which happened in 1553, and in reference to which the name of Sebastian Cabot is introduced. The second edition came out in 1554 a year

---

\* Thomas Lanquet lived from 1521 to 1545.



after that event, but no copy of this can be found.\* The third edition, bearing the title *Epitome of Chronicles*, was published at London in 1559, by Robert Crowley. It is divided into three parts; the first gave Lanquet's chronicle, the second reproduced the part added by Thomas Cooper in 1549, and the third contained the new addition made by Crowley.† The words referring to Sebastian Cabot are found in the second part, written by Bishop Cooper. Immediately after the publication of the *Epitome*, Cooper himself gave a new edition, which was the fourth, of Lanquet's chronicle, with the continuation he had made to it, and again printed it, the fifth edition, in 1565. Now, in both the fourth and the fifth edition, Cooper relates the voyage of 1553 with the same details that are found in the third edition published by Crowley; but, in giving the name of the principal author and promoter of it, he says simply that it was "Sebastian Cabot," without one syllable as to his or his father's nationality. How was this? Cooper himself gives us the explanation of it; for in both the fourth and fifth edition he protests against every sort of alteration, by omission or addition, which Crowley had made in his work for the edition of the *Epitome of Chronicles*. "Wherein," he says, "as I saw some thynges of myne lefte out and many thynges of others annexed . . . greatly blame their unhonest dealynge, and openly protest that the Edicion of this chronicle set fourth by Marshe and Ceres in the yere of Christ 1569 is none of myne. . ." Thomas Marshe was the publisher, William Seres the printer of the *Epitome*.

Consequently the Genoese nationality which the English

\* La seconde édition est de 1554. Nous n' avons pu la trouver dans les bibliothèques, Harrisse. p. 23.

† An *Epitome of Chronicles*, conteyninge the whole discourse of the histories . . . of this realme of England. . . first by THOMAS LANQUET, secondly. . . by THOMAS COOPER, . . . thirdly. . . by ROBERT CROWLEY. Anno 1559. Loudini, in aedibus Thomas Marshe, imprinted at London by William Seres,—Robert Crowley, born in the first 15 years of the XVI century, deceased in 1588, was at once publisher, bookseller, poet, controversialist, and preacher of the Reform, of which he was one of the most zealous apostles.—Thomas Cooper was first a physician and afterwards a bi-hop; born about 1517, he died in 1594.

chronicles bestow on John Cabot is the personal assertion of Crowley, an assertion not only unsupported by documents, but which he accompanies with a falsehood, attributing it to Cooper who had not made it, but twice denies it. Now, what confidence can be put in a man's assertion, who so disingenuously lays his hand on another's work, alters it at pleasure, and deceives us in giving us as the testimony of a third person what is nothing but his own caprice?

But why should Crowley have made the false assertion? The cause is clear. Sebastian Cabot was an English subject by adoption, but it was not so clear as the English would have wished that he was born in England and not brought from Venice in his infancy. Now, Crowley, with his free way of making history say whatever he thought it ought to say, when he came to the place where Cooper's chronicle mentioned Sebastian Cabot, boldly added that he was of Italian descent, but born in England: but in designating the province from which his father came, as Genoa was at that time in everybody's thoughts in relation to discoveries on account of Christopher Columbus, carelessly, like Puebla before him, wrote Genoa instead of Venice for Italian in general. The error, in Biddle's opinion, was a very natural mistake of a contemporary in view of the fame of the Genoese Columbus.\* If any one, rejecting all suppositions however reasonable, claims Crowley as authority in history, let him tell me where Crowley learnt that Sebastian Cabot was of Genoese descent. Certainly not from the Spanish dispatches; for these were shut up in the archives of Spain; nor from English, Spanish, or Italian writers, for not one had said so before himself. The conclusion seems to me so natural that I shall spend no more words on the matter.

Now comes Stow, and here the question is more difficult to solve. Richard Hakluyt, in his *Divers Voyages touching the Discoverie of America*, published in 1582, in-

---

\* "The very phrase 'a Genoa's son,' employed to designate Sebastian Cabot, may be considered as the not unnatural mistake of a contemporary, referring as it does to the country of Columbus, with whose fame all Europe was ringing from side to side." *Memoir*, p. 44—45.

served a memoir which he preceded with a notice that it was "taken out of an old chronicle written by Robert Fabyan, some time Alderman of London, which is in the custody of John Stowe, citizen, a diligent searcher and preserver of antiquities."\*

The Memoir begins thus : This yeare (1498) the King (by meanes of a Venitian . . . caused to man and victuall a shippe."†

The same author subsequently published his great collection of all the navigations and voyages of discovery made by the English in general : and in the second edition, published from 1598 to 1600, inserting the same passage taken from Stow where at first he simply had "by meanes of a Venetian," now says, "by meanes of one John Caboto, Venetian ;" that is, instead of the vague indication of nationality, it determines the name and surname of that Venetian. Had Hakluyt inadvertently omitted that name in the first collection, or did he bodily insert it of his own head in the second ? Let us delay answering this question for a moment.

Stow's collection was also published after his death, and there we find the same narrative precisely as it is given by Hakluyt ; but in the single point where the two editions differ as we have pointed out, Stow's collection is at variance with both. It says : "This yeare one Sebastian Gavoto a Genoas sonne borne in Bristow . . caused the king to man . . ."‡ It is clear that the original account of the old chronicle has been falsified. By whom ? Before answering, let me briefly recall to the reader's memory who Hakluyt and Stow were, for a knowledge of their persons and characters may aid us to take a few steps in the obscurity of this question.

\* It is useless to go into the question whether the chronicle from which Stow obtained this extract really belonged to Robert Fabyan or not. For information on that point the reader is referred to the defence made by H. HARRISSE (l. c.) against BIDDLE (Memoir, l. c.). What is important is to know that it was very old, and the source of the narrative is contemporary with the navigation of which it treats. As to this all agree.

† See App. viii.

‡ See App. ix.

Richard Hakluyt, born about 1553, and deceased in 1616, was the greatest writer and collector of memoirs relating to the voyages and navigations of discovery made by the English in the northern seas. Learned in ancient and modern languages, professor of naval history, in active correspondence with Ortelius, Mercator, and all the principal mathematicians and astronomers that could aid him by their learning, he was the highest authority in England on matters of navigation, and not only individuals, but cities and navigation societies applied to him for advice. As to his collection, it is still amongst the best, not of England only, but of the whole world. The appreciation of the English for this collection, especially of navigators and discoverers, is shown by the facts that in his life-time Bylot, who had Baffin for his pilot, gave the name of Hakluyt to an island in Baffin's Bay; Hudson whose name is borne by the great inland sea of North America, called a cape of Spitzberg after Hakluyt whilst he was still living; and finally during his life-time also, a river discovered by English navigators in 1611 near Petschora was called by his name.\*

John Stow was born of poor parents about 1525, and brought up to the tailor's trade. For forty years his life was passed among needles and thread, but in the few leisure hours which his trade allowed him he had always been a fond reader of legends, chronicles, histories, and all that told of the times that were past. By such reading he grew to be so attached to old memoirs that when about 40 years of age, he threw down his needle, devoted himself to collecting them and followed his new profession with the faith and enthusiasm of an apostle. Short of means, he made long journeys afoot to hunt over and ransack colleges and monasteries, and no matter how worn and torn might be the rags of old papers which he found, he kept all, reviewing, connecting, copying, comparing, annotating with truly wonderful ability and good sense. Arrived at fourscore years, and no longer capa-

---

\* Hakluyt Island in Baffin's Bay is at 77° 25' N. and 64° 20' W.—Cape Hakluyt lies in 79° 47' N. and 60° 51' E.

ble of earning a livelihood, he applied to the king, and James I, consenting to his petition, granted to the man who had saved treasures of memoirs for English history, the favor of wearing a beggar's garb and asking alms at church-doors! In this abject state, forgotten and despised, he died two years later in 1605.\*

Which of the two would be likely to lay his rash hands on the old chronicle attributed to Fabyan, the learned Hakluyt, or the devoted Stow?—Both; and each in good conscience according to the different point of view from which he regarded the matter. Let us begin with Stow. It must be remembered that Sebastian Cabot's fame always stood high in England, but precisely because his splendor was so great, it almost eclipsed the name of John, his father. Even now we see English writers remarking the fact, that many do not even know that there were two Cabots and the glory of their discoveries is divided between them and not given all to Sebastian.† Would it be a hazardous supposition that Stow, like so many others, confounded the two persons under one name? I cannot believe so, when I reflect that he was running here and there in search of old papers and memoirs among moth-eaten rubbish and on dusty shelves; and that the name of John Cabot, after all the search that can be made, only appears in England in the royal patents of Henry VII, and carefully preserved and guarded in the state records, to which the learned and famous Hakluyt could have free access, but the poor and despised Stow would not have had if he had asked it, which he certainly did not.

Stow, then, had before him an old account of a discovery made by the English in the time of Henry VII, under the lead of a foreigner, whose name and surname were not given.

John Strype, *Life of John Stow*, London, 1720.

† "Familiar as is the name of Cabot to all who are acquainted with the history of maritime discovery, it is not, perhaps, so generally known that there are two of the name, John and his more celebrated son Sebastian, between whom the credit of the discovery loosely attributed to 'Cabot' must be divided." Edward Cheney, *Notices concerning John Cabot and his son Sebastian*, Preface, London, 1856.

That they were not given is not a supposition, but an assertion, and this is its basis. In the British Museum, among the manuscripts of the Cotton collection, there is an old anonymous chronicle which relates the same fact which Stow has given us under the name of Robert Fabyan.\* Now the two chronicles are so completely alike, not only in the substance of the fact, but in the language almost word for word, as to prove without any restriction that they are both from the same source. The reader may satisfy himself of this with his own eyes by turning to them in the Appendix and comparing them one with the other.† But the Cotton manuscript, in the place where Stow has put Sebastian Cabot, says simply “a stranger Venetian.” As the account which Stow gives us under the name of Fabyan agrees with that in the Cottonian collection in every thing else, it should also on this point. If any extrinsic proof were needed to confirm the justness of this reasoning, we have such proof in Hakluyt’s account as he gives it in his first collection where he puts simply “a Venetian,” as does the anonymous writer in the Cottonian collection. But Hakluyt got his account from Stow ; therefore the memoir furnished by the tailor had in the original the words “a stranger Venetian.” How then did Stow, when inserting this memoir in his collection, come to make so material an alteration? HARRISSE has pointed out how it must have occurred. Stow, in his collection, immediately after the fragment of which we are speaking and which was taken from Robert Fabyan’s chronicle, inserts another fragment from Humphrey Gilbert’s discourse, in which Sebastian Cabot

---

\* It bears the title : “Chronicon rerum Angliæ et series maiorum et vicecomitum civitatis London ab anno primo Henrici tertii ad annum primum Henrici 8.” The writing belongs to the first years of Henry VII. See HARRISSE, l. c. p. 33.

† “Les premières lignes rappellent trop l’ extrait de Fabyan tel quel le donne Hakluyt dans son édition de 1582 pour ne pas y voir le prototype du récit attribué au digne Alderman (R. Fabyan) HARRISSE, p. 33—34. And further on : “Les mots . . . dans l’ extrait du manuscrit cottonien et dans celui de Robert Fabyan tel quel le rapportent John Stow et Richard Hakluyt, obligent la critique à reconnaître que ces trois extraits se ressemblent trop pour ne pas provenir de la même source.”—See and compare App. vii—viii—ix.

is spoken of and mention made of an English expedition led by him to the north-west in the time of Henry VII: that is to say, to the same place and at the same time as the voyage related by Fabyan.\* Stow supposed the two writers were speaking of the same expedition : and as Fabyan says that the expedition was led by a foreigner from Venice, and Sir Humphrey gave the command to Sebastian Cabot, he at once concluded that Fabyan's "stranger Venetian" was the person named by Humphrey Gilbert ; and to make Fabyan's account clearer, in place of *stranger* he gave the name of Sebastian Cabot. This substitution made, it was a natural consequence that the word *Venetian* should give place to the expression "a Genoa's sonne borne in Bristow ;" for Stow treats of Sebastian Cabot on another occasion, and that is when relating the expedition of Sir Hugh Willoughby, encouraged and undertaken at his instance. In relating this fact he follows the account of Crowley who, as we have seen, says Sebastian Cabot was "borne at Bristowe, but a Genoways sonne." These words, by a natural association of ideas, would occur to Stow's mind when inserting the name of Sebastian Cabot in the expedition related by Fabyan, and as he had inserted them on Crowley's authority in the expedition of 1553, he again substitutes them for the "stranger Venetian" in the expedition narrated by Fabyan. † Let us come now to Hakluyt. The memoir which he had from Stow was undoubtedly as we find it in Stow's collection ; that is, the voyage of which it speaks is attributed to Sebastian Cabot "a Genoa's sonne." This is evident from the heading prefixed to the memoir in every edition of Hakluyt, which is : "A note of Sebastian Cabot's first discoverie taken out of a chronicle by Robert Fabyan until now unpublished, in the custodie of John Stow, a diligent preserver of antiquities." ‡ These words are in open

---

\* See App. ix. 2nd Part.

† . . . Stow cherchant à remédier au vague de l' expression "a Venetian" et voyant par Humphrey Gilbert (qu'il cite immédiatement après,) que la découverte était attribuée à Sébastien Cabot, peut alors avoir pris sur lui d' interpoler le passage de Fabyan, et ajouté les mots "fils de Genoïs" empruntés à Crowley. HARRISSE, p. 33.

‡ See App. viii.

contradiction with the narrative given by Hakluyt. In fact, in his first collection he says the expedition was led by "a stranger Venetian"; in the subsequent, he gives the command to "John Cabot Venetian." The heading then is not Hakluyt's, but Stow's. If Stow put Sebastian Cabot's name in the heading why would he not insert it in the body of the narrative? He did so in his collection. And then Hakluyt must have again altered the memoir received from Stow. But why? and on what grounds? For it is absurd to suppose that a man like Hakluyt would make history follow his caprice.

Hakluyt had gone deeper than any other Englishman into the history of those navigations and he knew from other indisputable documents which he handled, read, studied, collated, with the greatest care and honesty, that the author of the voyage related in that fragment was not Sebastian Cabot, and therefore there was certainly an error in the name. What could he do? What any one else would have done in the same case; that is, ask to see the original to be sure whether it was correctly copied. And when he saw that the original had "a stranger Venetian," he replaced in his collection the true reading of the text. The reading he gives agrees so well with the chronicle in the Cottonian collection that it seems to me certain that he has given the true reading of the text which Stow possessed.

Afterwards, when revising his work for a second collection, he must have believed he would help the reader's understanding of the story by inserting the name of the "stranger Venetian," by which addition, without violating the truth of the text, he only rendered clearer the general expression of the chronicle. And he did so. But why when he corrected Stow's error in the body of the narrative, did he leave it untouched in the heading? Because this was not of the slightest importance in his collection, and therefore he paid no attention to it, but left it as he found it. If others prefer to suppose that Stow only changed the heading, but left the text unaltered, it turns out still better.

The testimony of Stow thus falls to the ground, deprived of all historical support: and with it falls every argument



for the opinion that would make John Cabot a Genoese. Then it only remains for history to go back and call him a Venetian, as at first, by virtue of the citizenship obtained from Venice. But does his obtaining this citizenship prevent us from believing that he may have been Venetian also by birth? HARRISSE answers that it is absolutely impossible for us to do so: and in support of his answer brings a decree made by the Republic of Venice in 1313. "This year," says one historian, "extending the privilege of the ancient Venetian Dogeate, it was decreed that whoever, born within the tract from Grado to Cavarzere, had lived with a fixed residence in those lands, should be a citizen of the one and the other class."\* Now, says HARRISSE, if John Cabot had been born in any part of the Duchy, by force of this decree, from the fact of his birth, he would have been a Venetian citizen. If, then, he applied for naturalization, it means that he came from outside of the Duchy.† The reasoning of the learned American would be unanswerable if the decree he brings forward had possessed in the legislator's mind, and in fact, the perpetual force of law. But in my opinion it is not so. To me that decree was a purely transitory arrangement by which the right of Venetian citizenship was offered to all who at the time of its publication were already born within the limits of the republic and had a permanent residence there. It has nothing to do with later times. The laws of Venice on this subject of citizenship of foreigners underwent so many and such frequent changes in the XIV and XV centuries that it can excite no wonder if we give a general law like this only temporary force and effect. Let the reader see a specimen of this facility of change, and then judge whether it is as I claim, or not.—In 1305, it was decreed that all children of lawful wedlock domiciled in Venice for 25 years should be counted as Venetian citizens.‡

\* Vettor Sandi, *Storia Civile della Repubblica di Venezia* t.iii. lib. vi, cap. 2, p. 345.

† *Jean et Sébastian Cabot*. l. c.

‡ Vettor Sandi, *Principii di Storia civile della Repubblica di Venezia*. T. i, lib. iv, cap. v, p. 813. Cristoforo Tettori, *Saggio della Storia civile della Repubblica di Venezia*, T. i, p. 102.

In 1348, after the great plague of that year, all foreigners were declared citizens if they were married and settled in the circle of the city with their family for two years.\* In 1391, their liberality was unlimited. It was decreed that any foreigner coming to dwell with his family in Venice had only to be inscribed in the registers of the purveyor of the Republic in order to acquire at once all the rights of a citizen.† In 1407, following another plague, the title of citizen was granted to any foreigner who would marry a Venetian woman and come and settle in Venice.‡

After 1407 there is no record of any change, but it is certain that there was a change, for the citizenship granted to John Cabot imposes conditions different from those required by the laws just mentioned. And if I am right, this change was made and fixed by the very decree of August, 1472, under which citizenship was conferred on Lodovico Fontana. Let the reader judge from the beginning of that decree.

“Nicolò Trono, —By the grace of God, Doge of Venice etc.

“To all and singular the friends and lieges etc.

“By the present writing we wish to make known to you that amongst the thoughts which we revolve in our mind, one of the principal is that of treating with great care the affairs of our subjects and devoted lieges, and securing their advantage. This adds to the splendor of our authority and our lieges, seeing our solicitude for them, are strengthened and increased in their loyalty and devotion to us. Therefore wishing to reward their merits by favors, we have determined to establish as follows :

“That any one who has resided for 15 years or upwards uninterruptedly in Venice and during this period borne the burdens and imposts of our government, shall be henceforth our Venetian citizen ; and for ever and everywhere enjoy the privilege of Venetian citizenship and all other benefits, liber-

\* Sandi, *ib.* T. ii, p. 814.

† Marco Ferro, *Dizionario del Diritto comune e Veneto*, Tomo iii, p. 189.

‡ Sandi, *ib.* T. 111, lib. vi, cap. 2, p. 345.—Tettori. *Ib.* T. 1, p. 108,—Cecchetti, *Il Doge di Venezia*, Venezia, 1864, in Svo. p. 246.

ties, and immunities possessed and enjoyed by other Venetians and our citizens. And as Luigi Fontana, formerly from Bergamo, is shown to have resided 15 years. . . .we receive him as a Venetian and our citizen.”\*

The first part of this decree has nothing to do with any particular person, but it is wholly impersonal. A general law is established applying to all who come under its conditions. We have then a real change of the former laws : the Venetian method of conferring citizenship starts here on a new path. In fact, the naturalization of Fontana is based on the fact that he comes under the conditions established in the first part of the decree.—For all the others that come after him the chancellor says : *Simile privilegium factum fuit* in favor of such and such a one, that is, it is shown that such a one had the requisites set forth in the first part of the decree, and therefore was admitted to Venetian citizenship.—It is consequently by the rule of this decree alone that the question of John Cabot must be decided ; previous laws have nothing to do with his case.

But as regards the mere registering of this decree when the chancellor signed each case of naturalization, there is a variation in the registers, which I do not think was accidental, but if I am right, may have an important bearing on the present question. The chancellor of the Duchy registered the whole of the decree of August 11, 1472, in favor of Lodovico Fontana *from Bergamo*, in the lengthy formula used in Chancery, with all the details of the requisites, burdens, rights, etc., which had to precede or followed naturalization. After Fontana, the chancellor gives the names of 16 others on whom citizenship was conferred under the same conditions, but in these cases, instead of repeating the decree each time, he says simply. “*Simile privilegium factum fuit provido viro etc.*,” such a year. Now of these sixteen, he sometimes mentions the foreign country from which they came, as was done in Fontana’s case ; and sometimes not. Why this difference? It cannot be said that the chancellor began in one manner, and then for brevity’s sake

---

\*See App. ii.

followed the other ; for the two manners intersect one another ; after five with the name of the country comes one without it: then two with, and then others again without: the last is given again with the name of the country. I regard this as indicating that those without any name of country were sons of foreigners, but born in Venice.

Finally I add—and if the argument by itself and unsupported is a weak one, it must, I think, have great weight preceded as we have seen by so many inductive reasons—I add that the little which we know of John Cabot shows him so bound in affection to Venice, that I cannot imagine him otherwise than as born, growing, and brought up amidst the memories of the glories of the Queen of the Adriatic. For so, even from his earliest years as a suckling in his mother's arms he hears Venice talked of; the first conceptions of power, greatness, glory that are presented to his fancy, are of Venice: the first impressions deep stamped on his tender heart, come from Venice. As his infant mind gradually opens at school to the first rays of reason, and as his maturer fancy spreads over newer and vaster horizons it is always in the greatness and glory of Venice that his spirit moves and is nourished as he learns how far she sends her fleets, whence she draws her wealth, and how great is the number of her ships, her forts, and her soldiers. And the stories that could not fail to be told of so many Venetian travellers, continually passing over unknown lands and seas, opening new regions to men's knowledge, must have kindled his fancy, not with the delight of mere curiosity and wonder, but with the enthusiasm of patriotic sentiment. In Venice he passes these happy years when life seems all to smile ; at Venice the seal of love is stamped on his heart, and he forms a family, and feels for the first time the rapture of being called father. His first labors are for Venice and with Venetians, the ships he goes aboard of, the wares he buys and sells, the ports he sails to, the merchants he talks with, everything speaks to him of Venice. So I can conceive how such a man led by the circumstances of life to betake himself elsewhere, carries ever with him the image of his dear city, always present in his thought,

always fixed in his heart : and on the day when he too shall place his signature on the great book of fame, he will wish with the sweet tenderness of a son that by the side of his name shall also be written that of his native land. Such was, so acted John Cabot. When in 1497 he took possession of the new land he had discovered, he raised there the banner of England in whose name he took possession, but together with that he would have the flag of Venice also raised in triumph. Why so ? Venice had taken no part whatever in fitting out that expedition, it could make not the least claim to the rights or profits of that land, for he sailed in the name of England, for the sole profit and advantage of England. Why then join to the banner of St. George that of St. Mark ? There could be only one reason, to bind the name of his native land to the glory of that discovery. And who else could feel in his heart this need—I say deliberately *need*, for there are moments when attachment to one's birth-place so fills the heart with emotion that it must have vent in a record, a word, or a sigh—who else but one who was Venetian *in medullis et visceribus* ?

---

## CHAPTER II.

*Venice—Its relations with England—Voyages of the people of the north in the North Seas—Youth of John Cabot—His Endowments of mind and heart.*

Proceeding in our narrative, we continue in the dark : and having no direct light, it will be well to make our way a little clearer by what we can gain from a knowledge of Venice and its condition at the time of which we are treating.

The fall of Constantinople into the hands of the Turks had been a fearful blow to the power and greatness of Venice ; but the blow was still too recent for its effects to be fully seen and felt : so that she still went on glorious and powerful in

the richness of her commerce. Alone of all states she had relations and treaties with every part of the known world; there was no sea unknown to her vessels, no region not reached by her wares. From the English and Russians in the extreme north to the Moors, Hindoos, Tartars, and Mongols in the furthest lands of the east and south, the earth was all overrun as with a net of roadways over which Venice sent and received her merchandise and merchants.

Every year, as soon as spring brought back the favorable season, an immense caravan of ships and merchants, partly on state, and partly on private account, sailed from Venice to spread over the east and the west, and everywhere they found their own consuls, privileges, warehouses, even in Siam and Cambodia. On their arrival they found the wares and products of other peoples and other lands ready and waiting to be embarked on the ships of the Venetians, and with and by them to be distributed amongst the nations. Thus the commerce of every people passed through the hands of Venice, she furnished all the markets, to her flowed in the wealth of all nations.\*

In a city where public and private life found the greatest opening for their activity and energy in commerce and navigation, it is natural that we should find the most diligent and devoted cultivators of geography. After Marco Polo, justly named the Christopher Columbus of the eastern regions of Asia, Venice presents us a series of voyagers and geographers, not less wonderful for their number, considering the times, than for the intrinsic value of their voyages and labors. In the first half of the XIV century, Marin Sanudo, the elder, made five voyages to Cyprus, Armenia, Alexandria, Rhodes, Ptolemais; he visited Slavonia, Germany, Flanders, Alsace, France; a wonderful extent of country and peoples to one who thinks of the condition of the roads in those days, and the difficulty and danger of communication between different countries. He has left us a valuable book of his travels, rich in notes and observations, on the customs, laws, and condition of the different na-

---

\* Romanin, *Storia Docum.* iii. 7.

tions he visited, and he added maps representing the Mediterranean, the sea with the continent, the Holy Land, Egypt, etc.\*

The following century saw first the two brothers Nicolas and Antony Zeno coursing, bold navigators and explorers, over the unknown seas of the north-west of Europe; and next Luigi da Mosto opening new paths to navigation in the dreaded seas of the African coast; while Nicholas de' Conti labored for more than 20 years to penetrate and explore regions of Asia, either wholly unknown, or known only by name. And whilst these and many others—whom it would take too long to mention all—were furnishing by their reports a precious treasure of new information about peoples, places, products, other Venetians, at home, in the silence of their libraries, were studying to improve and multiply maps and geographical charts, from the Portolan of the Genoese Visconti, executed at Venice in 1318 to the marvellous planisphere of Fra Mauro completed about 1470.

The brothers Pizzagano published in 1357 a Map of the world as then known; Marco Trevisani in 1378 gave a sort of Cosmography in six books; 1426 beheld the hydro-geographical charts of Giacomo dei Giraldi; 1436 those so celebrated of Andrea Bianco: and eight years later, in 1444 Pietro Versi published his *Raxon de' Marinieri*, followed by his *Raxon de Martoloio per navigare a mente*.†

Thus the name of Venice was sounded throughout Europe, not only as the greatest emporium of commerce, but also as the first school of geographical knowledge. Thither flocked Flemings, Portuguese, Germans, foreigners of every nation, to learn of Venetian masters mathematics and navigation, the arts of cartography and map-coloring. In the judgment of Karl Ritter, Albert Durer owes mainly to his studies in Venice the

---

\*Agostini *Scrittori Veneziani*, 1, 440. The title of the book is "Liber Secretorum Fidelium Crucis super terrae sanctae recuperatione." Its aim was, as the title indicates, to arouse Christendom to an energetic crusade, showing how to conduct it, the roads to follow, the places to attack, products, populations, etc.

†Romanin, *St. Docum.*, iii. 7.—iv. 450

wonderful ability shown in his geographical drawings.\*

<sup>1</sup> It is my conviction, as I have already said, that it was in these schools that the young John Cabot was brought up to know and love the sea, and that the education there received found its necessary complement in practical life amongst the bold youths who made the name of Venice feared and respected in every land and on every sea. But too great obscurity shrouds the view, and we can only follow him in imagination in the dauntless activity of his youth in which he was training for the great enterprises he carried out in his manhood. The only mention of him that we find in this first period of his life, is made by Don Raimondo da Soncino in his letter to the Duke of Milan, in which he relates that John Cabot told him "that he had formerly been in Mecca where spices are brought by caravans from distant countries, and when those that brought them were asked where the spices grew, they replied that they did not know, but these goods were brought to their country from far-off lands by other caravans who said they had been brought to them from regions still more remote."† These words, few as they are, give us an indication of the extent of his commercial navigations, and a sure proof of his desire to look beyond the horizon which bounded the navigation and commerce of that time.‡

From this extreme limit of the Venetian commercial world at the end of the Red Sea, history to find John Cabot again takes us with a rebound to the opposite extremity in the seas of the North to the ports of England. There were very extensive commercial relations between Great Britain and Venice, and even in the first half of the XIV century we find mention of Venetian embassies to the rulers of those islands for extending and securing that trade.‡ There was in England a flourishing colony governed in a republican form by its own consuls and a council of merchants, among whom were many patricians of

---

\* Die Erdkunde im Verhältnisse zur Natur und Geschichte des Menschen, Berlin, 1822—54.

† See App. xiii. By Mecca we are not to understand the city proper, but the neighboring shores of the Red Sea.

‡ Romanin, *Storia Documentata di Venezia* iii 7.



great houses ; whence it often happens that in reading Venetian documents we find patricians designated as of London.\* The loading was done at the city of Bristol, then the first port of the island. In this city we again find John Cabot from a mere commercial navigator presented to history as the discoverer of new islands and lands. He had settled in England, as his son relates, bringing all his family with him from Venice. † In what year this was is unknown, but from some dates in the life of his son Sebastian, of which we shall speak further on, it may be settled that it was about 1477.

But here before proceeding to discourse of his work, it will not be amiss to recall briefly the excitement for navigating unknown seas and discovering new regions, which at that time prevailed among men of the sea.

For more than half a century the Portuguese had pressed forward along the tempestuous coasts of the Atlantic and, though the results were not very showy, there was yet enough to magnify the fruit gathered and to strengthen hope for greater in the future. That there was much discussion of those voyages amongst men of the sea, and their imagination and heart excited thereby, is proved by the fact of foreigners hastening to those adventures and acquiring in them a fame that will never perish in the memory of posterity.‡

England then came last of maritime nations, and was wholly without the circle of the enterprises in which the activity of the Portuguese was exercised. But the report of what was doing in the southern seas had a special effect on the fancy of the few seamen who wandered about the ports of England, owing to the memory preserved in their traditions of similar attempts

---

\*Agostino Sagredo, in Rawdon Brown's "Preliminary note to the records of Venice," 1865.

†"Sebastiano Caboto mi disse che sendosi partito suo padre da Venezia già molti anni et andato a stare in Inghilterra a far mercantie." Ramusio. See App. xix.—And Lorenzo Pasqualigo, "e con so moger venittiana, e co so fioli a Bristo." See App xi.

‡ The reader will perceive that I allude to the Genoese Antonio Usodimare and the Venetian Luigi Cadamosto, to whom is due the discovery of the Cape Verde Islands, which at this time was the most important result that had been achieved by the expeditions promoted by Prince Henry.

by their fathers long before in the seas of the North. The fame of the achievements in the southern seas must more than ever renew this recollection and stimulate by example to beginning again the interrupted work with greater vigor. For us the memory of those traditions starts some years later, but there can be no doubt that the English mariners had always a more or less lively remembrance of them as a matter closely interesting their imagination and pride, for the more backward a people is in civilization the more tenacious it is of its oral traditions, and because in the poverty of relations with other countries in which England then was there could be no more acceptable subject of conversation to seamen. If in the course of time this remembrance faded and was even lost, it was precisely because more recent voyages and discoveries furnished vaster and pleasanter themes for their discourse, and the faint remembrance of ancient deeds is obscured by the splendor of fresher achievements until by historical research or chance is restored to the light of day what had long lain buried in profound obscurity.

Let the reader recall to his memory the adventurous life of the Normans, or Northmen, who, sustained by the doctrine of Woden promising Paradise to those slain by hostile steel, issuing with savage boldness from their native shores of Jutland or Scandinavia, ploughed the seas of the north with their little fleets, and threw themselves now on this land now on that, robbing and devastating everywhere. On one of these excursions in 861, Nadod, one of their pirates, driven by the fury of the winds and tempests to a frightful distance northwards, discovered Iceland.\* A colony was at once settled in the new land and continued in these new seas the same bold course as they had followed in those of their mother country. The same chance which occurred to Nadod in 861, was often repeated in connection with other lands. In this manner one

---

\* Some identify Iceland with the Thule of the ancients; others regard Thule as Mainland, the central island of the Orcaades, unwilling to believe that the ancients ventured so far north in their voyages. But even admitting that the ancients knew of Iceland, that could have had no material influence on Nadod's discovery, all trace of it having been lost.

Erik Raude (Erik the Red) in 983 touched the eastern shore of Greenland at about 64° of Latitude, and coasting around its southern extremity (Cape Farewell) he went on to establish himself in the gulf and fjord of Igaliko on the western coast.\* A colony started here in 985. Sailing thither in the next year young Bjarn, son of Herjulf one of the founders of the colony, was driven from his course by a furious storm accompanied with cloudy darkness. When after a few days the sea was again calm and the sky clear he found himself in front of a different land from the one he was seeking. There are various opinions as to what precise land it was, but it was certainly a part of North America. Numerous colonists flocked thither from Greenland, and seem to have increased in population and prosperity.† But Greenland, which is represented as then blessed with a habitable climate, afterwards, from causes not yet well explained, became uninhabitable for its severe cold and eternal frost.‡ From this cause, and from the loss of the fierce energy of the old Normans, every bond with the old world was broken, and even the memory of it was lost, so much so that when, at the end of the XV and in the XVI century, new expeditions from Europe reached its shores, every one believed that they were then first brought to the sight of white men. And but for the minute scrutiny of recent historical criticism, which from the slightest indication, can extract materials for rebuilding the past, nothing would be known of those old adventures. But if all memory of them was lost to history, it is certain that in the tales and fancy of the mariners descended from those old Normans, there must have remained some recollection, even though wrapped up in legends. And the seamen of England were the descendants of the Normans. This is all the more likely if we consider that from time to time similar cases to that of the Normans were happening, of ships driven from their course by the wind and cast on distant shores lost in the Ocean's immensity. It will suffice to mention the case of Antonio Zeno, whose being driven by storm on a little island lost

---

\* G. Gravier, *ib.* c. iv

† *Id.* *ib.* c. v.

‡ *Id.* P. iii. Ch. i

in the middle of the ocean, became the occasion of the famous voyages of himself and his brother in the northern seas. He went again to where the tempest had driven him, and related his adventures, and voyages, and his and his brother's deeds and bravery are known to the whole civilized world. But who shall say how many other mariners that are unknown may have been in the same case and were afterwards unable to regain their accustomed harbors and describe to their comrades the fearful shores they had seen? Moreover Iceland certainly retained the memory of the old Norman voyages and discoveries in the *Eddas*, religious songs of its bards, and the *Sagas*, the traditional legends of its people. Some like memory of them must have been preserved in England. At the tale of the Portuguese voyages and discoveries in the southern seas these traditions would naturally be illuminated with unusual splendor to the mind of the English mariners, and strongly attract them to tempt again the unknown regions of the northern seas so bravely and fortunately sailed over by their ancestors.

It was under the impulse of these examples and appeals, that in 1480 the citizens of Bristol launched a small ship, and giving the command to the ablest seaman they had, sent it west of Iceland in search of the island of Brazil.\*

The expedition lasted two months, from July 15 to September 18, and returned without any result. The failure of this expedition seems to have destroyed all their courage for a new attempt; for the Spanish ambassador, writing to his king of the discovery by Cabot, and mentioning the other attempts made some years before by the men of Bristol begin-

---

\*"1480 die jullij navis . . . et . . . Joh(ann)is Jay iunioris ponderis 80 doliorum inceperunt viagium apud portum Bristollie de Kyngrode usque ad insulam de Brasylle in occidentali parte Hibernie, sulcando maria per . . . . et . . . . Thlyde est magister scientificus marinarius tocius Anglie, et nova venerunt Bristollie die lune 18 die septembris, quod dicta navis velaverunt maria per circa 9 (sic) menses nec invenerunt insulam sed per tempestas maris reversi sunt usque portum. . . . in Hibernia pro reposicione navis et mariniorum."

Itinerarium Willelmi Botoner, dict de Worcestre, ms. in the Library of the College of Corpus Christi at Cambridge.

From *Harrissee*, Jean et Sébastien Cabot, p. 44.

ning in 1491, gives all the merit of them, or rather throws all the blame of them according to his view, on John Cabot.\*

At this point we feel more strongly the importance of knowing what man Cabot was, and how prepared for the difficulties and dangers of the new path : but he is still surrounded by the obscurity of night. We must be content with the few marks saved from time's destroying work, and by their aid represent to our mind approximately what he must have been. We have seen at Mecca he first showed his interest in voyages and discoveries by his inquiries from the merchants of the east. The information then gathered we shall find him putting to use after many years, and drawing from it arguments to support his calculations and determine the course he should pursue to succeed in his discoveries. This activity of his mind in collecting on all sides proofs and probabilities for the plans he was meditating, is evidence that he was not an adventurer driven by accident to the career of discovery ; but an acute and calculating mind ever intent on seeing and providing for his needs. Soncino calls him "a distinguished mariner with great ability in discovering new islands; † of a fine genius well skilled in navigation. ‡" The charts and spheres composed by him are also mentioned by Soncino, § and by the Spanish ambassador Pedro de Ayala ; ¶ the Cottonian Manuscript in the British Museum ; ¶ and the contemporary chronicler Robert Fabyan, or whoever may have been the author of that chronicle."\*\*\*

^ Few as these data are, they show that when John Cabot started on his voyages of discovery, he had acquired not only a long experience of sea life, but also a broad and deep prep-

\* We shall speak of them presently. † See App. xii. ‡ See App. xiii.

§ "Messer Zoanne ha la descriptione del mondo in una carta e anche in una sphaera solida che lui a fatto." Ib. xiii.

¶ Ayala, App. xiii. "Io he visto la carta que ha fecho el inventor . . . . la carta o mapa mundi que este ha fecho."

¶ "A stranger Venetian, which by a cart made himself expert in Knowing of the world." App. vii.

\*\*\* "A Venetian, which made himself very expert and cunning in Knowledge of the circuit of the worlde and ilandes of the same as by a carde. . . . he shewed." App. viii.

aration of mind for the wants and requirements of his new career.\

He was poor : Raimondo da Soncino tells us so expressly ;\* and even without his testimony, we should have inferred it with certainty from the gift of £ 10 which the King of England made him after his discovery : for although Henry VII was miserly beyond all belief, such a present would not be made to one who was not obliged to count his pennies in order to live.† In this condition, “ a stranger and poor,” as Soncino calls him, what hardships of toil, journeys, and repulses, must he have endured before he found any one to listen to him and advance the means and necessary aid to carry out his idea of sailing for new discoveries ! The dispatch of Ayala gives us a slight opening through which we catch a glimpse of the long and thorny road he must have travelled before he reached the goal. “ He has been,” says the dispatch, “ in Seville and Lisbon trying to get some one to help him in this discovery.” ‡ The words are few, but indicate a great deal. Let us recall the life that Christopher Columbus had to lead before he found any one to listen to him ; and our imagination will be able to depict the vast and sad field of the toils and disappointments of John Cabot.\

It nowhere appears whether his journeys to Spain and Portugal were before or during his attempts with the citizens of Bristol, and, all data wanting, it is useless to put forward suppositions.

Of his moral qualities, we can only speak of his great generosity of heart, shown by freely bestowing on his friends and those who had aided him the benefits which in his enthusiasm he hoped to gain by his discovery.§ If in this distribution vanity at finding himself elevated by his discovery to so great importance in the eyes of all had some little part, there still is shown a great depth of kindness which prevents his shutting himself up in the haughty pride of his greatness, but makes him invite his friends and companions to share his triumph.

---

\* See App. xiii. † See ch. v. near the end. ‡ App. xvi. § App. xiii.

In the extreme dearth of information concerning the moral and intellectual endowments of John Cabot, and his whole life in general, it is a comfort to see that all speak of him favorably, and every break in the thick darkness enveloping him either shows us a trait of his genius and energy, or some proof of his goodness of heart. \ \

---

### CHAPTER III

#### *The first Discovery of 1494.*

The Spanish Ambassador, Ayala, wrote to his government in July 1498: "for seven years past, the people of Bristol, incited by the fancies of this Genoese, have furnished two, three, or four caravels each year to go in search of the islands of Brazil and the Seven Cities."\* We have seen that the person indicated by Ayala under the name of Genoese was John Cabot. These few words are all the mention that has reached us of the first steps of our navigator in his career of discovery. It only remains then for us to consider what efforts he must have made to induce the people of Bristol to follow him again in his attempts at discovery and his energy in keeping them firm to the trial after repeated failures.

Ayala's words tell us clearly that the sole object of his voyage from the first was to find one of the islands said to be scattered in the Ocean, and which for so many years had excited the fancy of the men of the sea. It would, therefore, be a mistake to suppose he aimed at reaching the coast of Asia by the west; this greater undertaking was resolved on when the news reached London of the first voyage of Christopher Columbus. † This follows clearly from the words of his son Sebas-

---

\*"Los de Bristol, ha siete ano que cada anos an armado dos, tres, quatro caravelas para ir a buscar la isla del Brasil y las siete ciudades con la fantasia deste Genoves." App. xvi.

† Into this mistake L. Hugues among others, has fallen. He says: "During the

tian, as we shall see further on, when our story shall bring us to speak of him.\* After the discovery by Christopher Columbus, John Cabot, returning to his accustomed attempt, instead of sailing at random on the boundless waters of the Ocean, steered right to the west in the certainty of finding, after the example of the great Genoese, the eastern shores of Asia. The labors that had been in vain on former searches, now that he had a fixed term in view, were crowned with success. He found land, and he believed and judged it to belong to the empire of the Grand Khan. † This was on June 24, 1494. ‡

His son Sebastian has left us a record of the fact in the Planisphere he composed in the year 1544. To the right and left he places various legends and inscriptions in explanation of various points of the Planisphere; and one of these in the original Spanish reads thus: "This land was discovered by John Cabot, Venetian, and Sebastian Cabot, his son, the year of the birth of Our Saviour Jesus Christ 1494, on the 24th of June, in the morning, to which they gave the name First Land Seen, and to a great island which is opposite the said land they gave the name St. John because it was discovered that day." ‡ The Latin version which accompanies this Spanish inscription says more particularly that the island was called St. John after the Baptist, whose feast was celebrated on that day by the Catholic Church. § In no other place besides Sebastian Cabot's

repeated attempts made by John Cabot *to reach Asia by way of the West*, Columbus discovered the West Indies." *Le Navigazioni di G. Caboto*, in the *Memorie della società geografica Italiana*. Vol. i, p. 287. *The only historical source for what John Cabot wanted and sought in his first voyages we find in this dispatch of the ambassador Ayala, and the islands of Brazil and of the Seven Cities which he mentions, have not the slightest connection with the eastern coasts of Asia, but were supposed to be situated in the middle of the vast Atlantic Ocean. This inexactness however, in no way diminishes the merit of the distinguished writer who is a zealous cultivator and explainer of the historic geographical studies of our old navigators.*

\* In chap. vii.

† See App. xi, xiii.

‡ See App. iii.

§ "Terram hanc olim nobis clausam aperuit Joannes Cabotus Venetus, necnon Sebastianus Cabotus ejus filius anno ab orbe redempto 1494, die vero 24 Julii (sic) hora 5 sub diluculo, quā terrā primā visā appellarunt, et Insulā quandā magnā eī appositā, Insulā divi Joannis nominarunt, quippe, quæ solemnī die



Planisphere, is any record found of this discovery; so that there has been great discussion on this inscription, whether it should be admitted as it stands, or an error he held to have occurred in transcribing it. And even now, although the point which created the main difficulty has been explained and entirely cleared up, the discovery of 1494 has not succeeded in gaining a free path among the doubts of historical criticism.

The question in the past has been this: Sebastian Cabot's original map of the world has been lost, and the only remaining copy is preserved in the National Library at Paris. From this is taken the copy of the inscription which we have just given. Of the lost copies, only two have left any record of this inscription, one of which was at Oxford, and the other at Whitehall, Westminster, engraved by Clement Adams. The one at Oxford was read and copied by Nathan Kochlaff, called in Latin Chytreus, the other at Westminster was inserted by Hakluyt in his collection.\* The inscription preserved by Chytreus is identical with that we have just read from the copy of that at Paris. But that given by Hakluyt instead of 1494 puts 1497.† With Hakluyt agrees a very old chronicle of Bristol which says that, "In the year 1497, the 24th of June on St. John's day was Newfoundland found by Bristol men in a ship called the Matthews."‡ The evidence on each side being so evenly balanced, opinions were divided; some held out for 1494, others for 1497; and both parties sought to confirm their opinion by the very same point, both appealing to the letters patent granted to John Cabot by the King of England in 1496. According to the first, these letters absolutely presupposed some discovery already made by the Venetian, and therefore sustained the authenticity of the Paris and Oxford copies;§ according to the others these Letters have not the slightest al-

---

festo divi Joannis aperta fuit." The Spanish inscription has correctly *June*.

\* See App. iii.

† *Ib.*

‡ William Barrett. *History and Antiquities of the city of Bristol compiled from original Records and Authentic Manuscripts.* Bristol, 1789. p. 172.

§ "There is no possible way of reconciling the various accounts collected by Hakluyt and which amount to no less a number than six but to suppose John Cabot to have made one voyage at least previous to the date of the patent, and sometime between that and the date of the return of Columbus." John Bar-

lusion to, or connection with any previous discovery, and from their silence on this point they adduce their argument against the date of 1494. As usually happens in such matters, where the argument depends more on the personal valuation of the writer than on its intrinsic force, there was great consumption of ink and paper, each remaining more firmly convinced in his own opinion. The Westminster date acquired great support from the very name of Hakluyt who was the highest authority on English voyages in the XVI century. But M. d' Avezac, the erudite Frenchman who has rendered such valuable service to the history of geography, especially to that of Columbus and Cabot, had the merit of not only taking away that support, but of annulling completely the opposition of the Westminster copy.\*

Hakluyt's partial collection on the discovery of America naturally loses in value after his great collection containing all the navigations and voyages of discovery of the English ; and the second edition of his great collection, published in 1598-1600, improved and enlarged, supersedes the former, and on it were based all subsequent ones. Now Avezac had the lucky thought of comparing the first collection with the later on this point, and found the inscription transcribed from the copy of the Map of the World in the gallery at Westminster gave the date in the first collection as 1494, the same as the two copies at Paris and Oxford, and the unfortunate typographical error which in the enlarged work changed 1494 into 1497 was continued in all subsequent editions.†

row, *Chronological History of Voyages into the Arctic Regions*, p. 32. Harris and Pinkerton base the granting of the patent directly on the discovery of 1494. "Upon this report of his the before-mentioned patent was granted," Harris, *Collection of Voyages and Travels*, London, 1744. 8. vol. ii, p. 190.—Pinkerton's *Collection*, vol. xii, p. 158.

\* M. d' Avezac was the first to point out in the Cabot voyages certain milestones, as it were, for the guidance of the historian so that he should not lose his way in the great confusion. See the *Bulletin de la société de géographie*, for October 1857, the historical Introduction to the second volume of the voyages of Jacques Cartier, in 1863, and in the same *Bulletin*, Tome viii, Paris, 1869, the article entitled *Les Navigations terre-neuviennes de Jean et Sébastien Cabot*.

† "Une faute typographique (plutôt qu' une correction arbitraire mal avisée a altéré cette date 1494) en cette même citation dans l' édition postérieure du

All the known copies of Sebastian Cabot's map being thus in accord, it might reasonably be supposed that the date borne by them is that of the original, which is the same as to say that this date is based on the testimony of the very son of the discoverer, or rather of one who was present at the discovery and associated in the labor and glory of the discoverer. In face of this authority what value is to be put on the contrary testimony of the anonymous chronicler of Bristol, especially as no one but Barrett ever saw or read his work, and therefore we have no means of ascertaining the value of that chronicler's words or the accuracy with which they have been transcribed? I said all the copies of the map agree, notwithstanding that the inscription as given by Purchas has 1497, for there is no question but what he based his collection on Hakluyt's; in fact, in the title itself he called it "*Hakluytus Postumus*," a frank declaration that he had only enlarged the other's work.\*

As he had before him not the first, but the second collection,—and this is natural, for wishing to be more extensive than Hakluyt, he would take as his point of departure the last term to which the other had reached in his greater work—he repeated the date, 1497, as he found it in Hakluyt's larger work. It is of no importance that in Hakluyt the chart is said to bear date of the year 1544, and in Purchas, 1549; for the two being in all else perfectly alike, and differing in the same particulars from all other copies which we know of, there is no doubt that one is a copy of the other, and by an error of Purchas or his printer a 9 has been substituted for a 4. Such error can astonish no one who has written much, for he must have observed how easily a mistake is made in copying figures which have no special reason for fixing the attention. The same cannot be claimed in the case of the date of the inscription, for the defence of this rests on its

---

recueil de Hakluyt." M. d'AVEZAC, *Les navigations terre-neuviennes de Jean et Sébastien Cabot*—dans le Bulletin de la Société de Géographie. T. xviii. Paris 1869, p. 360.

\* *Hakluytus Postumus or Purchas, his Pilgrims*, etc. London, 1625,–1626.—The fifth volume was published separately in 1615, but the edition of 1626 is to be preferred.

being repeated and confirmed in all the charts that are known, drawn and engraved at various times by various persons, and moreover differing in several particulars one from another, so that there cannot be the slightest suspicion that they are reproductions of the same copy. \* It is true that Purchas says that he has examined with his own eyes the map in Whitehall from which his inscription is taken ; but that examination was of the map in general, as to the position of the new lands to which the inscription refers ; and he had no interest in the year when the map was printed as it was of no sort of importance to the question he was studying, for the dispute had not then arisen whether John Cabot discovered his first land in 1494 or 1497. Even HARRISSE, who refers this first discovery to 1497, pays no attention to this difference of the year of printing, but regards the chart given by Purchas as the same thing as Hakluyt's. † On what grounds, then, does HARRISSE contend for 1497, and hold out against the clear and absolute testimony of three copies of Sebastian Cabot's map of the world ?

His studies and publications concerning the discovery of America give a special importance to his adverse opinion, and it demands attention and discussion more than any other. He begins by declaring himself averse to admitting the date 1494, because there may have been an error in copying it. "I hesitate," he says, "to accept this date of 24 June, 1494, first brought forward half a century after the events, and which might be only a *lapsus* of the engraver : MCCCCXCIII for MCCCCXCVII, an error all the easier to make as the first I's joined at the bottom form a V." ‡ Nor is he quieted

---

\* See further on in chapter xxvii, where it treats directly of the charts and writings left by Sebastian Cabot.

† "Notre Sentiment, cependant, en admettant des fantes de transcription, et d'imprimeur, est qu' on peut ramener ces quatre descriptions à trois types seulement ; la carte de la Bibliothèque Nationale, la carte décrite par Chytreus, et celle gravée par Clément Adam (that mentioned by Hakluyt)." — Jean et Sébastien Cabot ; p. 156.

‡ "Nous hésitons à accepter cette date du 24 Juin, 1494, produite pour la première fois un demi siècle après les événements, et qui pourrait n' être qu' un lapsus du graveur : MCCCCXCIII pour MCCCCXCVII ; erreur d' autant

by the inscription in Latin, which has the same date 1494, not in Roman letters, but in Arabic figures, because he believes for various reasons that this translation was made afterwards in the Netherlands or Germany, without Cabot's being able to correct the mistake.\*

But this is only a suspicion : his real reason for rejecting that date is that it does not seem to him to agree with certain documents which we have concerning the discoveries of John Cabot. Let us examine his doubts. January 21, 1496, Puebla informs his sovereigns in Spain that "One has gone like Columbus to propose to the King of England an undertaking like that of the Indies." From the reply of the Spanish Sovereigns, says HARRISSE, it appears that this project was at that time a novelty at the English Court. So far we are agreed, but he adds : "If Cabot had already made a voyage like Columbus in search of Cathay and had discovered two years before countries which were believed to be the Kingdom of the Grand Khan or leading to it, the ambassador would not have attached importance to projects which could now be of no consequence, and the Catholic Kings would have abstained from making it the subject of so significant a diplomatic communication" † I confess that I cannot seize the thread of HARRISSE's reasoning. If the land was already discovered Cabot's project was of no consequence? On the contrary, it seems to me that the danger for Spain was not in the material fact of the discovery, but in its possession by some government whose flag should open to it the path of commercial

---

plus facile à commettre que les deux premiers i. rapprochés à la base, forment un v." l. c. p. 56.

\* "La traduction latine dit bien : *Anno ab orbe redempto 1494*, en chiffres romains ; mais cette version a été faite postérieurement à la rédaction de la légende espagnole, dans les Pays-Bas, ou en Allemagne, sans que Cabot put corriger le lapsus."—lb. p. 56, note.

† "Le langage de la dépêche indique que ce projet était alors une nouveauté à la cour d'Angleterre. Si Cabot avait déjà fait un voyage comme Colomb, à la recherche du Cathay et avait découvert depuis deux ans des pays qu' on croyait être le royaume du Grand Khan, ou y conduire, l'ambassadeur n'aurait pas attaché d'importance à des projets désormais sans portée, et les Rois Catholiques se seraient abstenus d'en faire l'objet d'une communication diplomatique aussi significative." l. c. p. 57.

connections. This is precisely what John Cabot's request aimed at: and it was therefore with his application that the danger of Spain commenced. In fact the privilege granted to Cabot bears the date of March 5, 1496, and Puebla's dispatch to his sovereigns of the 21st of the previous January; which proves that the Spaniard watched the proceedings and raised his voice as soon as he learned that the council of the English government were inclined to favor Cabot. If the discovery of 1494 was true, would not Puebla have been bound at that time to give immediate notice, it being easy to foresee that the possession would inure to the English government? He would certainly have been bound to do so, if he had known of the discovery. That he did not know of it I firmly maintain. That John Cabot was aware of the Bull of Alexander VI, which gave Spain all the lands and infidel peoples found beyond the line he indicated, is something too clear and evident for discussion. As soon, therefore as he succeeded in his first discovery, it was not only his interest but an absolute necessity to have the support and protection of some government. Without that all his labor would be lost; for Spain, by the privilege procured from the Supreme Pontiff would have risen against him at once, and what means had he to enforce his rights? That afterwards so long a time elapsed before he obtained his grant will surprise no one who reflects that he was "poor and a foreigner,"\* and under such circumstances it was no easy or speedy matter to obtain his request from the English government. In the meanwhile it was necessary for him to keep his discovery concealed—except to the government with which it was to be used as the chief argument for gaining his request—lest Spain notified of the event should invade the land and planting her flag claim its possession. This would close his way not only to the protection of England, but probably also to future discoveries. "But," continues Harrisse, "if Cabot in 1494 had found the land, the new expedition (of 1497) would have been the consequence of that discovery, and the new lands requiring equally the sovereignty of a Christian monarch, the text of the

---

\* Soncino, App. xiii.

letters patent of March 5, 1496 would have mentioned and claimed them. We should find in them, as in those the chancery issued to John Cabot from Westminster February 3, 1498, for the same purpose : 'We authorize our well-beloved John Cabot to convey and lead the said ship to the land and isles of late found by him,' and not merely this vague and trite expression 'in whatever part of the world they may be situated.'"\*

This putting forward of the way in which the chancellor might, could, or should have acted seems to me a useless question, in which, if it is easy to make an assertion it is equally impossible to prove or refute it. Why should the chancellor, in case he had to mention the same matter twice, at different times, two years apart, feel obliged to use the same words to express it each time ? Did he perhaps have an established form after which he modelled his letters ? No. The mind is free in its movements, and it is not wonderful that at different times it should use different words to express two similar matters. But suppose the similarity of the matters requires similarity of expression, will not diverse conditions produce diversity in this similarity ? The English government had the same interest as John Cabot had to keep his discovery concealed. That Spain would raise a cry and make trouble was not only easy to foresee, but was certain. In fact, as soon as the ambassador Puebla was able to learn that Cabot's application had gained a hearing in King Henry's council, he wrote at once to the Court ; and both then and afterwards he as well as Ayala was persistent in complaining to the English government against the favor shown to Cabot's voyage, as

---

\* "Si Cabot avait trouvé en 1494 l'île et les terres décrites dans la Carte de 1544 . . . cette nouvelle expédition aurait été la conséquence de la première découverte, et les nouvelles terres exigeant tout au moins la souveraineté d'un monarque chrétien, le texte des lettres-patentes du 5 mars 1496, les aurait certainement rappelées et revendiquées. On y lirait, comme dans les lettres de chancellerie expédiées à Jean Cabot de Westminster le 3 février 1498, pour le même objet :—Nous autorisons notre aimé John Kabotto à conduire les dits navires à la terre et aux îles par lui récemment trouvées . . . Nous n'y verrions pas seulement cette phrase vague et banale, 'in quacumque Parte Mundi positas . . .'" l. c. p. 58.

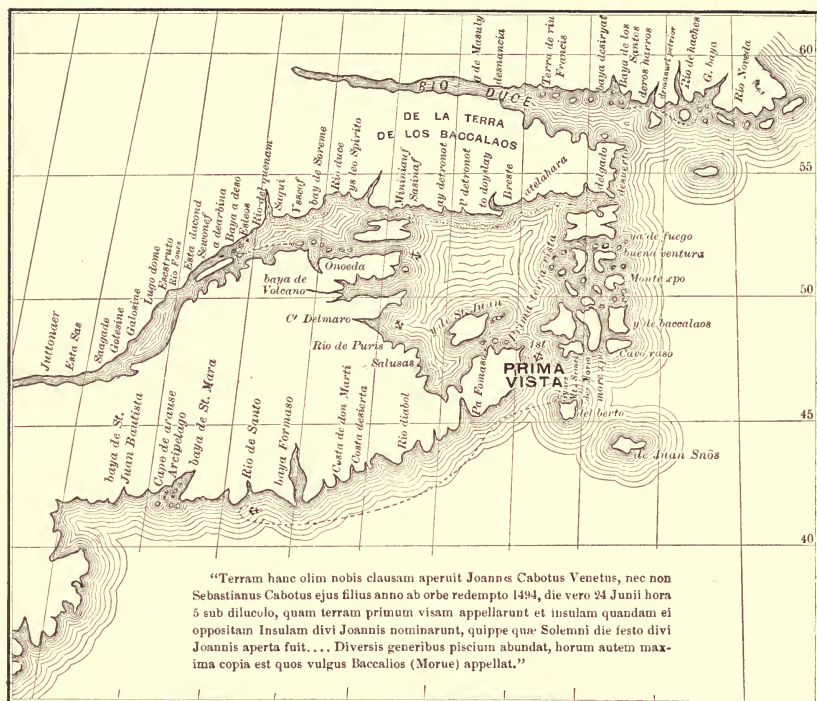
injurious to the rights of Spain. The English chancery would therefore prudently keep silence concerning that first discovery, and speak in general terms so as to give less ground for the complaint of Spain, who in face of the uncertainty of the fact would be less suspicious, especially as the expeditions sent out for years back by others and even by Cabot seemed to promise for this attempt the same vain waste of toil and expense. It was different when Cabot had planted the English banner in his discovery, and proclaimed that new land the property of England. The complaints and protests of the Spanish court would be more easily blunted against an actual possession. Moreover, was the English government so surely persuaded of the discovery by John Cabot as to be willing to authenticate it by its word without further evidence? I think not, and seem to find in Soncino's letter a sound argument for this opinion. In reporting to the Duke of Milan this discovery made by the same Cabot in 1497, and over which there was extraordinary rejoicing throughout England from court to people, he says: "This master John, a poor man and a foreigner, would not have been believed, if his companions, nearly all of whom are Englishmen and from Bristol, had not borne witness to the truth of what he told."\* This he wrote of the discovery made by Cabot after receiving his grant, that is to say, made under the flag and in the name of the King of England. If so little credit was given him then, when he was clothed with official garb, what would have been given him when presenting himself as a mere private individual? Nor does this view contradict the conviction before expressed that the discovery of 1494 was used, as the main argument for obtaining the grant applied for, because for that purpose it was enough for the council of the crown to have even a doubt that it might be true since the government ventured nothing—neither money nor name—in granting the request, but only gave authority to raise its flag in such places *as might be discovered*. If the previous discovery was true, England was sure to gain; if false, it lost nothing.

---

\* See App. xiii.







Esa tierra fue descubierta por Ioan Caboto Veneciano, y Sebastian Caboto su hijo, anno del nascimiento de nuestro Salvador Jesu Christo de M. CCCC. XCIII, a veinte y quatro de Iunio, por la manana, ala qual pusieron nombre prima tierra vista, y a una isla grande que esta par de la dha tierra, le pusieron nombre sant Ioan, por aver sido descubierta el mismo dia la gente della andan vestidos depieles de animales, usan en sus guerras arcos, y flechas, lancas, y dardos, y unas porras de palo, y hondas. Es tierra muy steril, ay en ella muchos orsos plancos, y ciervos muy grandes como cavallos y otros muchos animales y semeiantemente ay pescado infinito, sollos, salmoes, lenguados, muy grandes de vara enlargo y otras muchas diversidades de pescados, y la mayor multitud dellos se dizen baccalaos, y asi mismo ay enla dha tierra Halcones prietos cuomo cuervos Aquillas, Perdices, Pardillas, y otras muchas aves de diversas maneras.

But let us carry the question to a new field where we can move with more freedom and surety. The ambassador, Ayala, has told us that John Cabot began his expeditions in 1491 and continued them regularly every year. Did he from the beginning apply for the grant which he asked for and obtained in 1496, or did he not? We have no knowledge, but with one or the other supposition we must necessarily get at the truth. If he had asked for and not obtained it, what moved the government to give in 1496 what before it had refused? It seems to me that the only reason supposable is that Cabot's expeditions had begun to give good grounds to hope for success, and these grounds can only be a first proof of discovery. If Cabot had asked nothing before, why did he ask something now? If the confidence of those who had aided him in past expeditions still continued, there was no reason for seeking new aid to continue his course. If it had decreased, how could he, "a poor man and a foreigner," arouse all at once in the government that confidence which his old and tried friends had lost under his constant failures? I can very well understand that if he had presented himself to the government as wholly unexperienced, he might by his arguments and calculations convince it of his ability to seek for and discover new lands; but what force of argument could convince it of his ability in discovery now when a trial repeated for many years in succession proved the contrary? If, in the expeditions from 1491 on, he had not considered it necessary to obtain authority in case of discoveries to plant the royal banner and declare them the property of the Crown of England, why should he think it necessary in 1496?—Because then in support of his demand he could only allege the hope of discovery, and now he presented, instead, the proof of a discovery made. In conclusion, from whatever side I view the matter, I find all the circumstances uniting with full accord to confirm the date of Sebastian Cabot's Map; and therefore with intimate conviction, I declare for the discovery of 1494, attested by an eye-witness,—or rather one of the discoverers.

The claim of John Cabot of having touched the American continent four years and thirty seven days before Christopher

Columbus is then confirmed. \* This takes nothing from the glory of that giant amongst discoverers ; for after he had opened the way, it was simply an accessory honor for him to have advanced more or less, but it is not a slight boast for one of his followers to have preceded every one else in reaching the mainland of the New World. †

---

#### CHAPTER IV.

*What Point in North America it was that John Cabot first discovered in 1494.—Attempts to deprive him of the honor.*

WHAT was the point that John Cabot discovered to which he gave the name of *First-Seen* ? The name of Newfoundland so similar in meaning to that of First-Seen, has long been generally believed to be that where Cabot first landed ; and this seems the more likely as to the west of the island of Newfoundland in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, there is an islet called St. John, the very name given by Cabot to the island he discovered at the same time with the main-land. But the name *Newfoundland* gives no aid to our researches, because at first the English called by that name all their discoveries in the northern part of America, which, for nearly a hundred years only known as a fishing station, had come to be regarded as an appendage to the great Banks to which their ships resorted for their rich fisheries. As the only portion of all that land with which the fishing vessels had constant relations was the island close to the great Bank, it is not to be wondered at that the name of Newfoundland, common to the whole region, was gradually restricted to the island alone and became its proper name. †

---

\* Columbus first beheld the Continent of America opposite to the island of Trinidad, on his third voyage, August 1, 1498. See Tarducci, *Life of Christopher Columbus*. Vol. ii p. 60.

† *A memoir of Sebastian Cabot with a Review of the History of Maritime Discov-*

As to the island of St. John, not to look for other arguments, it is sufficient that it is historically proved that it was so called by Cartier in 1534, because on the Feast of St. John, June 24, it terminated his circuit of the gulf which he had begun on the 10th of May. At present, abandoning the misleading guidance of names, it is usual to place the first landing at the island of Cape Breton, and this new opinion is based on the Planisphere of Sebastian Cabot, who, as we have seen, accompanied his father on that discovery. On this, where the lands are drawn that were discovered in North America, there is a peninsula, the northern end of which according to the scale of the chart lies almost in the latitude of  $48^{\circ}, 30'$ , and at its north-east extremity are these words, "First Land seen." Further back, to the west, at a short distance from the peninsula and nearly in the same latitude, at the beginning of a broad gulf is a large island which the chart calls "Sam Joan." The figure 8 placed near this land refers the reader to the corresponding number in the legends accompanying the Planisphere, and under this is found the inscription already given, where it is said that this land was discovered June 24, 1494, by John Cabot and his son Sebastian.

In material configuration no part of North America agrees perfectly with the form presented in Sebastian Cabot's Map, but this was the common fault of all the maps then made of America, a necessary consequence of the slight and imperfect acquaintance with it then possessed. But the general shape of the peninsula as well as the correspondence of the latitude

---

*ery* etc. p. 56. This work was published at Philadelphia, in 1831, and at the same time printed and published in London. In England its sale was large, and a new edition was issued the next year, in 1832. The author's name was not given, but it was afterwards known to be the work of a lawyer, Richard Bidle, of Pittsburgh, Pa. As I have before said, it is the first profound work on the Cabots. It is not a history, but an historical work, of value for Cabotian studies, for the author has enjoyed meeting various difficulties and solving them, and besides great acuteness of mind he applies extensive erudition in the English voyages and navigations. One great fault of the work is the arrangement of the matters treated of and of the arguments: but a still greater is the author's obstinate partiality in favor of Sebastian against the merits and rights of his father John Cabot. I have used the second edition of London, 1832.

undoubtedly represents the regions where Nova Scotia and Cape Breton Island are situated. As the inscription, "First Land Seen," is at the north-east extremity of this region it must correspond to the northern extremity of Cape Breton Island. But where near Nova Scotia and the island of Cape Breton can we find any thing like the island which Sebastian Cabot on his chart represents as further within the gulf and a short distance beyond the peninsula? In Prince Edward's Island, which is just west of Cape Breton, and which has also been known as St. John. True, the island seen by Cabot was discovered the same day as "First-seen-Land," and the distance from Cape North to Prince Edward's Island is seventy-two miles, a distance too great to be made the same day that "First-seen-Land" was discovered. But if I see clearly, Cabot does not say that they touched the island the same day, but merely that they gave the name of St. John to an island opposite, and which was discovered the same day.\* The term *discovered* may be very well applied to what is merely seen, and so the difficulty as to the distance disappears, for they saw the mainland at five in the morning, and therefore in the long days of that time of the year, had ample time during the day to proceed far enough to see, if not to reach, Prince Edward's Island.

Harrisse measuring too mathematically the relative positions of the north-east point of the peninsula on Sebastian Cabot's chart and the island of Cape Breton, places the first land seen not at Cape North, which is the northern point of Cape Breton, but at Cape Fourchu or Percé, which is on its eastern side.† By doing so, the distance from the first point of land seen to Prince Edward's Island is so increased as to render it absolutely impossible for both to have been seen the same day. As an essential part of the agree-

---

\* ". . . y a una isla grãde que esta par de la d ha tierra le pusieron nombre Sant Joan, por aver sido descubierta el mismo dia." App. iii. A.

† "Il y a au Canada deux caps Percé. Celui qui se trouve sur la côte N-E de l'île du cap Breton, et un autre situé dans la baie de Gaspé, près du mont Joli ou Cap Tiennot. . . . C'est le premier de ces deux caps qui est le nôtre, d'après la carte de Bayfield précitée." Harrisse, p. 65.

ment between the indications of the Planisphere and the account in the Legend is thereby lost, the possibility that the first landing was at Cape Breton Island necessarily fails. But the fact that for want of exact knowledge the Planisphere unites the island to the mainland and makes it a continuation of it frees us from the scruple of a mathematically exact agreement, the more so as the capes are not many miles apart.

But, it has been asked, if Sebastian Cabot knew the region of Nova Scotia and Cape Breton Island so well as he shows in his Planisphere, how does it happen that the Spanish charts, which must have passed under his revision as chief Pilot, do not give the same indications, but remain so far behind his chart? How explain that all the charts of that day have a long extent of coast in the northern parts of America, with this inscription or its equivalent, "This land was discovered by the English from Bristol,"\* and on none of them is Cape Breton Island comprised in that long space, but on all the English discoveries begin at the north of Newfoundland and follow the coast of Labrador?

All this has naturally given rise to a suspicion that as Sebastian Cabot did not publish his Planisphere until after the exploration of those parts by the Frenchman Jacques Cartier, he drew these places from information obtained from others rather than from his own knowledge.

The former of these questions may be answered with the words of Sir Humphrey Gilbert who informs us that the Spanish and Portuguese pilots were forbidden under pain of death, to trace on their navigating charts any mark whatever which might put other states on the track of discovering the sighed-for passage leading to the East Indies.†

---

\* Note taken from the chart of Diego Ribeiro (1529), the second of the so-called Weimar charts.

† "The Spaniards and Portugals. . . have commanded that no pilot of theirs upon paine of death, Should plat out in any sea card, any thorow passage." Hakluyt, iii, p. 23.

Leone Pancaldo, Magellan's companion, in consideration of 2000 ducats bound himself by notarial deed to the Representative of the King of Portugal, September 30, 1531, "di non insegnare ad alcuno la strada ai paesi ultimamente

In consequence of this prohibition, Sebastian could not previously indicate the gulf opening to the west of "Land first seen;" but was free to do so in 1544, when his secret no longer amounted to any thing, the position of the gulf being generally known in consequence of Jacques Cartier's exploration.

The second objection, it seems to me, falls to the ground when it is noted that Sebastian Cabot places at Cape Breton Island the mere fact of its being the first discovered; whilst the further navigations and explorations of the English were along the lands of Labrador. Hence it was natural for the map-makers to give the name of English lands to those where the English vessels had generally gone and still went, and not to the mere point which had simply witnessed their first arrival. But let us take the first chart that mentions the English discoveries,—that of Juan de la Cosa, pilot of Christopher Columbus,—composed in 1500, that is, soon after John Cabot's discovery and many years before the places around Cape Breton were known to the world or made famous by the explorations of the French navigator: and let us see if that first chart excludes this island from the English discoveries. First of all, let us observe that at this time neither the Spaniards nor those of any other nation than the English had yet sailed to the lands of North America, so that it must necessarily be admitted that Cosa obtained his information from English sources; and perhaps Kohl's opinion is well founded, that Cosa indicated those places from a copy of John Cabot's own chart sent to Spain by Puebla or Ayala, ambassadors in England.\* In fact, the latter writes in his dispatch, "I believe your Highnesses are already advised of all this, and also of the chart or map of the world which he made, and *I do not send now the one*

---

scoperti, e a non fare alcuna carta geografica che indicasse quel cammino." G. B. BELLORO, *Elogio di Leone Pancaldo*.

In 1527 Robert Thorne, an Englishman of whom we shall have occasion to speak further on, sending a chart from Seville to the ambassador of Henry VIII to Charles V, cautions him to keep secret from whom he received it, "because it might be a cause of pain to the maker." Hakluyt. iii. p. 129.

\* "There is no difficulty in the supposing that a copy of the chart of Cabot may have been seen by Cosa in 1500." Kohl, *Hist. of the discovery of Maine*, p. 153. From HARRISSE, p. 104.



*which I have here.*"\* What he did not send then he may very well have sent soon after, either of his own motion or by request. In Cosa's chart in the highest part of the drawing, to the west is marked "Cabo de Inglaterra" and beside it is a small English flag. Another such flag is marked further south near a cape of St. John, and an island called Trinidad; three more flags follow lower down as far as a cape and a sea bearing the words "discovered by the English." This stretch of land engraved on the present maps would be from about the middle of Davis Strait to Cape Hatteras; that is to say, approximately the extent of coast along which according to Ramusio, Cabot had passed. It may be, as Desimoni conjectures, that Cosa's chart should be regarded as including two periods of discovery, indicated by that cartographer by the different Legends . 1. "A cape further east with the name Cabo de Inglaterra, with the island under it, and 2. an extent of land and a sea further south and west with the legend, *Mar descubierto por Ingleses.*" † The fact is that the first map which shows the lands of North America not only does not restrict the English discoveries to the north of Newfoundland, but on the contrary carries them a long way to the south of it; so that Cape Breton Island instead of being excluded, is in the very middle. What if this island is excluded from the English section in later maps? Was not the whole coast south of it as far at least as Chesapeake Bay also excluded? Yet that this was first seen and discovered by Sebastian Cabot at the head of the English is proved by the concordant testimony of Ramusio and Peter Martyr; and the latter related it as early as 1516. The southern portion of the English discoveries was called by the Spaniards Land of Estevan Gomez from their countryman who coasted along more or less of it in 1525, twenty-seven years after it had been discovered, because they first obtained knowledge of it through him. Is not the case the same as to Cape Breton Island and neighboring lands with reference to the French voyages and explorations?

It seems to me that a ray of light can be thrown on the

\* See App. xvi.

† Intorno a Giovanni Caboto, p. 27.

question by the direction taken by John Cabot on his second voyage, and therefore I believe it will be well to anticipate a brief mention of it here. Soncino, writing to the Duke of Milan says: "Master John Cabot . . . sailing from Bristol, the western port of this Kingdom and passing Ireland, further west, and then going higher up towards the north commenced to sail to the eastern parts."\* To know Cabot's intention we must settle the order of his ideas in regard to the expedition he was undertaking. This is easy enough, for the history of Christopher Columbus just after the discovery of the New World is an exact mirror of what everybody thought about the lands found beyond the Atlantic. Columbus left Spain with the expectation of reaching the territory of the Grand Khan: he had touched land at San Salvador, Cuba, Haiti, with the conviction that he had come to the land of the Grand Khan; he had returned to Europe with the announcement never doubted by him or anybody else that he had arrived at the land of the Grand Khan. Could John Cabot think differently? Certainly not. Sailing then on an expedition of discovery beyond the Atlantic for the account of England, he did and could only look to reaching also the land of the Grand Khan, which at that time was the ultimate term of the desires and hopes of discoverers and traders. But if the empire of Cathay lay on the other side of the Atlantic, Cabot knew very well that it extended an immense distance from north to south, and therefore was sure to be found by sailing directly west from England. Why, then, instead of sailing directly west after leaving Bristol, does he go further north and only after reaching a certain latitude turn his prow to the west. It is absurd to suppose that he hoped to find richer lands by going some dozens of miles further north, or that he made that bend without a motive. What could have been his motive? It was this: In his voyage of 1494 he came to Cape Breton Island, and entered the Gulf of St. Lawrence sailing out by the strait of Belle-Isle, and saw as he sailed that the country around gave no promise of the riches dreamed of

---

\* See App. xiii.

in the east. Consequently when returning in 1497 to take possession of the new region in the name of England, he would not go back to places already known to be of no interest, but sought the land he had seen extending to the north of Belle-Isle in the hope of finding places of a different nature from those near First-Seen-Land; and as one who knows what he wants and has a fixed purpose, after passing Ireland, he sailed far enough north to gain the latitude of the lands he wanted to reach; and then sailed due west and landed in the region afterwards known as Labrador.<sup>†</sup>

But, objects HARRISSE, "if Cabot had entered the Gulf of St. Lawrence and afterwards passed out by the Strait of Belle-Isle, Newfoundland would not have continued to figure as part of the mainland on all the maps without exception, for forty years longer.\* This objection which would be insurmountable taken by itself alone, is solved and disappears when taken in connection with another fact in the story of Cabot. It is historically proved, and nobody doubts it, that, as we shall see in the proper place,† Sebastian Cabot on his voyage in 1498, came down the coast from Labrador exploring it minutely to find a passage to the Chinese countries, in the supposition that the land before them was an island. He therefore could not help seeing in that close exploration the Strait of Belle-Isle and the great expanse of sea between Cape Breton Island and Newfoundland, and, as he was looking for a passage to the west, if he had not already known that these two openings through which he had passed would bring him back to the Atlantic, he must have tried one or the other to see if it was not the passage he was seeking, and his very search would have taken him along the coast and so brought him

---

\*"Si l'on accepte la position de la petite flotte de Cabot au moment ou, de l'île du Prince-Édward, elle se prépare à continuer son périple. . . Dans ce cas, il cotoya la Gaspésie, atteignit les côtes du Bas-Canada et vint déboncher dans l'Atlantique par le détroit de Belle-Isle."

"Si celle avait été la route suivie par Cabot, Terre Neuve n'aurait pas continué à figurer comme terre ferme sur toutes les cartes sans exceptions, pendant quarante ans encore." Jean et Sébastien Cabot, l. c.

† See ch. viii.

Whoever is familiar with the life of Christopher Columbus knows what efforts were made to deprive him of the glory of having opened the path to the New World to mankind. The Cabots were exposed to a similar warfare for the glory of having first arrived in the territory of North America. Two names have been preferred before theirs, those of the Pole, John Szkolny and the Portuguese, Ioão Vas Cortereal. Of the former it is related that he was a pilot in the service of Christian II, King of Denmark, and in 1476 was charged by his sovereign with the reopening to trade of the path between Denmark and Greenland, of which it is said, the Danes still retained a lively recollection. According to this account, Szkolny passed in front of Friesland and Greenland and reached the coast of Labrador that same year. But all the most industrious researches of the greatest geographers have failed to find any foundation for the truth of this pretended expedition!\*

The first to mention the Portuguese was Gaspar Fructuoso, a writer of the same nation, living in the XVI century.† This historian writes that Ioão Vas Cortereal by order of Affonso V explored the northern seas as early as 1464, and discovered a portion of North America, what is properly Newfoundland and the "Land of Bacalhao," in consequence of which he was rewarded by royal decree of April 12, 1464, with the government of Terceira Island. The story of Fructuoso was taken up, enlarged, and embellished by Cordeiro, another Portuguese historian in his "Historia Insulana das Ilhas a Portugal Sugeytas no Oceano Occidental," published in 1717; on the authority of which Barrow gave it a place in his history.‡ Lardner took it up on the authority of Barrow; § others on Lardner's; and so it became the general property of history.

---

\* ALEX. HUMBOLDT, *Examen critique de l'Histoire de la Géographie du nouveau Continent*, Paris, Librairie de Gide, 1837, T. II. p. 154.—L. HUGUES, *Le navigazioni di G. e S. Cabotto, nelle Memorie della Società Geografica Italiana*, 1878.

† He wrote at the Azores in 1590 a history entitled "Saudades de Terra." "Land Longings," which has never been published, but is still in manuscript. See Lucian Cordeiro, *De la Découverte de l'Amérique*, p. 39.

‡ *Chronological History of Voyages*, p. 37.

§ *Cyclopædia, History of Maritime and Island Discovery*, vol. ii, p. 138.

The reader will find here a real historical person with all the necessary details of place, of time, and of the other persons who lived and dealt with him. But an examination of all these details will show what Fructuoso's account amounts to.

We know that John II, King of Portugal, was inclined to accept the proposal of Christopher Columbus, but they could come to no agreement because "John wanted him to accept of the usual reward given to those who discovered lands or islands on the African coast," and Christopher Columbus demanded much more, saying that "his plan was totally different from any that had been carried out previously," and "not in any wise to be compared with simply advancing on a path already known."\* King John, notwithstanding the great results promised by Columbus, was undecided whether to accept or refuse his offer, and submitted it to the board that had charge of all matters relating to maritime discovery, and of which the greatest geographers and astronomers of the kingdom were naturally members. *The board declared the project of Columbus altogether extravagant and visionary.* Not satisfied with this answer, King John ordered a new inquiry and referred the matter to his privy council, which declared that *no account should be made of the proposal of Christopher Columbus.* Still the King was determined on a trial, and getting possession of the maps and drawings which Columbus had prepared in support of his proposal, he secretly sent a ship in the direction and by the course which Columbus had traced. But the mariners after proceeding a good distance to sea, turned back "*ridiculing the project of Columbus as the dream of a feeble mind that saw land where there was and could be only water.*"†

How could the board and the privy council have declared the project of Columbus *extravagant and visionary*, how could the mariners ridicule and laugh at it, if Cortereal had previously seen and visited the lands beyond the Atlantic?

Fructuoso says, and Cordeiro repeats, giving even the decree

\* Tarducci, *Life of Christopher Columbus*, Vol. i. p.67.

† Tarducci, *Ib.* pp. 69, 70.

of King Affonso, that Cortereal in reward of his services received the governorship of the island of Terceira : but I find that when the two Portuguese, Gonçalvez Varco and Tristão Vaz Texeira with the Italian Perestrello discovered the island of Porto Santo and the Madeira group, to reward them and encourage them in further enterprises, with the ownership they were given the government of the same lands they had discovered.\* When, in 1460, the Genoese, Antonio da Noli, was sent to ascertain the number of the Cape Verde Islands which Antonio Usodimare and Luigi Cadamosto had discovered four years before, he too was given the government as well as the charge of colonizing those lands, and held it until his death. How happens it that four years later Portugal takes an entirely different course with Cortereal, and instead of sending him back to colonize and govern the land he had discovered, sends him in the opposite direction to govern a land discovered and colonized by others? As soon as a new land or island was discovered Portugal was at once careful to extend its knowledge of it and attempt its colonization ; what reason caused it to act differently with the “Terra de Bacalhao,” and suffer it to fall into such oblivion that but for the record of it made by an obscure historian almost a century and a half afterwards, it would never have been known of? But there is yet another knot to untie before Gaspar Fructuoso’s course can run smooth. The famous globe of Martin Behaim constructed at Nuremberg in 1492, shows all the lands known and discovered up to that time ; how happens it that it has no indication, of any sort, of the land found by Cortereal? No one was more likely to know of it than Behaim, for he was a most learned cosmographer, and endeavored most zealously to show on his globe all the land that was then known, and he not only lived at the court of Portugal, but was a member of the special board appointed by the Portuguese Monarch to inquire into the means of improving navigation, and in 1484, not contented with hearing the report of others, but wishing to know from his own sight the new discoveries, accompanied

---

\* Tarducci, *Ib.* p. 31.

Diego Cam as the cosmographer of the expedition. No one was in a better position to know of Cortereal's discovery, no one more desirous to bring it to the knowledge of the civilized world.

Some may, perhaps, be impressed by seeing that the coast where John Cabot's first discovery was made bears a number of Portuguese names of gulfs, capes, rivers, and not one is called after Cabot. This fact is one of the arguments on which Lucian Cordeiro insists the most to prove his compatriot's prior discovery.\* But the difficulty bursts and disappears as soon as it is squeezed in the hand. † We have already mentioned that on their first voyage the Cabots touched at the northern point of Cape Breton Island, but that afterwards they and the English who followed them, continued their navigations more to the north along the coast which they called of the Baccalaos and which is now known as Labrador. On the other hand, the Portuguese Gaspar Cortereal, son of João Vaz, in 1500, sailed to and explored the seas and lands near the place of that first discovery. He naturally gave names to the places he discovered, and as these places came to be generally known and began to be visited by ships from Europe after his navigation, it is easy to see why they should be called by the names he gave, and no trace should remain of the general term First-Seen-Land given by the Cabots, which only indicated the simple record of the first discovery, and left for European navigators no designation for the special knowledge of the places. †† It is also well to remember that the Portuguese and Spaniards at that time possessed the field of discovery, and the fresh results obtained by them were looked for in Europe and at once made known; whereas the English were coming forward for the first time, and with a discovery which seemed of no importance. Is it any wonder, then, that the matter was not known in Europe, and that the modest advance of these new champions should be eclipsed by the noisy and pompous arrival of champions already every-

---

\* LUCIANO CORDEIRO, *De la découverte de l'Amérique*, Paris, Veuve I... P... Aillaud et C. 1876, p. 80.

where known and celebrated? But, it is said, in the Atlas of Vaz Dourado preserved in the Library of Munich, the map of North America along the coast-line of Labrador bears the names of *Gulf of Ioão and Land of Ioão Vaz*. And a copy of the same map made in Goa in 1571, has the same names.\* And what then? Is the name of a person given to a place an argument to prove that he discovered it? If that is so, Prince Edward's Island must have been discovered by the father of the present Queen of Great Britain.† And an immense number of other islands and lands must have been discovered by the Isabellas, Carolines, Mariannes, Ferdinands, Philips, Georges: in a word, the reigning houses of Spain, Portugal, England could boast of a fine number of Princes and Princesses who were navigators and discoverers. They had the same part in discovering the islands and lands bearing their name that Ioão Vaz had in discovering the gulf and land named after him. The only difference is that if the names of princes were sometimes introduced out of gratitude, it was more often from adulation, whilst here it was the noble and holy affection of a son. It is nothing strange that Gaspar Cortereal among the many names he was conferring should have given his father's also to a gulf and a land. Nor is it wonderful that so many years later in designating the map of those places there should be found amongst others the name of Ioão Vaz.

---

## CHAPTER V.

### *The first Letters Patent.—Expedition of 1497.*

THE three different accounts which we have of the old Bristol chronicle agree in saying that John Cabot drew the King of England into his design by force of the knowledge he

---

\* Peschel, *Geschichte der Entdeckungen*, p. 330.—From the article of L. Hugues before cited, in the *Memorie della Società Geografica Italiana*, 1878.

† The Duke of Kent, son of George III. The island was named after him when he was in North America at the head of the British fleet.



showed of how to carry into effect the project he proposed. "This year," says one of them, "the King (by means of a Venetian, which made himself very expert and cunning in Knowledge of the circuit of the world, and islands of the same as by a carde, and other demonstrations reasonable hee shewed) caused to man and victuall a shippe," etc.<sup>l</sup> The same thing is repeated by the other two in the same words.\* And this is the only information we have of the long negotiations which must have preceded the granting of the letters patent to John Cabot by the King of England.<sup>o</sup> Henry VII was reigning at that time, a king who with many fine qualities, was so extremely penurious and miserly that I doubt if his equal ever sat on a throne.<sup>n</sup> As such natures are generally led by their fear and dislike of spending money to put a drag on all negotiations, the opposition arising from the character of the English monarch should no doubt, be counted amongst the difficulties which John Cabot had to meet and overcome. And it is worth noting that the royal patent makes express provision that the expenses of the expedition shall be at Cabot's sole charge; the government reserving itself the right to share in the profits if it succeeds.<sup>†</sup><sup>l</sup>

The patent bears date of March 5, 1496, and is in favor of John Cabot, and also of his sons, Lewis, Sebastian, and Sanzio, and their descendants and heirs. It gives them the right to sail in any part, country, and sea of the east, west, and north, under the English flag, with five ships of any burden or quality, and any number of men they wished, but *all at their own expense*, to look for and discover new lands of infidels and pagans, whatever and wherever situated which *before that time had been unknown to all Christians*. They might raise the royal banner in any place or land they should discover, take possession and exercise jurisdiction in the name of the King of England. The vessels to and from those places were all to sail from and enter the port of Bristol, and the patentees were given the exclusive right to visit the new lands discovered

\* See App. vii. viii. ix.

† Suis et eorum propriis sumptibus et expensis . . . . . App. v.

and to trade with them. One fifth of the net income from the expedition was reserved to the crown. They and their heirs were to have the lands they discovered and occupied in perpetual fee as subjects and vassals of the King of England, with the absolute prohibition for any Englishman to visit those places without the permission of John and his sons or their delegates and representatives under pain of confiscation, not only of their ships, but of all their property.\*

Whatever the cause of delay, the undertaking approved in 1496 was not carried into effect till 1497. In explanation of the delay it has been suggested that Spain raised obstacles to Cabot's project, and this may very likely have had something to do with it.<sup>1</sup> But perhaps the very difficulty of organizing the expedition is a sufficient explanation, if we consider that Cabot was poor, and could not very easily have found any one to bear the necessary expense.<sup>2</sup> As the months suited for navigation were those from spring to the middle of summer, and the proposed voyage promised to be long, much of the good season might have passed before he could get ready, so that it would be necessary or prudent to wait till the next year. In fact the expedition sailed in 1497 in the beginning of May, and it could not have been ready by that time in 1496, less than two months from the granting of the patent required for the voyage.

How many ships composed the expedition? Pasqualigo says in general terms "with a vessel"; Soncino more specially, "with a vessel and 18 persons." † The contemporary chronicle of Bristol, in the Cottonian collection as well as in the collections of Hakluyt and Stow, has it a ship manned at the king's expense and three or four other small vessels furnished by citizens of Bristol, on which some merchants of that city and of London ventured some merchandise.‡

Which of these is the true account? I notice that the account in the chronicle is in contradiction with the words of the patent, which expressly provides that the expedition shall be at the sole expense of Cabot; but at the same time that the

---

\* See App. v.

† See App. xi. and xiii.

‡ See App. vii, viii, ix.

chronicler lived on the spot and wrote during the expedition, and under such favorable circumstances it is strange that he, only a step from the harbor out of which Cabot sailed, did not know whether the ships added were three or four, and moreover that his account is very general with no exact details. This makes me suspect that he wrote less of his own knowledge than from hearsay. On the other hand, I observe that Soncino is in accord with Pasqualigo, and with the terms of the letters patent and gives the precise number of men that sailed on the ship. This exactness of statement makes me think he searched for correct information concerning the expedition ; and as he tells us that he became a friend of John Cabot, and not only gives conversations he held with him, but even reports as from Cabot's own mouth minute particulars of his future plan, I hold that he had his information concerning this expedition directly from John Cabot himself. Hence I am inclined to believe that the expedition was really made with a single vessel, but that on its departure it was joined, from hope of gain, by three or four other small vessels with some small articles of merchandise for the people that should be discovered ; but that neither Soncino nor Pasqualigo made any account of these, as they were no proper part of the expedition ; perhaps also because disheartened by the length of the voyage, they returned and left the real ship of the expedition to pursue her voyage alone.

The expedition sailed from Bristol in the beginning of May and returned early in August. This is one of the few points on which the various accounts in the history of Cabot are in accord. The contemporary chronicle in the Cotton collection says that the fleet took to sea in the beginning of summer, which expression in language of seamen may very well be understood in the broad sense of the whole season suited for navigation.\* And in fact the account as inserted in Hakluyt says more explicitly that the departure was in the beginning of May.†

---

\* " . . . departed from the West Cuntrey in the beginning of somer." See App. vii.

† " . . . departed from Bristowe in the beginning of May." See App. xiii.

Lorenzo Pasqualigo writing to his brothers on the 23 August on its return, says it was gone three months ;\* then it must have returned early in August. And in the account book of Henry VII's privy purse under date of the 10th of that month, we find this note of expense: "To him that found the new Isle, 10 l.†

Arriving at the new land, they went ashore and took possession in the name of the King of England. There was one circumstance accompanying the act of taking possession which the Venetian Pasqualigo took to heart with much feeling and related to his brothers. We have already mentioned it when discussing the native land of John Cabot, as in the great scarcity of documents it seemed to have some influence on the decision of that question. But here, in its proper place, we will briefly relate it again.

The ship he sailed on was English ; nearly all the seamen who accompanied him in the toils and perils of the voyage were English ;‡ he sailed for the profit and glory of England. On landing, therefore, on the new shore, after planting there the cross, after the custom of all discoverers as a sign that they took possession in the name of Christ for the spreading of his Faith and his Law, he planted by its side the banner of England to mark the new country as the property of the English crown. And then drawn by that mysterious bond which, at every distance of time and place, brings to us the image of those dear to us, especially in the most solemn and consoling moments of life ; he crossed in thought through the ocean, passed over England, traversed Europe, and sought on the shore of the Adriatic the glorious Queen of the Lagoons. Twenty years had passed since he left her, but neither length of time nor distance of place could weaken his tender affection. And in the new land he had discovered by the side of Christ's Cross with the banner of England he planted the flag of Venice.§

---

\* "Le venudo sto nostro Venetiano che andò con uno navilio de Bristo a trovar Ixole nove. . . et è stato mexi tre sul viazo." See App. xi.

† See App. x.

‡ "Li compagni chi sono quasi tutti Inglesi e da Bristo." See App. xiii.

§ "Sto inventor di queste cose à impiantato suli terreni à trovato una gran

Pasqualigo goes on to relate that returning to the ship they sailed for 300 leagues along the coast, but saw no person whatever. They found, however, some springes set to catch game, and a needle for making fishing nets, which they kept to carry to the king. They also saw some trees cut, so that they were sure that the country was inhabited. \* That they saw no living soul is easily explained by the fear of the inhabitants, if we remember how in the case of Christopher Columbus the natives fled and hid themselves on the first appearance of his ships.

For the present they deemed they had done enough, and returned to England. On their way they discovered two islands, but passed on without landing at them, because they were short of provisions.† From Pasqualigo's words it seems clear that the land was very poor and the climate not happy, and his words agree with what Sebastian Cabot afterwards said in the brief description appended to his Map of 1544 where he calls it a sterile and uncultivated land abounding only in wild animals.‡ Soncino calls it "an excellent and temperate land :”§ but on this point Soncino's testimony is open to suspicion. He was tired of staying in England, and sighed for a fat benefice in Lombardy : and intending to speak to good purpose he writes to his master that many friars will go back with Cabot to the New Land, where they are promised bishoprics, and if he would go too he could have an archbishopric, but prefers to remain in His Highness's service and wait for the favors he could not fail to receive from the Duke.¶ Now he would not be inclined to belittle the

*Croze con una bandiera de Inghilterra e una di San Marcho per esser lui Venetiano.*" Pasqualigo, App. xi.

\* “. . . è andato per la costa lige 300, e e desmontato, e non a visto persona alguna, ma a portato qui al Re certi lazi che era tesi per prendere salvadexine, e uno ago da far rede, e a trovato certi albori tagliati, si che per questo iudicha che xè persone . . . .” Pasqualigo, See App. xi. “—et preso certi segnali, se ne ritornato.” Soncino, App. xiii.

† “. . . al tornar aldreto a visto do ixole, ma non ha voluto dessender per non perder tempo, che la vituaria li maneava.” Pasqualigo, App. xi.

‡ See App. iii.

§ See App. xiii.

¶ “Credo ancora andarano cum questo passaggio alcun poveri frati italiani

refusal of the archbishopric by vilifying the land where it was offered him. Still those words are all the praise he bestows on the land, and these lose much of their force by his adding that the discoverers had brought back "some tokens," as a sample of the place, for if the land had been so excellent and temperate they would, as was the case with Columbus, have brought something deserving more special and honorable mention than to be called "some tokens."

John Cabot's return seems to have wonderfully stirred and warmed up the cold nature of the English. He returned with the announcement that he had landed in the Grand Khan's empire and was naturally believed by everybody.\*

This announcement meant that he had opened the treasures of all wealth to their ships and commerce. "These English," writes Pasqualigo, "follow him like idiots."†

They called him "High Admiral," the king promised him a fleet for a new expedition in the fine season, and the principal merchants of Bristol vied to take part in it.‡

These honors seem to have gone a little to his head, for he put on showy garments of silk ; and in his confidence that he had discovered extensive regions and great numbers of people, he invited his companions and friends to share in his fortune, bestowing islands and lands on some, and bishoprics on others. Those selected for his generosity rejoiced in the

li quali hanno tutti promissione de' Vescovati, E per esser io fatto amico de l'armirante, quando volessi andarvi, haverei uno Arcivescovato, ma ho pensato chel sia più sicura cosa li beneficii quali V. E. me ha reservati." See App. xiii.

\* SONCINO : " Sua Maesta ha guadagnato una parte de Asia senza colpo de spada." App. xiii.

PASQUALIGO : "Dice aver trovato lige 700 lontam de qui Teraferma, ze el paexe del gran Cam." App. xi.

† " Chianasi el gran Armirante e vienli fato grande honor, e va vestito de seda, e sti Inglexi li vano drierdi a mo pazi, e pur ne volese tanti quanti navrebbe con lui !" Pasqualigo, App. xi.

‡ "El re li ha promesso a tempo novo navili X armati come lui vorà." Pasqualigo, App. ib.

" Et a tempo novo se dice che la Maestà prefata armarà alcuni navilli. . . . Et li principali dell' impresa sono de Bristo, grandi mariuari. . ." Soncino, App. xiii.

greatness of their future honor, and he in their midst esteemed himself a Prince.\*

Still in this cheap vanity there is a good and beautiful side ; it is to see that his heart was not shut up with pride in the sentiment of his grandeur, but gladly opened to share his happiness with others. †

One proof of what the new regions would produce was the discovery that the sea was extraordinarily rich in fish ; a discovery which we might be almost indifferent to in the XIX century, but at the time of Cabot was joyful news for England, because a certain source of great wealth for the nation. In those days every Christian people scrupulously observed the requirements of the church ; and in the strict observance by everybody of lent and the vigils, fish had become a commodity of prime necessity for all Christians. Iceland lived off their commerce, Norway and the Baltic shores saw no ships but those engaged in taking or conveying fish. It is easy, then, to understand how pleasant to English ears was the story of the discoverers, “that the sea was full of fish which were caught not only with nets, but also with bags, a stone being tied to the bag to sink it,” that they would bring from there such quantities of fish that they should no longer depend on Iceland, from which they received a very great trade of fish which were called stock fish. ‡

But whilst others from that first sign of wealth drew reason for unboundedly expanding their hopes in the treasures of those regions, John Cabot from the triumph won drew strength for new conflicts, desire for greater glory.

† He had composed a Map of the world on a plane, and another on a globe, and on these he showed where he had arrived, or rather where he believed he had arrived. “From that place,” writes Soncino, “he proposed to pass close

\* “Ho ancora parlato cum uno Borgognone compagno di mess. Zoanne chi afferma tutto, et vole tornarci perchè lo armirante (che già messer Zoanne così se intitula) li ha donato una Isola ; et ne ha donato una altra ad un suo barbero da castione Genovese, et intrambi se reputanno Conti, ne monsignor Larmirante se stima manco de principe.” Soncino, App. xiii.

† ‡ Soncino, App. xiii.

to land, further towards the east, till he comes opposite to an island which he calls Cipango, situated in the equatorial regions, where he believes all the spices grow, and also the jewels, and he says that at other times he has been at Mecca where the spices are brought by caravans from distant countries, and when he asked those that brought them where they grew, they said they did not know, but that other caravans came to their country with this merchandise from distant lands, and they said they were brought to them from other regions remoter still. And he argues that if the orientals tell the southerners that these things are brought to them from afar, and so on from land to land, it is necessary, supposing the earth to be round, that the last should get them from the north towards the west."\* This brief passage is all we know of the reasoning of John Cabot on his voyages and explorations; and I give it in Soncino's own words, because, as he received the information from Cabot's own lips, they seem to me in their antiquity like an echo of the glorious Venetian's voice.†

Whoever knows the story of Christopher Columbus is aware that Cipango was the dream and the sigh of the first discoverers who reached the New World, that noblest of islands, of which it was reported that it "abounds with gold, pearls, and gems, and the temples and royal dwellings are roofed with plates of gold."‡

¶ I conclude this chapter with the record of the munificence of Henry VII towards John Cabot, who by his discovery had opened to the Kingdom of England a future resplendent with the brightest hopes of power and wealth. ¶ To this man the King of England sent a present of ten pounds sterling. ‡ Peschel tries to defend the memory of that King by supposing that the present was not for the discoverer, but for the one who first saw the land.§ But this kind supposition is opposed by the fact that in the same book are entered other

\* App. xiii.

† From the Letter of Paul Toscanelli to Canon Fernando Martinez. See Tarducci's *Life of Columbus*, Vol. i. p. 58.

‡ "To hym that founde the new Isle. l. 10." See App. x.

§ Zeitalter, p. 276.



presents from the same King to those who sailed to places already discovered by Cabot, or who discovered some island in the same latitudes, and the name of Cabot is nowhere found in it. And it does not seem supposable that the King who recognized in some fashion the work of others should have kept a close hand with him who opened the path for them all.

But, whether because he was poor enough to be glad of any offering, or rather because he prudently wished to retain the King's good will, John Cabot in his speech magnified the English Sovereign's generosity and regard for him. \*

---

## CHAPTER VI.

*The Second Letters Patent.—Preparations for the expedition of 1498.—John Cabot's Death.*

A GREAT surprise now awaits us. The letters patent of March 5, 1496, contained many extensive rights and privileges not only in favor of John Cabot, but of each of his sons and their descendants and heirs, with full power to delegate their authority to representatives without any limitation of time or place. But now, on February 3, 1498, new letters patent are issued granting all necessary authority to seize in the ports of England from the ships that happened to be there, the number required for the expedition; but they are addressed to John. The King calls him his "well beloved," mentions the discovery he had made, leaves him free to choose his ships and crew, all the officers of the government owe assistance to John, John can delegate his authority to others,

---

\* "El re. . . ali dato danari." Pasqualigo, App. xi.

"Questa Maestà. . . li dà assai bona provisione come esso messer Zoanne me dice." . . . Soncino, App. xiii.

John is the head of the new expedition. Not the slightest mention is made of the sons, not the least allusion to the previous patent, not a syllable that can be construed as confirmation or revocation, of the privileges granted.\* What is the meaning of this ?

We are wholly in the dark.

The number of ships for the new expedition was fixed at six of 200 tuns burden and under, and could be taken in any port of England as well as of all other places subject to the English Crown ; and the sums to be paid for them were to be regulated by what the government would pay if it took them for its own service on its own account.† On this occasion no time seems to have been lost, but they went to work immediately upon the issuing of the letters patent authorizing the taking of the ships, with much energy ; since it appears from some contributions made from the King's privy purse, of which we shall speak in the next chapter, that in the following March the preparations for the expedition were in full activity.

Pasqualigo and Soncino, in their letters of the previous year, both tell us that all prisoners except those for treason went to people the new lands, and this was proposed, according to Pasqualigo's words, by Cabot himself.‡ But the letters patent of February 3, make no mention of this forced colonization ; on the contrary they say expressly that " the seid John . . . . maye take and receyve into the seid shippes . . . all suche maisters, maryners, pages, and our subjects as of their owen free wills woll goo and pass with hym . . . to the seid Land or Iles. " § But probably it should be understood as meaning that their free will was reserved for free citizens, while the malefactors in the public prisons were sent by force.

† From the time of the grant of the second patent, the name of

\* See App. xiv.

† Ibid

‡ PASQUALIGO—"El re. . . .ali dato tutti i presonieri da traditori in fuora che vadano con lui come lui a richiesto . . . ."App. xi.

SONCINO—"la Maestà prefata. . . et ultra li darà tutti li malfatori, et andarano in quello paese ad fare una colonia . . ."App. xiii.

§ See App. xiv.

John Cabot completely disappears : and the few notices which remain of the navigations of 1498 prepared by him, all present his son Sebastian as its head. From this all the historians have inferred that he was hindered from taking command of that expedition, or more probably died soon after the granting of the patent. Against this general opinion Desimoni has opposed the examination of Ayala's dispatch, the most extended and detailed document concerning this expedition which has come down to us, and which gives clearly the command of the expedition to the same person who proposed and organized it.\* In fact it begins by referring to the Genoese discoverer who for seven years has been going in search of the island of Brazil and the seven cities; it goes on to say that the King has determined to make the expedition, having had certain news that the Genoese had really found land *the year before*. It continues by relating how the expedition was struck by a furious storm and one of the ships turned back, but nevertheless, the *Genoese kept on his voyage*, and that the return of the expedition was looked for in September.† Here it is undeniable that the command of the expedition was assumed by the same person who had discovered land the year before, and had sailed over the northern seas for the last seven years in search of new islands and lands : consequently by John Cabot. But as after the return of the expedition there is no mention of John Cabot, but only of Sebastian, as its head, we must suppose, according to Desimoni, that John perished during the expedition, not before. The reasoning of Desimoni is clear and convincing, and therefore it seems to me that we must accept his supposition and place John Cabot's death during the expedition on the new battle-field where he was fighting to enlarge and increase the fruits of his victory.

The fame of John Cabot is almost lost to the memory of posterity, and it is only a few years since that the attention of students has been again directed to him with interest and affection. But it may be said that each of those years has

---

\* *Intorno a Giovanni Caboto Genovese, etc.*—Genova, Tipografia del R. Istituto dei Sordomuti, 1881—p. 53.

† See App. xvi.

shed additional splendor on his name and merits. He suffered from what makes a father's greatest happiness, the glory of his son, Sebastian Cabot, who was greatest among the great, lived to the ripest old age, held in two nations the highest position in the marine, drew the most lively attention of mankind to his name and his work : so that the figure of the father was lost sight of. And as the son not only continued the father's work, but was his companion and co-operator, mankind deceived by the splendor that radiates from the name of Sebastian attributed to him likewise what was the work of his father. Two writers principally have contributed to this mistake, Peter Martyr D' Anghiera and Giambattista Ramusio, who without the least mention of John ascribe everything to Sebastian ; and as their writings had a very extreme circulation, the error was spread by them and became general, not even the truthful testimony of Hakluyt being able to counteract the trumpet of the others, buried as it was in the collection of his big volumes, hardly known by name, still less read, out of England. But still in the splendor of the picture where the great figure of Sebastian shone all alone, it was never possible to efface entirely that of John. It appeared always low down in the background, hardly distinguishable in the shade, but still ever visible, and from there it seemed to say : "And I then ?"

The American, Richard Biddle, the first to give to history a profoundly thought-out book on Sebastian Cabot, wished to blot out completely the rest of that figure which appeared in the background of the picture, and concentrates the spectator's whole attention on the figure of Sebastian, sparkling in the richness of the coloring and drawing. But his efforts were idle, for the more he labored to persuade the beholder that the figure of Sebastian rose all alone by itself and had no support from another figure, no relation with it, the more the eye felt drawn to the mysterious figure there in the background of the picture, and to the ear came more sensibly distinct his question : "And I then ?"

In these last years the truth has finally triumphed, and the documents discovered, though few in number yet suf-

ficient for the purpose, have restored to John the light that was due him, and drawn his figure out of the shade and placed it in full view. If the love of my subject does not veil my judgment, it seems to me that one of the very first places in the history of discoveries belongs to John Cabot. For without any impulse or guidance from others, by the mere force of his will and strength of his enthusiasm, he raised himself above the common herd of navigators for commerce and wealth, and launched out into the fearful solitudes of northern oceans, panting after discovery ; and the failure of a first, a second, a third attempt does not lessen his ardor or weaken his resolve he returns to the attack . . . and he wins. True, he has his son Sebastian for a companion in his victory, but the son was not yet twenty years old, and at that age, however great his genius and his skill in the sciences relating to navigation, he could give but little aid to his father's vigorous strength. And if the work of the younger in later voyages was very efficient, it is still John that led the victorious band ; to him alone is the discovery of 1497 ascribed in public and private documents, and it is his name alone that resounds in the shouts and huzzas of the English nation. If the expedition of 1498 was led by the son, it was still unquestionably prepared, set forward, and for a time conducted by the father. Not then in the second rank, still less lower, is the place that belongs to John Cabot in the glorious phalanx of discoverers, but he must be hailed among the highest, very near the supreme chief that led them all, Christopher Columbus. ¶

## CHAPTER VII.

*Sebastian Cabot.*

To the post of John Cabot in command of the fleet succeeded his son Sebastian. The fact is unquestioned, but nowhere is there the least indication where and how this happened.\* If the letters patent of March 5, 1496, mention the sons of John in the order of age, as is likely, Sebastian would be the second.† There is no trace anywhere of the other two or of their mother, who was still living when John's discovery created such rejoicing in England.‡

From the confined cicle in which we have till now turned so uncomfortably we pass at present into a field of vast extent; but the thick fog which has all along obscured this short path we had to follow, unfortunately does not leave us, and the little light which here and there breaks through, although sufficient to show how broad the field before us and what a giant was laboring in it, is too little to enable us to see his work and the gratitude that posterity owes to his genius and energy.

We must lament this want of light at the first step we take in this story as in that of his father John; for the same question is discussed concerning him,—whence came he? and where was

\* Gaffarel says that: The Letters Patent provided for the case of John's death and Sebastian's succession to the command. "Par bonheur les lettres patentes avaient prévu le cas, et son fils Sébastien en qualité de représentant dument autorisé, put, malgré sa jeunesse, prendre le commandement de l'escadre." *Histoire de la découverte de l'Amérique*, Paris, 1892. T. ii. p. 293.

But this is not correct: the letters patent make no allusion to this case. See App. v.

† Dilectis nobis Joanni Cabotto civi venetiarum ac Ludovico, *Sebastiano* et Sancto filiis dicti Joannis. . . . App. v.

‡ "... e con so moier venitiana e con so fioli a Bristo." Pasqualigo App. xi. ix.

he born? The Italians make out that he was born at Venice; the English claim his birth for Bristol. In examining this question, I believe we should set aside all writers, however celebrated, of later date who hold to either side, for the bundle of their names seems to me a load encumbering free judgment; and I take only old authors who being either contemporary with Sebastian, or very nearly so, may furnish us authority of some weight.

He is made out to be English by Richard Eden, who knew him personally, was his friend, and was present at his death-bed;\* by the *Epitome of Chronicles*, already mentioned; and by the chroniclers Grafton, Holinshed, and Stow, who follow the *Epitome*; † Hakluyt, who published in 1582 his collection of the voyages and discoveries of the English in America; ‡ and Herrera, the historian of the Spanish achievements in the New World, who composed his history in the last years of the XVI century and must have conversed often and long on the facts with Sebastian when he was in the Spanish service.§

On the other side, for Venice, are Peter Martyr D' Anghiera, who published his decades under Sebastian's eyes, was his friend, and had him as his guest in his house; || Gaspare Contarini, Venetian ambassador in Spain, who knew him personally and had conversations with him on the

\* His words will be given a little further on.

† All have "an Englishe man, borne at Bristo, but was the sonne of a Genoway." See ch. i.

‡ "In the time of . . . Henry VII, Letters Patent were . . . granted to John Caboto, an Italian . . . to discover remote . . . country, which discover was afterwards executed . . . by Sebastian and Sancius his son, who were born in England." Vol. iii. p. 16.

The name of Sancius, which Hakluyt here joins with Sebastian's, is found in no document, so that it must be supposed that the name dropped from Hakluyt's pen from want of attention, or else that Sebastian's brother Sancius was associated with him in the beginning and for some reason or other afterwards ceased to assist him.

§ "Este desseo . . . movio el Rey a traer a su servicio Sebastian Gaboto Ingles . . ." — Hist. gen. de los Castellanos . . . — Dec. i. lib. ix. Cap. 13.

|| "Scrutatus est eas Sebastianus quidam Cabotus genere Venetus . . . Familiarem habeo domi Cabotum ipsum et contubernalem interdum . . ." App. xviii.

most subtile matters.\* Andrea Navagero who succeeded Contarini in office, July 21, 1524, while Sebastian Cabot was alive and present ;† Francisco Lopez de Gomara, who published his general history of the Indies in Spain hardly four years after Sebastian's departure, and whose rank and the character of whose studies allow us no doubt that he knew and conversed with one who was the highest authority in that marine, the glorious deeds of which he was engaged in relating ;‡ finally Girolamo Ramusio and the testimony of an anonymous writer who had detailed information on his life and voyages from Cabot himself and on his authority, for, if he was not personally acquainted with Sebastian, he nevertheless had epistolary correspondence with him on the subject of discoveries.§

To these should be added with special notice Francis Bacon, born a little after Cabot's death, because his testimony acquires a special value from the recognized weight of his opinion, and because he was himself an Englishman.¶ Let us now look at these testimonies separately and weigh their value. That of the *Epitome of Chronicles* is taken from the place, already extracted, where speaking of Sir Hugh Wil-

\* His words will be given with Eden's further on.

†“ . . . Un' altra armata . . . partira . . . della quale è capitano un Sebastian Cabotto Venetiano.”—App. xxxii.

‡ “Qui en mas noticia traxo desta tierra fue Sebastian Gaboto Veneciano.”—App. xxi.

§ ANONIMO :—“Non sapete a questo proposito . . . quel che fece gia un vostro cittadino Veneziano” v. App. xix.

RAMUSIO :—“ . . . come mi fu scritto . . . dal Sig. Sebastian Gabotto nostro Vinitiano.”

From the dedicatory letter to the celebrated Fracastoro prefixed to the third volume of his great collection. I omit from these names that of the Portuguese historian Antonio Galvão who wrote his *Tratado* a few years after Sebastian's death (1563), because as personally a stranger to Sebastian, in the place where he lived, he naturally could speak of him only on the credit of others. His words are :

“No anno de 1496 achandose hum *Veneziano* per nome Sebastiano Caboto . . .” App. xxii.

¶ “There was one Sebastian Gaboto, a *Venetian*, dwelling in Bristol, a man seen and expert in cosmography and navigation.” FRANC. BACON'S *History of King Henry VII*, p. 88, London 1778.



loughby's expedition, it is said that it was promoted by Sebastian Cabot, son of a Genoese, but born at Bristol. Treating at that time of the birthplace of John Cabot, we made a long and careful examination of these words, and we saw, and felt with our hands that they are an interpolation of Crowley's made from caprice and without the support of any document. Consequently the authority of the *Epitome of Chronicles* must be rejected now in Sebastian's case for the same reason as before in his father's. We saw then also and felt that the chroniclers Grafton, Holinshed and Stow had simply copied the notice in the *Epitome*, and consequently the rejection of the authority of the *Epitome* necessarily involves the rejection of all based on it.

Hakluyt's authority is great, and so is that of Herrera ; they both searched the old records with zeal, conscientiousness, and judgment ; the one to reproduce them as they were, the other to compose from them his history. But precisely because, being some years subsequent to Cabot's death, they had to rely for their assertions on those old records, all the value of their authority rests on these. And as there are only the authors cited above that make Sebastian Cabot born at Bristol ; excluding the chroniclers and Stow, the whole weight of the assertion is left to rest on Richard Eden's word.

The witnesses testifying in favor of Venice are all contemporaries and personal acquaintances, or at least correspondents of Sebastian Cabot. Yet, to be more scrupulously exact, let us exclude from these also all who are unable to give us a solid basis for their authority. Let us leave out Andrea Navagero, although as Venetian ambassador to Spain when Sebastian Cabot was chief pilot of that Kingdom, everything leads us to believe that he must have had occasion to talk with him, at court or elsewhere ; but, as we have no sure evidence of their having met, let us exclude him.

Let us leave out Girolamo Ramusio, because, although he was in epistolary correspondence with Sebastian Cabot, the great distance which parted them may lead us reasonably to suspect that his knowledge of Cabot's life did not extend beyond his great achievements of voyage and discovery. The

anonymous writer, whose account he reports, might be valid authority, because he visited Cabot, talked with him, questioned him about his voyages, and since they were both Venetians, it seems more than likely that their conversation must have brought up the subject of his native country. But as we cannot be sure of it, but only argue from probability, let us put him also aside.

Gomara wrote a general history of the Indies, and the subject led him to speak very often of Spanish navigations ; and in such position it seems not only unlikely, but impossible that he should have had no relations with Sebastian Cabot, who held the first place in the Spanish Marine. Still his relations with him might very well have been confined to the matter of which he was treating in his history, without going into details of the Chief Pilot's life : let us therefore, put him too aside. In this way we narrow the whole dispute to Peter Martyr and Contarini for Venice, and Richard Eden for Bristol.

Eden, in the margin of his translation of the Decades of Peter Martyr de Anghiera, writes these words : "Sebastian Cabote tould me that he was borne in Brystowe, and that at iiii yeare ould he was carried with his father to Venice, and so returned agayne into England with his father after certayne years, whereby he was thought to have been borne in Venice."\*

This evidence is positive, and seems as if it ought to put an end to the dispute. But, lo ! the Venetian ambassador Gaspare Contarini in a letter to the council of Ten written just after a conversation he had with Sebastian, writes that Sebastian himself said to him : " Sir Ambassador, to tell you the whole, I was born in Venice, but brought up in England."†

Which of the two are we to credit ? which of the two was mistaken ? Certainly Contarini was not mistaken, for he wrote right after his conversation with Sebastian, and the whole purport of the letter he is writing to the council of

\* The Decades of the New Worlde, London 1555 f. 255.

† Signor ambasciatore, per dirle il tuto, io naqui a Venetia, ma sum nutrito en Ingelterra. See App. xxvi.

Ten has for its starting-point the fact that *Sebastian Cabot was born at Venice*. Perhaps some one may object that Sebastian Cabot at that time had great need of the Venetian Republic, as we shall see further on ; and therefore it is not out of place to suspect that he was carried so far by the necessity of the case as to say what was not true. But this objection is soon dispelled. The same assertion which Cabot made to the ambassador Contarini in Spain, he had previously made at Venice itself through one whom he sent to the council of Ten.\* Can it be supposed that a man arrived at the very high rank which Cabot had attained to, earnest, serious, considerate in every thing as he was, would hazard so explicit and absolute a declaration "I was born at Venice," without being certain of the fact, without being able to prove clearly and unquestionably, if need were, the truth of what he was saying, considering that the application he was making to the Venetian Senate was entirely founded on the fact that he had been born at Venice ? But let us for a moment accept this supposition and set aside even his own testimony as being suspicious. No sort of suspicion can attach to the historian Peter Martyr d' Anghiera, who not only says that Sebastian was born in Venice, but that he was taken from there, and tells us why. And he could not have got this information from Contarini, for the Decade where he speaks of it was published seven years before the conversation between Contarini and Cabot took place.† His evidence is the same as though it came directly from the lips of Sebastian himself, for Peter Martyr was his friend, his companion at court, had him as a guest in his house, and published this Decade of his precisely during the period of that hospitality; indeed, in his account he joins the information concerning Cabot with the fact that he has Cabot a guest in his

---

\* "Disse esser sta mandato per uno Sebastian Cabotto, che dice esser di questa città nostra . . ." Letter of the council of Ten, September 22, 1522. App. xxv.

† The Decade was published in 1516, and the conversation with Contarini occurred towards the end of 1523.

house.\* Thus it is clear, natural, undoubtable that he had his information from Sebastian's own mouth; for it cannot be supposed that with such opportunity as he had of learning the truth from the very lips of one who was at his side, at his table, at his conversation, he, an historian, would fail to question him and learn the truth from him. Sebastian at that time had no need of Venice, which might cast suspicion on his word, but was on the point of hastening to a fresh triumph of his navigations with the money and aid of Spain, † and Anghiera was writing the story of Spanish discovery. There was therefore no reason, direct or indirect, for Cabot untruthfully to place his birth in Venice.

Therefore his repeated declaration at different times, to different persons, under different circumstances, with many years interval between them, must be held conformed in every thing and throughout to the truth.

But then did Eden lie? Avezac has shown by many proofs that Eden with great dexterity makes history say whatever he thinks or chooses it should say, and if he showed no scruple in this freedom, there was still less good critical sense. Translating for example, the first three Decades of Peter Martyr d' Anghiera, he came to a place where the historian calls Sebastian Cabot "his concurialis," which means "who is with me here at the court:" Eden, knowing that Peter Martyr was a member of the Supreme Council of the Indies, translated it that Cabot was also a member of that high board, whereas we have in Herrera the list of *all the members* of that council, and Sebastian Cabot's name is not among them.‡ But this might have been an oversight in translating: it is real audacity for him to give the name and surname of the anonymous writer in Ramusio. Ramusio (and we shall speak of it

---

\* "Familiarem habeo domi Cabotum ipsum et contubernalem interdum . . . concurialis noster est, expectatque in dies ut navigia sibi parentur . . . Martio mense anni futuri MDXVI puto ad explorandum discessurum." See App. xviii.

† See preceding note.

‡ *Revue Critique d' Histoire et de Littérature*. Premier Semestre, 1870. pp. 265—266.

at greater length further on) places in his collection "a great and admirable discourse . . . of a gentleman, a very great philosopher and mathematician . . . whose name out of respect is not given . . ." \*Eden translated this discourse and coming to this passage, instead of respecting the author's secret, thought it best to satisfy the reader's curiosity by revealing the name, surname, and country of the anonymous narrator, and made it known that he was the Bolognese Galeazzo Bottrigari, Pope's nuncio in Spain. Where did he get this information? He does not say. On what proof is it based? He does not tell. But the beauty of it is that when the anonymous speaker made the discourse Bottrigari had been sleeping for thirty years in his grave. †

After that, what reliance can be had on the word of one who so easily makes assertions openly contradicting the truth?

However, there is a way of explaining the opposing testimony of Eden without offence to his memory, by supposing him to have been the victim of a misunderstanding. Even Avezac, for a moment, advances this supposition. I say "for a moment," because he hardly hints a suspicion of this misunderstanding, before he repeats more vehemently than before his charge of falsehood against Eden. ‡ We may then suppose that Eden had the correct information from Cabot as to his native land, as it had already been given to Peter Martyr and Contarini; but from lack of attention or other cause he misunderstood his words and gave them a

\* "Un grande et admirable ragionamento . . . di un gentil' huomo, grandissimo philosopho et mathematico, . . . il nome del quale per suoi rispetti non si dice. . ." See App. xix.

† Galeazzo Bottrigari, Papal Nuncio to Ferdinand, King of Spain, died in Bologna, his native country, in 1518, and was buried in a sarcophagus in the church of St. Francis. Afterwards the sarcophagus was transferred to the Carthusian cemetery where it is still to be seen.

‡ "Nous croyons raisonnable de soupçonner un qui pro quo dans l'esprit aventureux du compilateur, à qui probablement Cabot avait dit en réalité, comme à tous les autres, qu'il était né à Venise, et avait été, dès son jeune âge (quatre ans expressément cette fois), amené à Bristol par son père"—a little after he gives Eden a worse dose, and says "il n'y aura qu'une falsification fantaisiste de plus à porter au compte de Richard Eden, coutumier du fait." p. 266-267.

meaning quite opposite to the true. Let us compare the words of Eden with those of Peter Martyr and we shall see that this supposition is well founded. Peter Martyr says : "Sebastian Cabot was by birth a Venetian but taken by his parents to England whilst almost an infant."\* And Eden : "Sebastian Cabot was born at Bristol, but at the age of four years was taken to Venice." Substitute Venice and Bristol for each other and the two accounts agree. Another thing to be observed is, that when Peter Martyr mentions the carrying of Sebastian from Venice to England in his infancy, he gives, although parenthetically, as the reason of his being taken there so young, the custom of the Venetians of living in any part of the world for the sake of commerce. Eden does not take the trouble to tell us why John Cabot took his little child of four years of age on so long a journey as that from England to Venice, but is careful to inform us that Sebastian Cabot was supposed to be a Venetian in consequence of that journey. The parenthesis inserted by Peter Martyr is incorporated with the substance itself of the story. Eden's added fact barely hangs on it by a thread, and discloses his desire to give authority for believing what was merely a vague report, but which he was anxious to have thought true. We may add that the information furnished by Eden contradicts good sense. Suppose John Cabot had taken his boy at that tender age to Venice, and brought him back "after certayne years." The expression, certain years, does not mean three or four, but at least extends to eight or ten ; and the child would then be twelve or fourteen years of age, about to reach, if he had not already reached the age at which parents sent their children to study at Venice. Would John Cabot have taken his away from there at that time ? Strangers felt need of the schools of Venice at that age, but John Cabot, who already had the use of them, would have removed his child ? Sebastian turned out one of the first

---

\*"Sebastianus Cabotus genere Venetus, sed a parentibus in Britanniam tendentibus (uti mos est Venetorum qui commercii causa terrarum omnium sunt hospites) transportatus pæne infans." App. xviii.

men of his age in the sciences which relate to navigation ; where did he learn these sciences ? Not in England, for there were no suitable schools there. Where then ? Substitute, as we said, Bristol and Venice one for the other in Eden's story, and all runs smooth. With not another syllable changed it will be "Sebastian Cabot was born in Venice whence at the age of four years he was taken to Bristol ; and from there after certain years he returned again to Venice." Why did he return to Venice ? To make his studies. In this way the reason of every thing is clear.

This reasoning, in my opinion is more than sufficient to win the cause for Venice. But HARRISSE has given another argument drawn from the English laws, which I present herewith in the learned American's own words.\* The petition to Henry VII in 1496 is in the name of John Cabot and Lewis, Sebastian, and Sancius, his sons ; and John does not appear as the guardian of his sons ; but they figure in their own full personal capacity. So also the letters patent of March 5, 1496, recognize the individual and distinct character of each of the four patentees ; and the grant is not to them jointly, but separately to each of them and his heirs and representatives : "to our well-beloved John Cabot citizen of Venice and to Lewis, to Sebastian, and to Sancius, sons of the said John, and to their and each of their heirs and deputies."†

The way in which the letters patent are expressed evidently supposes each of the grantees to have attained to his majority. Besides this, they specify or imply grants which by the English law can only be enjoyed by those of age, as for instance, to make contracts, to appoint commissioners, to take charge of lands, to administer law, to grant licenses.‡ It cannot be said that Henry VII by his royal authority created in favor of the minor sons of John Cabot a civil capacity in violation of the common law, for only Parliament had that power, and any thing in letters patent issued by the sovereign in contravention of that common law would be null and void.§

---

\* Jean et Sébastien Cabot, p. 39, 40.

† Eorum ac cujuslibet eorum haeredibus et deputatis. See App. v.

‡ *Blackstone's commentaries*, New York, 1851. vol. i. Book i. c. xvii. 3. P. 386.

§ Ib. Book ii. ch. xxi. vol. i. pp. 280, 281.

John Cabot's three sons had then reached their majority in 1496, which according to the law of England was fixed at twenty-one years, until which time they are under guardianship.\*

Therefore, Sebastian Cabot on March 5, 1495 must have been twenty-two years old at least, for his younger brother Sancius must have completed his twenty-first year; consequently, he must have been born before March 5, 1474. But John Cabot's letters of naturalization issued by the Venetian Senate March 28, 1476, say that for fifteen years he had had a permanent residence in Venice.† Therefore Sebastian who was at least two years old at that date must have been born at Venice.

Now let us resume our way.

After the general mention by Ayala that John Cabot had sailed every year from 1491 with the men of Bristol in search of the islands of Brazil and of the Seven Cities, the next notice we find of him is in the anonymous narrative inserted in Ramusio's collection. This relates that Sebastian Cabot, son of John, had said that "when his father left Venice many years before and went to live in England, he took him with him to the city of London, that he was very young, yet not so young but what he had learned humanities and the Sphere.

"My father died at the time that news came that Senor Don Christopher Columbus had discovered the coasts of the Indies and it was much talked of in all the court of King Henry VII, who was then reigning, and said to be rather a divine than a human thing to have found that way, never before known, of going to the east where the spices grow. From this I conceived a great desire, or rather a burning of the heart to do also something distinguished, and knowing by the nature of the Sphere, that if I sailed by way of the north-west wind I should have a shorter distance to find the Indies, I immediately made this thought of mine known to the King who was much pleased."‡

---

\* "Ad annum vigesimum primum et eo usque juvenes sub tutelam reponunt." J STIERAHOOK, *De Jure Suevorum et Gothorum libri duo*, Holmie, 1672—cited by Blackstone.

† "Quicumque annis xv. . . Venetiis continue habitasset." App. ii

‡ See App.



The reader must have remarked that the anonymous writer has fallen into two serious mistakes of fact, one, that he makes John die in 1493, whereas he was still living in 1498; the other, that he excludes him altogether from the glory of the English discoveries and gives all the credit of them to his son Sebastian. Further on we shall have a better opportunity to turn to this and other errors of fact in Ramusio's narrative, at present we merely call attention to it and pass on.

The beginning of the narrative is somewhat confused and, but for the certain information we have from other sources, we might be led to believe that John Cabot's departure from Venice, and his going to England, and then to London, were all in close succession. This indefiniteness of the narrative is easily explained by reflecting that Anonymous had his mind fixed on London, to tell us where and on what occasion Cabot got the starting-point of his glorious career of discovery. Hence he hardly touches in flying such matters as have no direct bearing on his plan, except so far as necessary to understand the main point of his narrative. But we, who know them from other sources, may enlarge on them and fill the gap in his narrative. Thus we understand that in a voyage of his from Bristol to London John Cabot had his son Sebastian with him, and that this was when the news of Christopher Columbus's discovery reached London.

Sebastian's young mind, sensitive to strong impressions, felt greatly moved at the discourses and the great marvel that was made at that event, the more so that he was not only a seaman's son, born in a city whose glory, power, and wealth were all on the sea, but because his natural inclination had led him to study geography, and in the profit he had derived from it he was in a better condition to appreciate the work and measure the greatness of the famous Genoese than many of his most enthusiastic panegyrists. It was those discourses which fanned the flame that was smouldering in his heart, and opened to his young fancy the boundless fields of future conflicts in the danger and glory of discovery. The year following Sebastian stamped his name with his father's in the first discovery of the American Continent.

## CHAPTER VIII.

*Expedition of 1498.*

WHAT number of vessels did the expedition of 1498 consist of?—Pasqualigo had told his brothers the year before that the King promised ten ships for the new expedition : Soncino wrote the Duke of Milan that there would be from fifteen to twenty.\* The letters patent of February 3 provide for a fleet of six ships : † but the Spanish ambassador, writing after the expedition had sailed, puts the number at five. ‡

There were but two according to Peter Martyr D'Anghiera, and Ramusio and Gomara agree with him ; but whereas Peter Martyr says they were manned at Cabot's expense.§ Ramusio says they were at the King's ; ¶ and Gomara for want of positive information confines himself to reporting that some said they were at the King's, and some at Cabot's own expense. ¶¶

It would seem a hopeless case to try to open a passage through such intricate entanglements of contradiction, and that the best plan would be to cut it short, sweeping aside all this encumbrance of thorns and brambles we find in the

\*PASQUALIGO :— "El re le a promesso a tempo novo navil x . . ." App. xi.

SONCINO :— "la Maestà de Re questo primo bono tempo gli vole mandare xv in xx navili."— App. xii.

† " . . . may take at his pleasure vi English Shippes . . ."— App. xiv.

‡ "El rey de Inglaterra embio cinco naos." App. xv.

Ayala repeats his colleague's words, as he does throughout : "Delarmada que hizo que fueron cinco naos . . ." App. xvi.

§ "Duo is sibi navigia propria pecunia in Britannia ipsa instruxit." App. xvii.

¶ "Subito feci intendere questo mio pensiero alla Maestà del Re, il qual . . . mi armò due caravelle." App. xix.

¶¶ "El qual armó dos navios en Inglaterra. . . a costa del Rey Enrique Septimo . . . otros disen que a su costa . . ." App. xxi.

way. But the matter deserves a little patient labor and perhaps the work spent on it will not be unprofitable. For one thing, I believe we must leave out Pasqualigo and Soncino entirely, for neither could do more than repeat the rumors then current. And even admitting that the King in the heat of enthusiasm named a rather high figure, a more calm and accurate consideration may have shown him that the number mentioned in the letters patent was sufficient. As to the other statements I think our labor will succeed best if we first untangle the snarl in the contradiction between Peter Martyr and Ramusio.

I have already said, and repeat it here, that Anghiera wrote and published his Decade in which he speaks of this expedition while Sebastian Cabot was a guest in his house. It is therefore to my mind undoubted that he received or verified his information from Cabot's own lips. But the anonymous whose discourse is reported by Ramusio also had his direct from Sebastian. How then account for the open contradiction in their words on this point? It would be absurd to suppose that Sebastian wanted to deceive either of them on this whilst giving him correct information on all other matters. We must then suppose that the memory of one or the other was at fault. Of which one? Of Ramusio's anonymous, because Anghiera wrote his information fresh from Cabot's lips; the anonymous on the contrary referred to his memory a long time after, and his information only reaches us at third hand through Ramusio, who besides, from the very commencement of his narrative, protests that *he does not feel himself capable of relating it* in all its particulars as they were told. As we have no reason for suspecting Sebastian's word, we must believe that the two ships were manned at Cabot's expense as Peter Martyr says, and not at the King's as reported by Ramusio. Another difficulty is here presented, how, namely, the King could draw back from all share in the equipment of the fleet after all his enthusiasm the year before. But the difficulty vanishes when we remember the miserly nature of Henry VII. An English historian says of him: "Avarice was, on the whole, his ruling passion; and he remains an instance, almost singular, of a

man placed in a high station, and possessed of talents for great affairs, in whom that passion predominated above ambition. So insatiable was his avarice. . . . By all these arts of accumulation, joined to a rigid frugality in his expense, he so filled his coffers, that he is said to have possessed in ready money the sum of one million eight hundred thousand pounds ; a treasure almost incredible, if we consider the scarcity of money in those times.”\* It may be well to recall here that when John Cabot had roused the whole people of England to enthusiasm by his discovery and was generally believed to have opened to them a new era of incalculable wealth, King Henry in token of the royal participation in the general rejoicing and of his munificent recognition of so great an event sent him a present of ten pounds sterling. What wonder is it that this miserly disposition, which on every grave occasion had often induced him to forget all regard for the majesty of his throne and his own personal decorum, should make him loath to draw out of his securely locked coffers the gold he had sought and guarded with such industry and care to venture it on an uncertain undertaking like that which Cabot was preparing for ? It must also be borne in mind that he was in constant necessity of money for combatting external and internal enemies who kept him in trouble more or less during the whole of his long reign, and obliged him to incur fresh expenses at the very time when this expedition was fitting out.†

Henry VII, hesitating between the avarice and necessity which held him back, and the advantage which urged him on, did as such characters usually do under such circumstances. He made a show of acting, and urging others, turned the merit of their movement in his favor, remaining in the meanwhile in the comfort of his own repose.

In this King's book of private expenses we read these entries :

—“ 22 March, 1498. To Landslot Thirkill of London, upon a prest, for his shipp going towards the Ilande 20 l.

\* Hume, *History of England*, ch. xxvi.

† Hume *Ib.*

—“Delivered to Launcelot Thirkill going towards the New Isle in prest, 20 l.

—“1 April 1498. To Thomas Bradley and Lancelot Thirkill going to the New Isle, 30 l.

—“To John Carter, going to the New Isle, in rewarde 2 ll.”\*

From these entries it seems to me evident that the aid of the King was reduced to helping by loans and encouraging such as wished to take part in the expedition ; and the loans correspond perfectly to the character of a miser, for they return principal and interest.

In fact it was natural for the Spanish ambassador to say the ships of the expedition were sent out by the King, for, no matter who fitted them out, it was still his order that made them sail. Now, to the two ships fitted out at Cabot's own expense, add three others fitted out by the merchants with the aid of loans from the King's private purse, and we have the precise number of five as given in the Spanish dispatch. I believe this was the actual number of ships that sailed: which is practically the number fixed by the letters patent of February 3, 1498, as many reasons, all very likely, may be found to account for the failure of one of the ships. But why did Cabot mention to Peter Martyr and Ramusio only the two vessels fitted out at his own expense ?

It is impossible to give a clear answer. It may be useful to remember that Cabot had been very little pleased with England and the support for his discoveries that he found there. Is it not possible that some feeling of irritation made him less just, so that, giving all the honor of the discovery to his own ships, he left to be regarded as mere accessories the three ships of the merchants, doubtless laden with articles and specimens of trade ?

The expedition sailed in the beginning of summer. † 300 persons went with it. ‡ It had two purposes ; to colonize the

\* v. App. x.

† “. . . il Re mi armò due Caravelle di tutto ciò che era di bisogno e fu . . . nel principio della state et cominciai a navigare verso maestro. . . .” App. xix.

‡ Primo tendens *cum hominibus tercentum* ad Septentrionem. Pietro Martire d'Anghiera. — App. xviii. — Llevo trezientos hombres . . . Gomara, App. xxi.

lands discovered on the previous voyage, the other, to proceed further till they reached the land of spices, and open commercial relations with it.

Peter Martyr does not give the year in which the expedition of Sebastian Cabot, of which he speaks, took place : but as he distinctly informs us that he was writing of it in 1515, and the whole Decade in which it is mentioned was printed the same year, it is certain that his account cannot refer to the voyage to the same places undertaken by Sebastian Cabot in 1516.\* Neither does Gomara tell us the year, but as his narrative is drawn so faithfully after Peter Martyr's that it may be called a translation of it, he must of necessity follow him, and if Anghiera takes us to 1498, Gomara must refer to the same year.

The matters related by Peter Martyr and Gomara meet the account given by Ramusio, but all is thrown into confusion by the date he gives of the voyage as in the year 1496. This is the third time that we have had to complain of Ramusio as a stumbling-block between our feet involving us in serious difficulties; on the two previous occasions we put off the question, but now it is time for us to step and inquire into it.

Ramusio relates that going with a friend to visit the celebrated Fracaſtoro at his villa of Caphi, he found him in the company of "a gentleman who was a great philosopher and mathematician, whose name *out of respect is not given.*" This philosopher, as the conversation turned upon the "plan of going to find the Indies by way of the north-west wind" made on this subject "a long and admirable discourse and amongst other things related a visit of his to Sebastian Cabot in Spain, and the accounts the latter had given him of his voyages and discoveries. Ramusio, who was then composing his great *Collec-*

---

\* Peter Martyr after telling of Cabot's expedition for the benefit of England, writes that he is about to commence another for the benefit of Spain and indicates the time by these words : "Martio mense *anni futuri* MDXVI puto ad explorandum discessurum." Even without them, there could be no doubt, for the Decade was printed in 1516, that is to say, during the expedition that Sebastian Cabot made that year to the western sea, before it was possible to have any information of its incidents or results. See the *Bibliotheca Americana Vetusissima* of H. HARRISSE, p. 153.

*tion of Voyages and Navigations*, inserted in it this discourse of the gentleman, putting it in the person of Cabot himself as the Anonymous had done.\*

We are not told in what year Anonymous met Sebastian. Avezac supposes it was in 1544 or 1545; † but as it is necessary to put Ramusio's visit to the Villa of Caphi in 1547 or 1548 (as Avezac admits), it does not seem to me that at the distance of only three or four years Anonymous could have said "finding myself *many years ago* in the city of Seville." I therefore think the conversation with Sebastian must have occurred some years earlier.

The story of Anonymous begins with John Cabot's departure from Venice and his settling at Bristol, thence running, or rather flying, he hints at what Sebastian Cabot had done for England, his arrival in Spain, the fresh glory acquired and the high office he held there; that is, in a little over a page, it includes a period of time extending from 1477 till beyond 1533, or a space of at least about sixty years, but probably more. This flight over such space of time could naturally allow him to make nothing more than a slight mention of events, but, however slight, the mention is most valuable to us in our great dearth of information concerning Cabot. That his testimony is correct and to be relied on is proved by the comparison we are able to make of his testimony on some points with that of others, and which shows them fully to agree. But when he descends to any details, especially of date, he has

\* Tomaso Giunti, who republished Ramusio's work in 1613, places after this Anonymous's name, I know not on what ground the addition of Mantuan. From this Marco Foscarini supposed it was the Mantuan Giangiacomo Bartolo (Ms. No. 6142 of the Imperial Library at Vienna, cited by C. Bullo, *La Vera Patria di Giovanni Caboto* p. xxviii). Foscarini's opinion has probably no other ground than that in Fracastoro's *Dialogue Navagerius sive de Poetica*, dedicated to Ramusio, one of the persons introduced in the dialogue is Joannes Jacobus Bardulo Mautuanus civis. Harrisse, p. 339. We have already seen, in Chapter VII, that Richard Eden durst assert that he was Galeazzo Bottrigari, Papal Nuncio to Spain, who died as early as 1518.

† *Revue Critique d'Histoire et Littérature*. Premier semestre, 1870, p. 265. The approximate time of the visit to the Villa of Caphi is taken from these words of Anonymous in speaking of the Portuguese: "*this last battle of theirs with the King of Cambay.*" As it was fought in 1546, the expression *this* could not have been applied to it later than 1547, or at most 1548.

made the greatest confusion possible. We have already seen that he makes John Cabot die about the time that Christopher Columbus returned from his discovery, that is, in 1493, whereas he was still alive in 1498. We shall soon find him placing the departure of his son Sebastian for Spain, to enter the service of the Catholic Kings, immediately after his return from the voyage of 1498; whereas it is proved that he did not go to Spain before the death of Henry VII, that is, not before 1509;\* or rather as we shall see, he did not in fact go there till 1512. He further says that he went to Spain to serve the Catholic King and *Queen Isabella*; when that great woman had been dead since 1504.†

Such confounding of dates is a most serious fault in an historian, but in this particular case of Sebastian Cabot's voyage, if we consider the matter carefully, Ramusio's fault is a very slight one, and most probably none at all. For, in the first place, we must remember that neither he nor Anonymous whose discourse he is reporting, ever had any intention of relating a sketch of Sebastian Cabot's life, so that it would be necessary to fit its parts in with due division of time and years; neither had any other view than that of relating the voyage of discovery which Sebastian Cabot had made to the northern parts of America. The whole story is, therefore, directed to this purpose, and what there is over and above and not strictly relating thereto, serves only to tell us how Sebastian came to be in England to make the voyage, and why he did not continue the work begun. In the second place, we must remember that when Anonymous related his story in Fracastoro's Villa many years had elapsed since his conversation with Sebastian Cabot in Spain.‡ Now that after so long a

---

\* "Familiarem habeo domi Cabotum. Vocatus namque ex Britannia a rege nostro Catholico post Henrici maioris Britanniae regis mortem . . ." P. Martyris de Angheria. De rebus Oceanicis. Dec. iiii. lib. vi. Henry VII died in 1509.

† "My father died at the time that news came that Señor Don Christopher Columbus the Genoese, had discovered the shore of the Indies. . . I resolved to go back to England. . . where on arriving I found very great commotions. . . on account of which I came to Spain to the Catholic King and to *Queen Isabella*, who received me and gave me a good appointment." App. xix.

‡ "And being in the city of Seville some years ago." App. xix.



time a man of sense, as he was, should repeat a story with substantial correctness is very possible where the matter treated of is one that greatly interests him ; but it would be a marvel if he carried the same correctness into the details, especially if these details are not essential to the substance of the story. Add to this, that Sebastian Cabot's story, to reach us, has not only had to pass through the memory of Anonymous, but also through Ramusio's. May it not have lost something in this last passage ? Ramusio himself answers by the following declaration which he makes before beginning the story of Anonymous.

“ I do not pretend,” he says, “ to write his discourse with *as full details* as I heard it, for that would require other skill and memory than I possess ; still I will try to give a *summary* or, *as it were, the heads* of what *I can remember.*”\* If this does not suffice, hear what he says just afterwards, still speaking of the discourse of Anonymous : “ With regard to the Mediterranean Sea, I *seem to remember* that he touched upon I know not what voyage that might be made on it with great profit, but to what place *has entirely escaped my memory.*” † Now, if Ramusio entirely forgot all about a voyage of very great profit that could be made right here at home, on the Mediterranean, is it to be wondered at that his memory should slip on a detail concerning a voyage made more than half a century before in seas entirely unknown ?

To account for the mistake of the date as 1496, let us go back to the visit which Anonymous made to Sebastian Cabot at Seville. ‡ The great man receives his visitor with all courtesy, and yielding to his request gives him a summary ac-

\* App. xix.

† Ib. “ Il quale ragionamento, egli dice, non mi basta l'animo di potere scrivere così *particolarmente* com'io lo udì, perchè vi saria di bisogno altro ingegno, et altra memoria, che non è la mia, pur mi sforzerò *sommarimente* e *come per capi* di recitar quel che *mi potrò ricordare*. A proposito del Mar Mediterraneo mi *par ricordare* che toccasse anche di non so che viaggio che si potria fare in quello di grandissimo proposito, ma a che *parte emmi al tutto fuggito dalla memoria.*”

‡ Ib.

count of the voyages and discoveries he had made. As this account included in the brief space of a conversation the course of many years and events, he was obliged to mention the most important things and pass lightly over the rest.

For us seeking to reconstruct the story of those events from the few remaining fragments, it is of greatest importance to fix dates ; but this importance did not exist for Cabot who was narrating facts, not fixing dates, nor for Anonymous who on his side had special reasons for wishing to know the facts. The intention of both was to relate and listen to the direction of voyages, obstacles met with, what was seen and done ; and why the undertaking did not answer its purpose. Of all this we find a rapid mention in the account of Anonymous. There was one thing that had no interest for Anonymous, though it had much for Sebastian, and he could not have omitted it. Any one who has read autobiographies, even those of great men, must have observed how they dwell on all the details of their first steps in the career of their greatness, and the difficulties they met and overcame, whilst they are concise enough, and often sparing, to the reader's regret, with the facts of the greatest and most general importance. For we all judge the importance of things by their impression on us rather than their intrinsic value. This is so general that it has no need of examples to prove it. Now, in the first days of his career as navigator and discoverer, what must have made a deep impression on Sebastian Cabot's mind, so that it would be in his thoughts and he would be sure to speak of it to any one asking for the story of those first years of his life ? It must have been the patent by which King Henry VII authorized his father and brothers and himself to sail on new discoveries. Who can say how John Cabot had struggled to procure that longed-for patent ? How many stairs he went up, what repulses he endured, how often, when he believed he had succeeded, he had to begin anew ? To Sebastian, whose youth and taste inclined him strongly to the sea, this continued alternating between hope and discouragement must have been much more painful than to his father ; and in proportion to the anxiety of deferred hope must have

been the pleasure of receiving the patent. That day opened clear and sure to him the road of discovery, and it was impossible for its date ever to be erased from his memory. He could not have failed to mention that starting-point to one questioning him concerning his glorious career. It seems to me most natural (and therefore true) that he commenced the account of his discoveries from the year in which the royal patent authorized them, that is, from 1496. His auditor was not thinking of that, but of the voyage, and when he heard this given as the starting-point, he took it for the starting-point of his voyage instead of that of his career.

Or it may be supposed with no less probability that Anonymous caught the true sense of Sebastian Cabot's words and so repeated them, and Ramusio confounded the two events. Ramusio himself leads me to suppose this, for in his first edition he precedes the date of 1496 with the words, *saving the truth*. "The King . . . fitted me up two caravels with every thing needed, and this was, saving the truth, in 1496."\* So that Ramusio himself was in doubt whether he was correctly reporting or had rightly understood the words of Anonymous. In subsequent editions, for what reason I know not, this eloquent little parenthesis is omitted. The date, then, of 1496, given by Ramusio can create no difficulty; and as in his account he agrees with the narrative of Peter Martyr d' Anghiera, it must be certain that they are both speaking of the same voyage, and as that mentioned by Peter Martyr refers to 1498, we must place Ramusio's in the same year.

Having thus cleared our path of the first obstacle that confronted us, let us see what we can put together from the different accounts. We know from Ayala's dispatch that the fleet had hardly got to sea when it was struck by a violent storm, and one of the ships was so damaged that it went back for safety to the coast of Ireland. There was a Friar Buil on this vessel; most likely a religious sent out for service among the colonies whom it was intended to leave in the lands newly dis-

---

\* "Il Re . . . mi armò due caravelle di tutto ciò che era di bisogno et fu, *salvo il vero*, nel 1496." P. 402. — The first edition was published in Venice by the heirs of Lucantonio Giunti, in the year MDL.

covered.\* Ramusio says in general terms that the fleet on leaving England took a course to the north-west.† Gomara more definitely, that it sailed towards Iceland.‡ Between this island and Bristol there was some commerce in relation to fish; and Biddle thinks that Cabot very prudently regarded it as a place where he could give his men a resting-place on the long voyage on which he was taking them, and avoid the fatigue which its excessive length might produce on the sailors in the watery solitude.§

Why, instead of sailing due west, did they take a course so far to the north? It is necessary to pause a little to answer this question, in order that our story may proceed with clearness and without obstacles. The Cabots had believed they had arrived at the continent of Asia on their previous discovery. But later, whether the effect of information coming from Spain concerning the discoveries of Christopher Columbus, which told only of new islands, or a more mature and calm study of the stories of Marco Polo, the only authority that could be had on the extreme eastern regions of Asia, who related that in front of those countries there was a long stretch of islands in the sea, or whatever else it may have been (for it is not possible for us to know all these particulars, and it would not help us if it were); the fact is and of this there is no question, that a change had been effected in Cabot's mind in regard to the real character of the places he had discovered, and in accordance with this change were his new aspirations and the new purposes of his third expedition.

Admitting, then, that the land explored on the previous voyage was an island, it naturally followed that the conti-

\* App. xvi.—It is strange that the friar who went with Christopher Columbus to evangelize the New World was also named Buil. HARRISSE asks: "Might he not be the same?" p. 102. If so, it must have been shame or remorse that induced him to return to the New World, there to wash away the dark stain contracted there by his infamous conduct towards Christopher Columbus. See TARDUCCI'S *Life of Christopher Columbus*. Book 1. ch. 31.

† App. xix.

‡ Prometio . . . de ir por el norte al Cataio . . . y camino la buelta de Islandia—App. xxi.

§ *Memoir*, p. 23.

ment must be beyond; for no one had as yet suspected that the lands which were discovered belonged to a new continent, it was still the universal conviction that beyond the Atlantic must be the continent of Asia. The aim of the present voyage was therefore limited to finding among these islands a channel giving passage to the mainland. On the previous voyage they had explored a long tract of the coast of Labrador without finding its end. On this, to avoid the necessity of repeating the tiresome sailing along the part of Labrador which they had seen the year before, from the time of leaving they go up well to the north-west, and then change to due west, sure of finding an open sea north of the land along which they had coasted the previous years, or that at least they should not have far to sail before they came to the end of the coast. On reaching the mainland beyond the islands, it was their intention to sail south until they came opposite to the island of Cipango, which they imagined to be the centre of the wealth and treasures of the East. "Master John," writes Soncino, "has set his mind on higher things, because he thinks that after reaching that place he can sail always close to the shore, further towards the east, till he is opposite to an island which he calls Cipango, situated in the equatorial region, and where all the spices and jewels of the world come from."\* And Ramusio more distinctly yet, "Cabot expected to find no land till he came to that where Cathay is, and then from there to turn towards the Indies; but after a few days he found that it trended to the north, at which sight he was infinitely disappointed; he returned along the coast to see if he could find a gulf to change the direction, but came to none till he reached fifty-six degrees under our pole, where seeing that the coast turned eastwards, he went back in despair to explore the same coast on the side towards the south, still with the hope of finding a passage to the Indies."†

---

\* "Messer Zoanne ha posto l' animo ad maggior cosa perche pensa, da quello loco occupato andarsene sempre a Riva Riva più verso al Levante, tanto chel sia al opposto de una isola, da lui chiamata Cipango, posta in la regione equinoctiale dove crede che nascano tutte le speciarie del mundo et anche le gioie." App. xiii.

† "Caboto si pensava di non trovar terra, se non quella dove è il Cataio, e di

Peter Martyr says nothing of the height of latitude reached on the voyage, but tells us, "that they went so far north that in the month of July they found immense masses of ice floating in the sea, and *the day was almost continual*."\* Gomara gives the same details as Peter Martyr with the addition of the degree reached which, instead of being the fifty-sixth as Ramusio has it, he says was the fifty-eighth.†

So we are again in difficulty and must work our way through contradictory accounts. The reader has probably observed that in Ramusio's account there is one point where he runs against a truth of fact. The fifty-sixth degree, which he gives as the final point to which Cabot sailed, takes us right on the coast of Labrador, which instead of trending east, trends to the north-west, just in the direction that Cabot had supposed. On the other hand, the circumstances mentioned by Peter Martyr, of the masses of floating ice, and the almost continual day are absolutely irreconcilable with the latitude as given by Ramusio; for although it may not be impossible to see some stray icebergs in the sea that bathes the coast of Labrador, they are never numerous enough to make navigation difficult or dangerous, certainly not in July, as happened to Cabot. Nor is the night in that latitude so short as to warrant the expression that the day *was almost continual*. The same difficulty with a slight difference is found with Gomara's fifty-eighth degree. The skein seemed so tangled as to leave no hope of being able to undo it; but an acute remark of Zurla's has put its head in our hands; and as his suggestion

là poi voltare verso le Indie, ma in capo di alquanti giorni la discoperse che correva verso tramontana, la qual vista gli fu di infinito dispiacere; e pure andando dietro la costa per vedere se poteva trovare qualche golfo che voltasse non vi fu mai ordine, finchè andato sino a gradi cinquanta sei sotto il nostro polo, vedendo che quivi la costa voltava verso levante, disperato di trovarlo se ne tornò a dietro a riconoscere ancora la detta costa dalla parte verso l'equinoziale sempre con intenzione di trovar passaggio alle Indie." App. xix.

\* "... primo tendens... ad septentrionem donec etiam Julio mense vastas repererit glaciales moles pelago natantes et lucem fere perpetuam..." App. xviii.

† "... hasta se poner en cinquanta y ocho grados. Aunque el dize mucho mas contando como avia por el mes de Julio tanto frio y pedaços de zelo que no oso passar mas adelante, y que los dias eran grandissimos y quasi sin noche y las noches muy claras." App. xxi.

agrees perfectly with the places and fact to which he refers, it seems to me reasonable to accept and follow it.\* He observed that to have such length of daylight as to make the day appear almost uninterrupted it is necessary to go at least ten degrees higher than Ramusio puts it, and reach  $66^{\circ}$ . There, in fact, enormous masses of ice may be met with even in the middle of July. These circumstances should suffice to convince us that there is an error in the number 56 given by Ramusio, and that it should be 66. But in addition to the circumstances mentioned by Zurla, there is a third which completes the agreement throughout. This last I think should be examined at some length to remove all question as to Zurla's supposition. Gomara has told us that on leaving Bristol the expedition sailed towards Iceland. If we cast our eyes over the map, and from the southern point of Iceland along which Cabot sailed with his fleet we follow his course to the west till we come to land, *after a few days*, as Ramusio says, we find it, and it is Greenland in the same latitude as we found Iceland, for its lowest latitude  $63^{\circ} 20'$ , and Cape Farewell the extreme southern limit of Greenland extends to  $59^{\circ} 43'$ , and the short distance between them agrees perfectly with Ramusio's expression, "after a few days." Cabot, who *expected to find no land till he came to that where Cathay is*, is *infinitely disappointed* at this sight. The coast of Greenland where we have arrived coming direct from Iceland *trends to the north*, precisely as Ramusio expresses it; and Cabot returns along the coast *to see if he can find a gulf to change the direction*. But after a long stretch of land the coast of Greenland turns to the north-east; wherefore Cabot, according to Ramusio, *seeing that the coast turned eastwards, in despair of finding a gulf, turns back*. Here every thing fits into Ramusio's account; the only variance is as to the point where the land turns to the east; for Ramusio says it is at  $56^{\circ}$ , while Greenland shows it to be at  $66^{\circ}$ , just where *great masses of ice float in the sea, and the day is almost continuous*, as D' Anghiera says.

---

\* Placido Zurla, *Di Marco Polo e degli altri Viaggiatori Veneziani più illustri*, vol. ii, p. 278. Venezia; Fuchs, 1818. True, Zurla confounds the present voyage with that made in 1516, but that takes nothing from the acuteness of his view in regard to this particular.

After this, can we hesitate to correct the 56° of Ramusio by substituting 66° as proposed by Zurla?

With these matters cleared up, the course and plan of Sebastian Cabot seem to me to become plain enough.

The historian cannot, like the romancer, give free flight to his fancy, but, if he could, what things he would have to think and to say of that "infinite disappointment," and that "despair" with which Cabot in the narrative of Anonymous pictures his state of mind when he saw the land betray his forecast and hope, and he was compelled to decide on going back! Those masses of ice and that almost perpetual day can make no great impression on us, accustomed as we are to so many tales of navigation in the polar seas, and tolerably acquainted with the lay of the land and the character of the country; but facing Cabot and his companions there was the dread of the unknown. How far would that land extend? and where would it end? Would it leave some passage open? or would it continue without a break till it joined on to Norway shutting in the whole sea? This apprehension of a continuous extension of American territory till it united with the northern regions of Europe may seem strange to us with our knowledge of the geography, but it was most natural it should present itself to Sebastian Cabot's mind. So true is this, that the XVI century was half over and the question whether North America joined Norway or left open a passage by sea, was still vexing the minds of geographical historians. "Why," wrote Ramusio in 1550, "have the Princes not been able to make discoveries to the North where the land of Labrador is, and ascertain whether it joins Norway, or there is water there?"\* Another thought, not less harrowing, presented itself to Cabot's mind. For, even if there should be an open sea there, if these enormous masses of floating ice rendered navigation difficult and dangerous in the middle of July, what would it be when the season

---

\* "Perchè non potevan gli Principi. . . far. . . . scoprire verso tramontana dove è la terra del Lavoratore, et veder se ella si congiunge con la Norvegia, over se vi è mare. . . ." *Raccolta*, vol. i, p. 414. B.



was more advanced and they sailing further north? "Seeing that the coast turned eastwards, in despair of finding any gulf to change the direction he went back to explore the same coast on the side towards the south, still with the hope of finding a passage to the Indies; and he went as far as what at present they call Florida."\*

Another difficulty meets us here. If Sebastian Cabot came to the coast of Greenland and from there sailed down as far as Florida, looking for an opening, how did he happen not to enter the broad gulf which opens between Greenland and Labrador? The most natural answer to this question seems to me, that he supposed the new land seen on this voyage was the continuation of what he had seen the year before and sailed along its coast for 300 leagues; and that so supposing, he did not sail close to the shore from the point he had reached in Greenland, but to save time, he took the course, with his ships, straight for Labrador, and so did not observe the broad gulf which he left on his right. However, with such dearth of information we cannot pretend to reconstruct the whole course of his navigations: it is much if we succeed in fixing a point here and there. Peter Martyr D'Anghiera to indicate the place where Cabot stopped his exploration, uses these words: "He proceeded so far south as to reach nearly the latitude of the Strait of Gibraltar, and so far west as to leave Cuba on his left and nearly in the same meridian."†

The precise indication given by Peter Martyr of the latitude as the same as that of the Strait of Gibraltar, leaves no doubt that the most southern point reached by Cabot must be placed along the shore of Chesapeake Bay. If Ramusio's Anonymous mentions Florida as the extreme point, it is be-

---

\* "Vedendo dunque che la costa voltava verso levante, disperato di trovare un qualche golfo che voltasse, se ne tornò a dietro a riconoscere ancora la detta costa dalla parte verso l' equinoziale sempre con intenzione di trovar passaggio alle Indie; e venne sino a quella che chiamano al presente Florida." Ramusio. See App. xix.

† "Tetenditque tantum ad meridiem, littore sese incurvante, ut Herculei fretus latitudinis fere gradus aequarit: ad occidentemque profectus tantum est, Cubam insulam a leva longitudine graduum pene parem habuerit."—App. N. xviii.

cause nothing was at that time known of the extent of that peninsula to the Northwards, and it was very easy to make a mistake and include under that name not only the peninsula proper, but also the coast region of Georgia and the Carolinas.\* Arriving at the Chesapeake he was obliged to return to England for want of provisions.† Did the colonization, which we said was one of the purposes of the expedition, take place? That besides the discovery of new lands colonization was also intended, is clearly stated in the documents. In the first place, the number of three hundred persons embarked on the ships is too great for a mere expedition of discovery, and can only be explained on the idea of a colonization: and the words of Pasqualigo in his letter, "These English follow him like fools, but let *as many as he can get*, and even some of our knaves too, go with him,"‡ can have no other meaning than this, of a colonization. The same sense must be given to the words of the second patent giving permission to leave to "all suche maisters, maryners, pages, and *our subjects* as of their owen free wille woll goo and passe with hym in the same shippes to the seid Lande or Iles."§

Still more definite is Gomara's account which says: "He promised King Henry to go to Cathay by the north, and bring spices from there in less time than the Portuguese by the south. He went also for the purpose of ascertaining *what sort of lands the Indies would be for peopling*: he took with him three hundred men."||

Finally, Soncino in so many words says that it was intended to found a colony. "It is reported that the said majesty will soon fit out some ships and moreover will give them all the criminals, and they will go to found a colony in that country,

\* L. Hughes, l. c. p. 257.

† "Et mancomi già la vettovaglia, presi partito di ritornarmene in Inghilterra."—Ramusio, App. xix.

‡ "Sti Inglesi li vano drieri a modo pazi e pur *ne volese tanti quanti n'avrebbe con lui*, et etiam molti dei nostri furfanti." See App. xi.

§ App. xiv.

|| "I prometio al rey Enrique de yr por el norte al Cataio y traer de alla especias en menos tiempo que Portugueses, por el sur. Y va tambien *por saber que tierra eran las Indias para poblar*. Llevo trezientos hombres." See App. xxi.

by which means they hope to do a larger business in spices at London than is done at Alexandria." \* There was then undoubtedly an intention of colonizing the new lands. What came of it we know not. It is supposed that an attempt at colonization was made in the land of Labrador, and Gomara seems to give good grounds for this supposition when he says that Cabot made a stop at the land of the Bacallaos.† It would also seem to be confirmed by what the Venetian ambassador to Portugal, Pietro Pasqualigo wrote on October 19, 1501, to his brothers, on the return of Gaspar Cortereal's expedition, only eleven days after it entered the Portuguese harbors: "They have brought here VII, between men and women and boys.... in their land they have no iron ; but they make knives out of some stones ; and likewise heads of arrows. And they have also brought from there a piece of a *broken gilt sword* which certainly *appears to have been made in Italy* : one of the boys had in his ears *two silver rings* which seem without doubt to have been made at Venice"‡ True, Pasqualigo refers in his letter to another voyage made by Cortereal the year before, § and so the articles from Europe found in the possession of those savages might have come from his own ships on the previous expedition ; but as Cortereal in 1501 went further north than the land he discovered the year before, and consequently nearer to the English discoveries, and all those articles were of Venetian, and not Portuguese manufact-

\* "A tempo novo se dice che la Maestà prefata armarà alcuni navilij, et ultra li darà tutti li malfattori et andarano in quello paese a fare una colonia, mediante la quale sperano de fare in Londres maggior fondaco de speciarie che sia in Alexandria." App. xiii.

† "Rehaziendose en los Baccalaos. App. xxi.

‡ "Hanno conducti qui vii, tra homini et femene et putti de quelli. . . nella terra loro non hanno ferro ; ma fanno cortelli de alcune pietre ; et similmente ponte de freze. Et quilli anchora hanno porta de la uno pezo de spada rotta dorata la qual certo *par facta in Italia*: uno putto de questi haveva ale orecchie *dui lodini* de arzeno, che senza dubbio *pareno sta facti a Venetia*." This letter is printed in a book, now very rare, published at Vicenza in 1507, under the title, "Paesi novamente retrovati et novo mondo da Alberico Vesputio Florentino intitolato."

§ "Credono che sia terra ferma la qual continua in un' altra terra che *lano pasato*, fo discoperta sotto la tramontana." lb.

ure, it would seem more natural to suppose they came from the ships of Cabot, who, as a Venetian and sailing from a city where there was a most flourishing colony of Venetian merchants, would obviously have carried many articles imported from his own city and by his own countrymen.

The asperity of the climate probably rendered the attempt abortive. But the climate was not likely to be the main consideration: many more persons than had been counted on having remained on board of the vessels probably caused a diminution of provisions, which prevented Cabot from further exploring the southern coast, for the ships being furnished with a year's supply it is hard to understand how they should have run short in three or four months.\*

And here, since we have got back to speaking of Labrador again, I will give somewhat in detail the only record which remains of this voyage: and perhaps the reader will not be sorry to take a little breath after the tiresome journey he has been making amongst notes and discussions. Moreover the brief episode I shall relate belongs partly to the domain of history, for it was the origin of the name *Tierra de Bachallaos* being then given to what was afterwards, as it is now, called Labrador.† Peter Martyr has preserved it for us, and it relates to bears' fishing.

He relates, then, that the place was wonderfully full of

\* "El Rey. . . embio cinco naos . . . fueron proveydos por un ano."  
—Puebia, App. xv.—. . . . "fueron avitallados pour un ano." Ayala, App. xvi.

André Thevet says positively that Sebastian Cabot landed full three hundred men, but they nearly all died of the cold, although it was in the month of July. "Vray est, qu'il mist bien trois cens hommes en terre du coste d'Irlande au nord ou le froid fist mourir presque toute sa compagnie encore que ce fust au mois de juillet." (App. xxiv). But his testimony is too open to suspicion, for he gets his information concerning Cabot at second hand, and it is certainly not for his care in collecting it that he merits praise. We have an immediate proof of this in the very surname of Cabot which he shamefully distorts by calling him Babate. And here, without doubt, in speaking of the attempted colonization he commits the mistake of taking for colonists the whole three hundred who sailed in the ships of the expedition.

† Biddle, on page 246, says that the name of Labrador (Laborer) was invented by Cortereal and the Portuguese slavo-merchants to indicate that this Northern coast produced men wonderfully fitted for labor.

bears that were harmless to men, and they always saw a number of them seated on the shore awaiting game. The sea in front swarmed with big fishes so closely packed together that at times it was difficult for vessels to force a way through them,\* and in gliding hither and thither in their play they sometimes got into shallow water near the beach. Then the bears, which had lain in wait on the bank with an eye always fixed on the surface of the water, sprang into the sea. Their sudden appearance and the splash in the water, with their furious bounding to one side and the other, put the happy shoal of fishes in great trouble and disorder. In their confusion and anxiety to get into deep water, they swam against and interfered with each other, and hindered their escape, so that the bears were able to pounce upon them and fix their strong claws between their scales. Then followed the strangest and most beautiful contest. The fish made every effort to free himself from the clutch that held him fast, and struggling, turning, sliding in every direction, raised around him a cloud of spray, within which in transparent coloring was seen the enormous beast of a bear pulled this way and that, now under and now above the water, but always hanging on to his prey till the fish, his strength exhausted, and overcome with pain, gave up entirely and the bear's victory was complete. Then he drew the fish to the bank, where extended at full ease on the sand, he made a most savory repast. Our navigators were present at one of these contests and enjoyed it greatly, and while it lasted their laughter and shouts from the ships made accompaniment to the various turnings of the battle, and hailed the final triumph.

The indigenes, questioned by signs, made known that they called these fishes *Baccalao*, and from this word Cabot named the land in front of him the Land of the Baccalaos (Codfish).†

---

\* "Ut etiam illi navigia interdum detardarent." Peter Martyr, dec. iii, lib. vi.

† "Bacallaos Cabottus ipse terras illas appellavit, eo quod in eorum pelago tantam repererit magnorum quorundam piscium, tinnos aemulantium sic vocatorum ab indigenis, multitudinem, ut etiam illi navigia interdum retardarent." Pietro Martire, ib.

## CHAPTER IX

*A Period of Obscurity.*

THE news of the bad result of the enterprise must have been most unpleasant for the English, and their dejection upon its return equal to the enthusiasm on its departure the year before. It was like passing suddenly from the brightness of the noonday sun to midnight darkness. What a load of criticism, ridicule, and invective must have been heaped on the young Sebastian, who had succeeded his father in the command of the expedition! For, without doubt, those who had promoted and aided the expedition threw the blame of its want of success on the too great want of age and experience on the part of its leader. There must have been great lament for the loss of John, whose bravery and experience would in their opinion have secured a happy issue of the undertaking. From this general feeling the poor young man's reputation must have received a blow that caused him to disappear wholly from view, and fourteen years passed before he reappears openly shining in the light of day.

In the discourse of Sebastian Cabot reported by Ramusio's Anonymous, he says that upon returning to England, he found great commotions of the people aroused and war, and that there was no further thought of navigating the northern seas, and therefore he left that country to seek better fortune elsewhere.\* In those words he, no doubt, alludes to the various attempts of the pretended Duke of York to wrest from Henry VII the sceptre lost by the House whose name he had assumed; to the support which James IV of Scotland gave his

---

\* “. . .presi partito di ritornarmene in Inghilterra, dove giunto trovai grandissimi tumulti di popoli sollevati et della guerra in Scotia . . .” App. xix.

pretensions in open war; and to the repeated rising of the people in Cornwall, driven to despair by the excessive burdens imposed on them and the cruelty of those who were employed to collect the payments.\* But it was not on his return that all these events disturbed England, nor were they all at once; they did not last long, and victory always smiled without much difficulty on Henry's arms. Fourteen years passed between his return from the voyage and his going to Spain, so that these disturbances could not be called the direct cause of his leaving England. Neither is it strictly true that there was no further thought of navigation in search of new lands and seas; for some, even though few, undertakings of this nature are recorded. In Sebastian's words, then, rather than the expression of his precise motive, we have the sad echo of what in that long interval passed in his mind, when the idea of discovery was greatly exciting his thoughts, and he beheld the possibility of carrying out his plans continually put off by the disorders that disturbed Henry's reign.

But during that long period of fourteen years, did he remain a calm spectator of events, waiting patiently for times more favorable to his ideas? Even if we were told so, we could not believe it. A man who in early youth had given such vigorous proofs of activity, and whom again in mature life, and on to extreme old age, we find most extraordinarily active, it is not possible that in the most vigorous period of life, when even the least inclined to work feel at times the desire and necessity of moving, acting, stirring at some thing, should remain calmly idle; it is contrary to nature. But what did he do?

Biddle, at this place, cites a book of historical and topographical notices of the City of Bristol, which, under the year 1499, quotes from an old almanac of that city, the following passage: "This yeare, Sebastian Cabot borne in Bristol, proffered his service to King Henry for discovering new contries; which *had noe greate or favorable entertainment of the King, but he with no extraordinary preparation set fort from Bristol, and*

---

\* Hume's *History of England*, ch. xxv and xxvi.

made greate discoveries.”\* It is superfluous to remark how little reliance can be placed on the testimony of almanacs; nor does the ingenious American attach any importance to it, in an absolute way, especially as the chronicler shows clearly by the last words that he refers to one of Cabot’s other voyages; yet all erroneus as it is, Biddle thinks he can obtain from it a gleam of light amid the obscurity of those years. Cabot had broken off his exploration of the American coast for want of provisions; and he must naturally have wished to resume it at the point where he had left off, until he found the wished-for strait. It would therefore seem very likely that he was applying to the King, proposing new plans for resuming the undertaking, and that the King did not look favorably on his proposals: very likely that Cabot was treating not only with the crown, but with private individuals to form a company for a new attempt, but found the door shut on this side also; that then urged by the interior force that led him to resume the sea, he got together a small expedition from his own means, and in some sort of a vessel which he was able to fit out, rushed again into adventures on the unknown path; which would very well agree with what the almanac says: “with no extraordinary preparation set forth from Bristol.”

This supposition corresponds very well with what Navarrete relates of Ojeda: “It is certain that on his first voyage he found some Englishmen in the vicinity of Coquibacoa.”† Ojeda sailed from Spain May 25, 1499, and was absent only one year.‡ Therefore the dates of Cabot’s departure from Bristol and Ojeda’s from Spain would very well permit the meeting mentioned of the English and Spaniards. If Navarrete’s information is correct, there is every probability that these English were led by Sebastian Cabot as the only man in England at that time who was capable of conducting such expedition:

---

\* From Seyer “Memoirs historical and Topographical of Bristol and its Neighbourhood,” p 258. Biddle, Memoirs, Bk. i, p. 91, 92.

† “Lo cierto es que Hojeda en su primer viage hallò á ciertos Ingleses por las inmediaciones de Coquibacoa.” Navarrete, iii, p. 41. Coquibacoa is on the Gulf of Maracaibo, on the northern coast of Venezuela.

‡ Navarrete, *ib.*



this is so true that when two years later a new expedition was planned the Portuguese were called on to direct it.

These Portuguese were three, John and Francis Fernandes, and John Gonsalvez, gentlemen from the Azores ; with them were associated three merchants of Bristol, Richard Warde, Thomas Ashurst, and John Thomas. Their patent, dated March 19, 1501, is substantially the same as usually given for such undertakings, and does not require to be particularly considered. Only one thing in it is necessary to observe, this is that the English monarch in granting to the three Portuguese a monopoly of trade with the newly-discovered countries, covertly, but with clear meaning, refers to the former concessions made to John Cabot and his sons, to deprive them of all force and authority contrary to the privileges now granted to the three Portuguese and their associates. Notwithstanding, says the decree, the pretensions any foreigner or foreigners may set up under pretext or color of former grants.\*

Nothing is known, or is for our purpose important to know, of the result of their enterprise. But one should be glad to know the reason why Sebastian Cabot's name is not mentioned. Biddle attributes it to his being absent on the American coast, again following up his explorations.† But if Henry consented to the request of these Portuguese, why should he not have listened to Cabot's? It can only be because he asked for aid as well as authorization ; whereas the three Portuguese declared they assumed all the risk of their undertaking ; and not only assured to the Crown a portion of the eventual profits of their discoveries, but agreed after ten years to cede all rights they might have to them, and leave England their absolute owner.‡

---

\* " Et quod nullus ex subditis nostris eos eorum aliquem de et super possessione et titulo suis de et ex dictis terris firmis, insulis et provinciis se aequaliter contra voluntatem suam expellat quovis modo seu aliquis extraneus aut aliqui extranei virtute aut colore alicuius concessionis nostrae sibi Magno Sigillo Nostro per antea factae." Rymer, Foedera, T. V. P. iv, p. 186.

† Biddle, l. c. p. 76.

‡ " . . . concessimus et licentiam dedimus . . . Ricardo Warde, Thomæ

We find another grant signed by Henry VII on the 9th of December, 1502, in favor of Hugh Elliot, Thomas Ashurst, merchants, of Bristol, and John Gonsalvez and Francis Fernandes, Portuguese ;\* but we only make this mention of it to prove that Sebastian Cabot's expression that "there was no further thought of navigating the northern seas" was not correct. England had her eye always on the benefits to be procured from these discoveries ; but Henry's enormous avarice prevented his taking a direct part in them, though he did not refuse the work of others so long as they took all the risks, and divided the profits.

Moreover, the connection between England and the new lands was never broken off. A sure proof of this are the notes of presents found from time to time in King Henry's book of expenses, presents always worthy of his superlative avarice, but showing nevertheless that he paid some attention to the affairs of these new possessions. Thus we find on January 7, 1502, a note of the expense of five pounds to some men from Bristol who went to these places ; September 30, 1503, thirty pounds to Bristol merchants who had been in the same parts ; November 17, the same year, one pound to one who had brought some hawks from there ; and April 8, 1504, two pounds to a priest going to the New Land ; and September (?) 25, 1505, five pounds sterling to some Portuguese who had brought him cats and popinjays from there.†

Asshurst, et Johanni Thomas, mercatoribus villæ nostræ Bristolliaë ac dilectis nobis Johanni Ferdinandus, Francisco Fernandus, et Johanni Gunsolus, armigeris in insulis de Surrys sub obediencia Regis Portugalliaë oriundis . . . navigandi et se transferendi ad omnes partes sub banneris et insigniis nostris . . . . . *ad custus et onera dicti Ricardi et aliorum prædictorum*, vadiis et stipendiis prout inter eos poterunt concordare ad inveniendum." Rymer, *ib.*

\* Rymer, *Fœdera*, L. xiii. p. 37.

† "1502. Jan. 7. To men of Bristoll that founde Thisle. . . . L. 5.

"1503. Sept. 30. To the merchants of Bristoll that ave bene in the Newefounde Launde, L. 20.

"1503. Nov. 17. To one that brought hawkes from the Newfounded Island. 1 L.

"1504. April 8. To a preste that goeth to the new Ilande, L. 2.

"1505. Sept. (?) 25. To portyngales that brought popyngais and catts of the mountaigne with other Stuf to the Kinges grace, L. 5."

Every thing, then, confirms what we said, that Sebastian Cabot's complaint is not so much the pure truth as the expression of his bitter disappointment at the reception his proposals met with ; a disappointment all the greater that he saw others, supplied with means that were wanting to him, freely passing over the seas which he and his father had discovered.

Under the year 1502, Stow quotes from Fabyan's chronicle as follows : "(18 Henr. VII. A. D. 1502). Thys yeare, were brought unto the Kyng three men taken in the new founde I-lands by *Sebastian Gaboto* before named in anno 1468 (sic), these men were clothed in Beastes skinnnes, and eat raw flesh, but spake such a language as no man could understand them, of the which three men, two of them were seene in the King's court at Westminster two years after, clothed, like Englishmen, and could not be discerned from Englishemen."\* Hakluyt also speaks of these three savages and quotes Fabyan's chronicle, but does not agree with Stow as to the date. In the first collection of 1582, instead of the 18th year of Henry VII, he has the 17th. But here, as Hakluyt puts the date in Roman numerals, the difference may have been the fault of the printer who may have carelessly put XVII for XVIII. But in the second edition of the greater collection, 1599—1600, the same fact is related under the 14th year of Henry's reign ; and if Stow's account is correct, we have here another, and a very strong proof that Sebastian Cabot resumed his discoveries after the expedition of 1498. If, on the other hand, Hakluyt's correction in his second collection is right, the proof vanishes, for their coming would coincide exactly with the return of the expedition of 1498. As we have nothing by which to settle either date, all that we can do is to mention the matter and pass on.

---

*Excerpta historica.* Privy purse expenses of Henry VII. p. 126, 130, 131, 133.

\* Stow, *Chronicle*, London, 1580. p. 875.

## CHAPTER X.

*Sebastian Cabot passes to the service of Spain.*

SPAIN watched the English discoveries with jealous eye, and did her best to put obstacles and impediments in their way. When in July 1500, Alonzo de Ojeda was sent out as Governor of Coquibacoa, the decree appointing him says: "you will follow and explore the coast you discovered, which runs apparently from east to west, because it extends to the part where it is known that the English have made discoveries, and you are to place marks, as you go, with their Highnesses' arms or other known signs, as you think best, to show that you discovered that land, and so cut off the English discoveries in that direction."†

The great danger for Spain was that England, besides extending her discoveries to new lands, might succeed in finding a passage to Asia north of the land already discovered, through which most of the benefits anticipated from the commerce with Cathay would be transferred to the English market. This danger was not greatly to be feared during the reign of Henry VII, because his extraordinary penuriousness left the whole burden of these undertakings to the initiative of private individuals who bore all the expense, and with no other impulse they necessarily went on very slowly, and so feebly that they were on the point of expiring. But the miserly and vacillating Henry VII was succeeded by Henry VIII, a munificent and

---

† "Item: que vaes e sigais aquella costa que descubristes se corre leste-vuest, segun parece, por razon que *va hacia la parte donde se ha sabido que descubrian los Ingleses e vais poniendo las marcas con las armas de SS. A. A. o con otros señales que sean conocidos, quales vos pareciere: porque se conozca como vos habeis descubierto aquella tierra, para que atages el descubrir de los Ingleses por aquella via. . .*" Navarrete, Tomo *ñi*, p. 86.

bold young man who found himself in possession of his father's hoarded treasures.\* For the moment the impetuosity of youth incited him to military glory, and immediately he took part in the wars raging on the Continent, allying himself with Ferdinand King of Spain, whose daughter he had married. But who can answer for the future? The astute Ferdinand thought it best to take steps to prevent danger and while the English Monarch was so well disposed, quietly deprive him of the principal arm he might some day use against him. This arm was Sebastian Cabot.

The alliance referred to between King Ferdinand of Spain and the youthful Henry VIII of England was directed against Louis XII King of France. By the terms of the treaty concluded between the two sovereigns November 7, 1511, it was agreed that the King of England should land 6000 men in Aquitaine, and the Spaniard towards the month of April 1512 should dispatch a fleet of forty sail to Southampton for transporting them.† It was so carried out. Lord Willoughby, one of the generals of the expedition, took in his train Sebastian Cabot. We know not in what capacity Cabot went, but from all the information we have, it seems to me very clear that his going to the war was a mere pretext for leaving England and passing into Spain where King Ferdinand had invited him. That he had not sought this new service, but went by request, is expressly stated by Peter Martyr D'Anghiera and Herrera. The former says: "He was called from England by the Catholic King after the death of Henry VII,"‡ and

---

\* Hume says of Henry VII. "So insatiable was his avarice. . . . By all these arts of accumulation joined to a rigid frugality in his expenses, he so filled his coffers, that he is said to have possessed in ready money the sum of one million eight hundred thousand pounds: a treasure almost incredible if we consider the scarcity of money in those times." And in a note: "Silver was, during this reign, thirty-seven shillings and sixpence a pound, which makes Henry's treasure near three millions of our present money." This was noted by Hume in his days (1711—1776): but if we consider the difference in the value of money since his time we shall see that the value of the sum hoarded by Henry VII was really enormous. Hume's *History of England*, ch. xxvi.

† See Bergenroth, *Calendar*. vol. ii, N. 59, 63, p. 58.

‡ "Familiarem habeo domi Cabotum. . . . Vocatus namque ex Britannia a rege

the latter, narrating Ferdinand's anxiety about the newly-discovered lands, and his cautious glances towards the island of Baccalaos, and his desire of gathering around him the best cosmographers of the time, says that these motives induced him to draw Sebastian Cabot into his service, knowing him to be an expert man of the sea.\* True, in writing to Sebastian, King Ferdinand says: "You offered your services;"† but this is merely a form of chancery, for the purpose of keeping up the King's dignity.

On arriving in Spain Sebastian Cabot had a conference at the city of Burgos, with Lope Conchillos, secretary of Queen Joanna, and with the Bishop of Palencia, and the terms of his employment were therein settled.‡ After that, Ferdinand wrote the same day to Lord Willoughby, asking him to send Sebastian Cabot to him, as he required to consult him about some matters relating to his service; and he also wrote to Cabot himself inviting him to come to him at once at Logrono, where Ferdinand then was. §

*nostro Catholico* post Henrici majoris Britanniae regis mortem concursalis est." Petri Martyris de Angheria, *De Rebus Oceanicis et orbe novo*. Dec. iii, lib. vi.

\*"Este desseo de descubrir el estrecho, y de tener el Rey en su servicio personas plasticas en descubrimientos, y afirmarle muchos Cosmographos que necessariamente le avia de aver a la parte de los Bacallaos y otro al occidente; *le movio a traer* a su servicio a Sebastian Gaboto Ingles, por tener noticia que era experto hombre de mar." Herrera, Dec. i, lib. ix, cap. xiii.

†"Ofrecisteis servirnos." See note next but one.

‡This Bishop of Palencia must have been John Rodrigo de Fonseca, not yet promoted to the archbishopric of Rosano, who was general superintendent of the affairs of the New World, and who made himself notorious by his ill-treatment and oppression of Christopher Columbus.

§ "R. a Milor de Ulibi Capitan R. de Ingl.<sup>a</sup> He sabido que viene en vtrã compania Sebastian Caboto Ingles, e porque yo quiero saber del cosas de ntrõ servicio, le enbiareis a do estoi." Logroño, 13 Set.e 512.

"Conch [illo]

"Obpo[de Palencia] (M.S.in the Library of the Academy of History at Madrid. Collec. Muñoz, t. cx. fol. 109.)

! "R. a Sebastian Caboto.

"Sabeis que en Burgos os hablaron de mi parte Conchillos i el Obp. de Palencia sobre la navegacion á los Bacallos, e ofrecisteis servirnos escribiendo yo á Milor de Uliby, ntrõ Capitan: hele escrito y con su licencia venies, á do estoi." Logroño, 13 Set.e 512 (Ib. fol. 115).

The Spaniards translating according to sound the name of Willoughby, made it

This concern on the King's part to write both requests the same day shows clearly that every thing was settled upon between Cabot and the Spanish government, and the conference at Burgos was merely for the purpose of closing an agreement already made. Cabot went at once to Castile, and Ferdinand, by decree of October 20, 1512, conferred on him the rank of Captain with a salary of fifty thousand maravedis yearly, and assigned Seville as his residence while waiting for orders. \* The same day, October 20, the King wrote to his ambassador to the English government, ordering him to assist Sebastian Cabot, his captain, who was going to England to arrange his affairs and bring away his wife and family. †

His wife was called Catharine Medrano, a Spaniard it would seem from the name. ‡ From this circumstance, and from the fact that Peter Martyr says that Sebastian Cabot was called to Spain after the death of Henry VII, who died in 1509, Harisse is of the opinion that Sebastian had been in Spain before 1512, but without giving up his English domicile, and that it was then that he married. § For my part, I do not regard the building on the wife's name as very consistent, for it may very well have been possible for Sebastian to

Uliby. Herrera also calls him the same: "El Rey. . . . escribió a Milort Uliby". l. c.

\*"Letter from King Ferdinand to the Office at Seville, to which was entrusted the management of all the affairs of the New World.

"R. a off. de Sevilla.

"A Sebastian Caboto Ingles he echo merced de ntro Capitan de mar con 50,000 mrs. de Salario, los que les pagareis annualm. te en la forma acostumbrada.

"Logroño, 26 Oct. e 1512.

"Conch.

"Obpo."—Ibidem.—Herrera: "Sebastiano Gaboto vino a Castilla, y el Rey le dió titulo de su capitan, y buenos gages, y quedó en su servicio, y le mandó residir en Sevilla, para le que se ordenasse." Herrera, l. c.

†"El Rey D. Luis Caro ntrō Embajador etc.

"Sebastiano Caboto, ntrō Capitan va a poner recaudo en su hacienda; a traer su mujer i casa: favoreced su bueno y breve despacho.

"Logroño, 20 oct. e 512. Ib."

‡ App. xx.

§"Nous croyons . . . qu' entre les années 1503 et 1509 ou 1512 Cabot, libre d' engagements à l'égard de Henri VII, visita l'Espagne et s'y maria mais sans cesser d' avoir son domicile en Angleterre."

Jean et Sébastien Cabot, p. 109-110.

meet a Spanish woman in England ; thus Christopher Columbus met Philippa Perestrello, an Italian, in Lisbon, and married her. It is by no means necessary to understand by Peter Martyr's expression *post mortem*, the time immediately following the death of Henry VII.

From 1512 to 1515 the only record to be found of Sebastian Cabot is in certain schedules of payment of salary, which by the King's order was paid him in full without any deduction for the time he spent in England on his own affairs.\*

In 1515 Peter Martyr in speaking of him, mentions the friendship he had with him, and the hospitality which he often extended to him in his own house. He calls him also his *Concurialis*, and as Peter Martyr was a member of the Supreme Council of the Indies, Eden, as we have seen, interprets that word to mean that Sebastian was also a member of the council, and many others have repeated it after him.† But the fact is that Herrera gives a list of all the members of that council, and in it we find Peter Martyr, but no Sebastian Cabot.‡ The proper translation of the word is, therefore, that given by Avezac, namely, that *concurialis* means 'is here with me at court.'§

From Peter Martyr's words it seems that Sebastian Cabot was surrounded in Spain by a strong circle of rivals who tried to detract from his reputation and sap the foundation of his greatness.¶ This was very natural. Among those Spanish seamen were some who had accompanied the discoverer of the New World on his voyages ; there were the companions of Alonzo de Ojeda, of Yanez Pinzon, of John de la Cosa ; and they must all have felt humiliated that a foreigner, a perfect stranger to Spanish navigations, should place himself at their side and take precedence over many of them. But the high

\* See App. xvii.

† In his translation of the first three Decades of Anghiera, 1555.

‡ This list is found at the bottom of his *Description of the East Indies*.

§ In the *Revue Critique d' Histoire et de Littérature*, Premier Semestre, 1870, p. 265.

¶ "Ex Castellanis non desunt qui Cabotum primum fuisse Baccalorum reperi-  
torem negant, tantumque ad Occidentem tetendisse minime assentiuntur." P.  
M. d'Anghiera, l. c.



position in which we find him in 1515, shows that he had come out triumphantly over all and every thing. In that year Herrera names him as a member of a commission charged with revising and correcting all the maps and charts used in Spanish navigation, a duty of the greatest importance and delicacy at a time when the principal activity of Spain was directed to navigation and discovery.\*

Under the same year, Peter Martyr's history relates that an expedition was planned for the next year to make further explorations and discoveries, and that Cabot was to be at its head.† In fact, in the book of accounts of the Treasury at the House at Seville, is a note of a payment to Sebastian Cabot for going to court to confer with Their Majesties concerning a voyage of discovery which he was to undertake.‡ But while they were making preparations, King Ferdinand died, January 23, 1516.

---

## CHAPTER XI.

### *Sebastian Cabot back in England.*

THE governments of those days, all centring in the life of the sovereign, always received a severe shock when he died, and the whole machinery of the public business felt its effects in a greater or less degree. In this oscillation there was always a period of uncertainty, of doubt, in the whole civil administration until the new sovereign had declared his views

---

\* "...—porque las cartas de marear de Castilla no pareva que. . . . estaban conformes, los oficiales de la casa de Sevilla suplicaron al Rey les diese licencia para hazer sobre ello junta de Pilotos y corregir las cartas. El Rey lo tuvo por bien . . . . y para la junta que se avia de hazer, ordenó que se buscasen los mejores Cosmografos y Pilotos: mandó a . . . . asentar el salario de Capitan y Cosmografo a Sebastian Caboto, etc." Dec. ii, lib. i, cap. xii.

† "Sebastianus Cabotus . . . expectat in dies ut navigia sibi parentur, quibus arcanum hoc naturæ latens iam tandem detegatur. Martio mense anni futuri MDXVI puto ad explorandum discessurum." l. c.

As to arcanum hoc naturæ latens. See note at that place in App. xviii.

‡ See App. xvii. A.

of the direction he wished to give to the machinery of the government. The internal and external relations of the Kingdom of Spain and the different characters of the former and present sovereign rendered this period of uncertainty and doubt unusually full of anxiety and danger. Spain was a kingdom of recent formation, and with the new King made its first experiment of trusting its united destinies to the hands of a single sovereign. Externally Spanish honor was pledged in many and distant wars and their fortunate issue was not so much hoped for from their own forces and treasure, as from the prudence of Ferdinand and the confidence in himself which he had inspired in nearly every court. He was born and bred and lived in Spain and for Spain, and associated with the heroic Isabella in the glory of having given national unity to the country. On the other hand, Charles, his successor, was young, only known to Spaniards by name, born and bred an Austrian, with his affections much more set on his paternal domains than on the rich inheritance of his grandfather. The suspense of mind was consequently greater in the beginning of the new reign than on other like occasions, and the preparations for Sebastian Cabot's contemplated expedition as well as many other matters were put aside.

During this period, which naturally had special causes of anxiety for Cabot, an opportunity was presented for him to return again to the frosts of the North in the service of England for a new expedition in search of the longed-for passage to Cathay by the north-west. But as his service only lasted during this expedition, and after that we again find him at his accustomed duties in Spain, we must presume that he had a special permission for his absence from the Spanish government. How he came to be called to England, and on what terms, and who was promoting the expedition, all is dark to us. The grants already mentioned from the King of England to the three Portuguese merely contemplated new explorations and discoveries in the regions already discovered. Nowhere does it appear that any one had proposed to resume the bold idea of the Cabots of opening a passage to the eastern lands of Cathay across the lands discovered in the

northern seas to the westward. But on September 25, 1513, Vasco Nuñez de Balboa crossing from Darien the cloven heights of the Cordillera, from the tops of those mountains discovered the Great Ocean, and settled the question that the lands of America were isolated.\* This fact puts Cabot's plan in a new light, and the search after a passage to the eastern lands of Asia acquired the same importance as the first voyages of discovery in the New World. As the matter was of the greatest interest for the future of England, Cabot's idea was taken up again, and an expedition got together for a new and more determined experiment. Sebastian Cabot was called upon to direct it in the character of pilot.†

Of all the losses we have to lament in his life this is the most deplorable, that nothing is left concerning this voyage which from many indications appears to have been most important under every aspect. It is only by chance that with much labor we have been able to make sure of its existence. Richard Eden, the personal friend of Sebastian Cabot, is the only one to make direct and clear mention of it. In 1553, during the life-time of Sebastian, Eden printed at London a translation of the *Universal Cosmography* of Sebastian Munster, and in the dedication to the Duke of Northumberland, complaining of the neglect into which navigation, and discovery had fallen, he writes these words: "If it (manly courage) had not been wanting in other in these our dayes at such time as our Sovereigne Lord of noble memory, King Henry the Eighth, a-

\* Herrera, Dec. i, lib. x, cap. i.

† Oviedo, in the 13th chapter of the XIX Book of his history, relates that an English vessel coming from the neighborhood of Brazil appeared at the harbor of San Domingo in the island of Hispaniola, and requested license to enter there for the purpose of trading; that the comandant of the fort being suspicious opened fire on it, and the English retired in fear and went to the island of St. John for supplies, complaining loudly of their treatment, and protesting that they came with fair intentions of trafficking and nothing else.

The fact occurred in 1527, but Hakluyt erroneously puts it in 1517, and so believes that the vessel was commanded by Sebastian Cabot, and makes one of his expeditions take place in 1517 to the vicinity of Brazil. Purchas (*Pilgrims*, vol. iv, p. 1812), Robertson in his *History of America* (Book ix), Lardner in his *Cyclopaedia* (vol. ii, p. 138), and others have fallen into the same error.

about the same (eighth) yere of his raygne, *furnished and set forth carten shippes under the governaunce of Sebastian Cabot yet living*, and one sir Thomas Parte, whose fayant heart was the cause that that viage *toke none effect* ; if (I say) such manly courage whereof we have spoken had not at that tyme bene wanting, it myghte happelye have come to passe that rich treasurye called Perularia (which is now in Spayne, in the citie of Civile and so named, for that in it is kepte the infinite ryches brought thither from the newfoundland of Peru) myght longe since have bene in the Tower of London, to the Kinges great honoure and welth of this his realme.”\*

Henry VIII having ascended the throne April 22, 1509, the eighth year of his reign strictly speaking is from April 22, 1516 to April 22, 1517. But in a broader sense we may mean 1509 by the first year of his reign, and 1510 by the second, and so on : which would make the eighth year coincide with 1516. Some writers have followed one, some the other interpretation; and whichever is followed makes no substantial difference in the narrative. I incline to the second, which keeps us within the year 1516 ; because it seems to me more natural that Cabot's departure from Spain should have occurred within the first months after Ferdinand's death, just in that period of uncertainty and doubt we have spoken of, before the new sovereign has shown the direction he intends to give to the machinery of government.

As to Perularia, we easily recognize under this name the immense treasures which Spain in those times drew from Peru, and which fancy made even greater than they were, though they were great enough in reality.

This is the only direct notice we have of this new expedition, but other indirect notices, and very clear ones, confirm and extend the account given by Eden.

Robert Thorne, a rich English merchant settled in Seville, who watched with great interest the march of discovery, anxious that his country should also enter fully and effectually on this glorious path, wrote in 1527 a memorial to Henry

---

\* A Treatise of the New India, Lond. 1553.

VIII to urge that monarch to seek a passage by the north to reach the regions of Cathay.\* He accompanied this letter with another to Dr. Edward Leigh, ambassador of Henry VIII to Charles V in Spain. In the letter to Leigh he explains why he takes so lively an interest in the search for that passage by the northern seas. "I reason that as some sicknesses are hereditarious, and come from the father to the sonne, so this inclination or desire of this discoverie I inherited of my father, which with another marchant of Bristow named Hugh Eliot, were the discoverers of the Newfound-Lands; † of the which there is no doubt (as nowe plainly appeareth) if the mariners would then have bene ruled and followed their Pilot's minde, the lands of the West Indies (from whence all the gold commeth,) had bene ours. For all is one coast, as by the card appeareth, and is aforesayd." ‡ There are three ways proposed by Thorne to the King for opening this passage; one would run behind the new land he speaks of in his letter to Leigh. His words are: "And if they (our sailors) will take their course after they be past the Pole, toward the west, they shall go in the backside of the Newfoundland, which *of late was discovered by your Grace's subjects*, until they come to the backside and south seas of the Indies Occidental." §

The expression, *of late*, applied to the new discovery, assures us that Newfoundland seen in 1497, is not referred to, for the long time that had elapsed, and the numerous voyages thither, would make the expression entirely out of place; whereas only fourteen years had passed since the expedition of 1516, and as it pushed northwards to an altitude never before

\* Hakluyt, vol. i. p. 235.

† *Ib.* p. 237. Rymer in his *Fœdera*, vol. xiii, p. 37, reports a royal patent for a new expedition, December 9, 1502, in which the name of Hugh Eliot is joined with that of Thomas Ashehurst and not with Nicholas Thorne's. Hence we must either admit another patent which we know nothing of, or more probably suppose with Biddle that Thorne bought from Ashehurst or his heirs his share in the privileges of the expedition. *Memoir*, ch. xiii, pp. 107, 108.

‡ He means the chart which Thorne enclosed with the letter to explain and prove his plan. Hakluyt, i. 243.

§ Hakluyt, *ib.* p. 237.

reached, the name of Newfoundland belongs more appropriately to the regions then seen for the first time. And that the Newfoundland was seen on Cabot's expedition of 1516 we know from the circumstance of the revolt of the crews, which is likewise told by Eden, and is found in all the other accounts referring to the same expedition.

This voyage is told of with additional and more particular details, but without any date given, in a legend on one of Cabot's charts preserved in the private royal gallery at Whitehall in Westminster, as we are informed by Sir Humphrey Gilbert, himself a distinguished navigator, and who in his youth may have seen and known the great Venetian personally.\* These are Humphrey's words: "Sebastian Cabota . . . in his charts which are yet to be scene in the Queen's Majesty's Privie Gallerie at Whitehall . . . affirme that he sayled very farre westward with a quarter of the North, on the North side of Terra de Labrador the eleventh of June, until he came to the septentrionall latitude of 67 degrees and a-halfe, and finding the seas still open, sayd that he might and would have gone to Cataia, if the mutinie of the Master and Mariners had not bene."†

Cabot himself wrote to Jerome Ramusio the same details as those on the chart, as the latter relates in his dedicatory letter to the celebrated Fracastoro, prefixed to the third volume of his great collection. Ramusio speaking of New France, as it was called then, or Canada as it is now, says: "We are not yet (1553) sure whether that land is joined on to the mainland of the province of Florida and New Spain, or is all divided into islands. And if by that way it is possible to go to Cathay, as was written many years ago by Signor Sebastian Cabot, our Venetian, a man of great experience and rare in the art of navigation and science of cosmography: he had sailed above this land of New France at the expense of

---

\* He lived from 1539 to 1584, and won great reputation in his search for a passage to Cathay by the north-east of Europe. The story of his voyage was originally published in 1576, and republished, but in a mutilated form, by Hakluyt.

† Hakluyt, [vol. iii, p. 38.

King Henry VII of England, and he told me that having gone a long distance towards the west and a quarter to the north-west behind these islands situated along the said land, as far as sixty-seven and a half degrees under our pole, on the 11th of June, and finding the sea open and without impediment, he firmly believed he could pass by that way towards eastern Cathay, and would have done so if *the malice of the master and insurgent mariners had not forced him to turn back.*" \*

As to the height of latitude reached, Martin Frobisher put it at 67 degrees, † Herrera 68. ‡ But this difference not only is slight, but the mean between them exactly agrees with Ramusio, who says 67°, 30'.

It is an exaggerated scruple on the part of Erizzo Miniscalchi that contrary to the full agreement of these witnesses, makes him loath to admit this voyage of Cabot's for the sole reason that he was not at its head, but only held the office of Pilot; regarding it as unbecoming and inadmissible that after holding the first rank in other navigations, he should in this have accepted a secondary part. § In allowing himself to be affected by this scruple, he forgets with what strength an idea rooted for years in a man's mind, and strengthened by long study and meditation, gains absolute dominion over his thoughts and forces the will and self-love to bend in order to gain the desired triumph. What though Cabot had over his head the person of Thomas Pert, officers and sailors knew that not Pert but he was the Pharos of the expedition

---

\* As to the uncertainty expressed by Ramusio whether New France was all a continuous land with Florida and New Spain (Mexico), it should be remembered that John de la Cosa in his famous chart of 1500 makes the land continuous from the coast of Labrador to south of the equatorial line. John Schöner, on the contrary, in his of 1520, divides North and Central America into two parts. As to what is mentioned here about Henry VII, we shall recur to it in the XII chapter where the same matter is repeated by another writer.

† "I find that Gabota was the first, in King Henry VII's days, that discovered this frozen land or seas from sixty-seven towards the North and from thence towards the South, along the coast of America to 36 degrees and a half, etc." *Reporte of Voyage to Meta Incognita* etc. By Thomas Churchyard, Hakluyt, iii. 38.

‡ Dec. i, lib. vi, cap. 16.

§ Erizzo Miniscalchi, "Le Scoperte Artiche" p. 131, note.

and to him they looked for light amid the darkness of the way. And if they had succeeded in gloriously carrying out their purpose, it certainly would not be on Pert's forehead that public opinion would have placed the triumphal crown. And besides, in the maritime enterprises of those days instances often occurred where men of great worth and reputation accepted a secondary part that they might have some share in the expedition : as John de la Cosa in those of Alonzo de Ojeda and Rodrigo de Bastidas ; Americus Vespucci in all four of his voyages ; William Barentz in the expedition of 1596 led by Heemeskerck ; William Baffin in that of 1616 directed by Robert Bylot. \* Only too frequently were the genius and the means to lead an expedition in open opposition one to another, and in such cases genius must yield to the will and sometimes arrogance of the one who puts out the money, reserving for its own reward the satisfaction of being the real head of the expedition. But history did justice, and the bay discovered by the expedition of 1616 was named after the pilot Baffin, not the commander Bylot.

---

## CHAPTER XII.

*Sebastian Cabot discovered the strait and bay which were afterwards named from Hudson.*

WHAT was the place in latitude sixty-seven-and-a-half degrees, where Sebastian Cabot was compelled by the fear of his companions to go back ? We have no direct information from any quarter, but by putting together various other facts we may be able to throw some light on our subject.

The fourth expedition, like the third, aimed at finding a passage to the eastern coasts of Asia ; where would it go to look for it ? Certainly not to the place already explored and

---

\* L. Huguez in the "Memorie della Società Geografica Italiana," vol. i, parte iii.



which had given a negative answer to previous researches. The southern part of America to the mouth of the Rio de la Plata had been passed by Spanish and Portuguese ships ; the central had been explored by the Spaniards from the days of Christopher Columbus ; the northern from the coasts of Labrador to Chesapeake Bay had been visited by Sebastian Cabot himself, in 1498. All that remained, then, to explore was the southern extremity and the region north of Labrador. The Portuguese and Spanish vessels were busy exploring and examining to the south, and besides it was too far out of the reach of England ; therefore the new English expedition had no way left for it to take but to push its explorations to the north of Labrador. It could not, however, go too far north, for in the previous voyage of 1498 they saw there was land in that direction and that it trended to the north-east. Therefore the course of Sebastian Cabot was designated right to the north-west, to the broad opening between Labrador and Greenland, the precise portion still unexplored, for as we said in its proper place, from the parallel of  $66^{\circ}$  where he reached the coast of Greenland, he sailed right down to the coast of Labrador, without taking notice of the wide gulf he left on his right. But as the English afterwards often returned to the land of Labrador, it was very easy to ascertain that it extended far back in the sea towards the north-west.

Entering that gulf, is it more probable that he passed through Davis Strait or the smaller strait of Hudson ? The question is equivalent to this ; what is more likely than that Cabot continued at hazard on the open sea and kept along the coast of Labrador, following every bend it makes, towards the places where he wanted to arrive ? To the question in this form, it seems to me, there can be but one answer. His course from England was therefore straight for the land of Labrador, at the point where his previous exploration ended, and then taking the coast for his guide, he came to Cape Chudleigh where the land turns, and he turned with it, and so found himself sailing in that strait which was afterwards named from Hudson.

Let us now see how the few indications which have been

left us agree with these probable and natural suppositions of the itinerary of the fourth expedition.

After Sebastian Cabot's death repeated attempts were made to find a passage to Asia by the north of America and, as is natural, his previous voyages served as the rule and guide of those who wanted to continue his work : and his not having succeeded was the main argument in opposition to prove that it was idle to renew the attempt. The first to come forward with great courage and tenacity to resume the work of Sebastian Cabot was Martin Frobisher who gave his name to one of the bays opening on the eastern coast of Cumberland. A great contest occurred over his project, for and against it, but the victory remained with those in its favor. Among its most ardent supporters was Humphrey Gilbert whose name was afterwards distinguished among the most honored in the noble band of discoverers. He had made special studies on this subject, and a certain George Gascoigne, a relative of Frobisher's, knowing this, requested him to show Frobisher what he had collected so as to derive from it advice and rules for his voyage. Humphrey complied, and Gascoigne printed and published the information thus obtained on the 12th of April 1576, two months before Frobisher started on his voyage. Gascoigne himself tells us all this in the Preface.\* Here, for the purpose of proving that the north of America is not a continuous land, but that there is an opening there by which a passage is given to the eastern lands of Asia, we read the following passage, a part of which we have already given, but the whole is inserted here for greater clearness. " Furthermore Sebastian Cabota

---

\*"Now it happened that myself being one(amongst many) beholden to the said sir Humphrey Gilbert for sundry courtesies, did come to visit him in the winter last past, at his house in Limehouse, and being very bold to demand of him, how he spent his time in this loitering vacation from martial stratagems, he courteously took me into his study, and there showed me sundry profitable and very commendable exercises which he had perfected painfully with his own pen, and amongst the rest this present discovery. The which, as well because it was not long, *as also, because, I understood that M. Forboiser, a Kins-man of mine, did pretend to travel in the same discovery,* I craved it at the said sir Humphrey's hand for two or three days." Biddle, *Memoir*, bk. ii, ch. xiii.

by his personal experience and travel hath set foorth, and described this passage in his charts which are yet to be seene in the Queen's Majesty's Privie Gallerie at Whitehall, who was sent to make this discovery by King Henry VII, and entered the same fret : affirming that he sailed very farre westward with a quarter of the North, on the North side of Terra de Labrador the eleventh of June, until he came to the septemptrionall latitude of 67 degrees and a-halfe, and finding the sea still open, said that he might and would have gone to Cataia, if the mutinie of the Master and Mariners had not bene."\*

Another person who fought hard in favor of Martin Frobisher's undertaking was Richard Willes, the meritorious continuator of Eden's work. He puts in the mouth of the opponents who claimed that it was impossible for it to succeed, these words : "Well graunt the West Indies not to continue continent unto the Pole, grant there be a passage between these two lands, let the gulfe lie nearer us than commonly in Cardes we finde it set, *namely, betweene the 61 and 64 degrees North*, as Gemma Frisius † in his mappes and globes imagineth it, and so left by our countryman Sebastian Cabot, in his Table, which the Earle of Bedford hath at Cheynies . . ." ‡

Then speaking in his own person with greater particularity he continues : "For that Caboto was not only a skilful seaman but a long traveller and such a one as *entered personally that straight*, sent by King Henry VII. to make this aforesaid discovery as in his own *Discourse of Navigation* yov may read in his Card, *drawn with his own hand*, that the mouth of the North Western Straight lieth *near the 318 meridian*, between 61 and 64 degrees in the elevation continuynge the same breadth about ten degrees West, where it openeth southerly more and more." §

---

\* Hakluyt, vol. iii, p. 38 from the Discourse of Sir Humphrey Gilbert, where the possibility is proved of going by the north-west to Cathay, ch. iii.

† Gemma Regnier, surnamed Frisius or Frizon because born in Friesland in Holland, was a celebrated mathematician, who besides many other works of great merit and reputation published a "Mappa Mundi," at Louvain in 1540. He was born in 1508, and died at Louvain in 1555.

‡ Hakluyt vol. iii, p. 48.

§ Ib. p. 49.

The topographical description corresponds so exactly with the true position that of itself alone it would suffice to convince us that Richard Willes was speaking of the very strait and bay which were later called after Hudson, and of no other place. But if this is not enough, there is the perfect agreement of the latitude in its confirmation. Willes's calculation of the longitude is made from the island of Ferro eastwards. Now following this direction between  $61^{\circ}$  and  $64^{\circ}$  N. L. we come directly to the mouth of Hudson Strait. It is true that the degrees of longitude from the Island of Ferro to the entrance of that strait are not 318 as Willes has it, but 312; but the difference very likely should be charged to Willes, who judged by looking at Cabot's chart, without much attention to the mathematical exactness in the distance. \*

The difference in longitude, however, does not injure our argument, so long as the latitude, which is the important point, is given correctly.

Finally, Ortelius puts the seal on all this discussion by his *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, published in 1570, that is to say, forty years before Hudson's expedition; and even before Martin Frobisher attempted his voyage to the same coasts. In that Atlas, in the map he calls "America, i. e. novi orbis descriptio," he puts the strait and bay which were afterwards called Hudson's, and the channel afterwards named Fox's which empties into the bay, with an exactness not possible to any one who had not certain and precise information of the topography of those regions. But where could he have got this information? The answer is had in the Catalogue of the authors from whom he says he obtained the necessary information for his work. Amongst these we find Sebastian Cabot, whose "universal map cut in brass" he says he had before his eyes. † As none of the other authors he names in the

---

\* Biddle, *Memoir*, Book i, ch. 3, pp. 234-235.

† *Catologus auctorum Tabularum Geographicarum quotquot ad nostram cognitionem hactenus pervenere.*

*Sebastianns Cabotus Venetus.*

Universalem tabulam quam impressam aeneis formis vidimus, sed sine nomine loci et impressoris.

note give any information whatever concerning those northern regions, it remains necessary that he must have obtained it from Cabot.

In the whole treatment of this chapter I have followed almost in the steps of Richard Biddle in his *Memoir*, as it seems to me that what he says is not only likely or probable, but true. I must confess that the last argument drawn from Ortelius's Atlas has given me some trouble. Biddle did not know of Sebastian Cabot's great planisphere which is still preserved in the National Library at Paris. But we who know of it must draw our proofs from that, not from Ortelius. For although Ortelius has Hudson Bay and Strait and Fox Channel with all the exactness noted by Biddle, Cabot's planisphere on the contrary leaves us in the dark. From this it would seem most natural to conclude that Ortelius did not obtain his knowledge of those parts from Cabot's Map. But on thinking it over there seems a way out of this reasoning. The list of the authors consulted by him proves clearly that Ortelius could not have obtained the existence of that bay and strait from any other source than a chart of Cabot's. That Cabot in his charts had marked a strait in those parts and at that height is proved by the testimony of several persons who had seen and studied those charts. It follows then that Ortelius had under his eyes some other chart than that preserved at Paris; in fact Sir Humphrey speaks of charts preserved in the gallery of Whitehall, not of a single chart.

Here I think best to recall what we elsewhere observed, that it was forbidden under pain of death for the Spanish and Portuguese pilots to trace on their sailing-charts any sign that could put other countries on the track of discovering the canal sought for and which opened the way to the East Indies.\* The chart, from which the copy at Paris is taken, was made whilst Cabot was in Spain, and even if he had wished to make

---

\*“ The Spaniards and Portugals . . . have commanded that, no pilot of theirs upon paine of death, should plat out in any sea card, any thorow passage. . . .” Hakluyt, iii, p. 23 — G. B. Belloro in his “Elogio di Leone Pancaldo” reports a notarial act of September 30, 1531, by which Pancaldo, a companion of Magellan, bound himself to the King of Portugal for the sum of 2000 ducats not to teach any one the new way discovered to the Moluccas, and not to make

his discovery known of the bay which was afterwards named from Hudson, and the two channels communicating with it, he could give no hint of it, for to do so would have been to sign his own condemnation. But when he was in England, beyond all danger from Spain, he added that correction to his planisphere. We must then presume that the copies mentioned by Sir Humphrey Gilbert and that used by Ortelius were taken from the planisphere corrected and improved by the addition of this discovery.

It is then beyond question that Sebastian Cabot had sailed through the strait which gave immortal fame to the name of Hudson; he knew the bay, had seen its expanse southwards, and indicated that there was a passage through it into a new channel towards the north.

But in which of his voyages did he make this discovery ?

It could not have been in either of the voyages of 1497 and 1498 ; what we know of them excludes it. It could not have been in the period from 1498 to 1512 in which we lose sight of him, for the only sign of him we have during that period, so far from showing him to us in such distant expeditions as that of Hudson's Bay, represents him, on the contrary, in the care and anxiety of getting together a few vessels for a voyage which failed precisely on account of the poverty and scarcity of the means with which it was undertaken. \* Nothing remains then but the expedition of 1516. But it is not necessary to obtain this conclusion from negative proof alone : Sir Humphrey Gilbert's own words place this discovery in that year. Read them over carefully, and you will see what appears to me quite clear. The short extract we made from them is divided in two parts : in the first he says that Cabot discovered and described that strait, and in the second, that he sailed to  $67^{\circ} 30'$  of North Latitude, and was obliged to return by the mutiny of the crews. Are the two parts separated from each other ? No, they are joined closely by means of the present participle : " Sebastian Cabota by his per-

---

any geographical chart showing it. See *Giornale Ligustico* Feb. e Marzo, 1875, p. 56.

\* See chapter xix.

sonal experience and travell hath set forth and described this passage . . . . . and entered the same fret ; *affirming* that he sailed . . . . . to the Septentrionall latitude of  $67\frac{1}{2}$  degrees and . . . . . that he might and would have gone to Cataia if the mutinie of the Maister and Mariners had not bene.\* Then the two things form a single whole and are inseparable one from the other. But we know from Eden that the navigation to sixty-seven-and-a-half degrees and the mutiny of the crews was in the eighth year of Henry VIII, or in 1516 : therefore the discovery of the strait and bay was likewise in that year.

At first sight this conclusion appears to contradict the account of Richard Willes who says that " Cabot . . . . . entered personally that straight, sent by King Henry VII to make this aforesaid discovery." But a careful attention to the whole of his words will show that he mentions Henry VII, not in connection with the particular discovery of that strait, but as a general mention that from him began the navigations of Sebastian Cabot, on one of which he made the discovery of that strait. In other words, it is as if he had said : " Sebastian Cabot, sent by Henry VII to discover new lands in the northern seas, entered that strait which is the commencement of the passage now sought after." If we had any doubt about this interpretation it would be dissipated at once by the instance of Ramusio, whose words also, as we saw in the last chapter, apparently sound as though Cabot had reached the height of  $67\frac{1}{2}$  degrees under Henry VII :—"It was written me by Signor Sebastian Cabot . . . . . who had sailed above this land of New France *at the cost of King Henry VII of England*, and he told me how having proceeded a great distance to the west and a quarter north-west, . . . . . as far as 67 degrees and a half . . . . . he thought . . . . . he could pass towards Eastern Cathay." The authority of Eden who wrote in the life-time of Cabot, and was his personal friend, assures as with absolute precision that the altitude of 67 degrees and a half was reached in the eighth year of Henry

---

\* App. xxiii.

VIII : it is therefore impossible that Sebastian Cabot in his letter to Ramusio put it in the time of Henry VII. How, then, did Ramusio come to fetch in this King? For the same reason that Richard Willes did so. It is with the name of Henry VII that the glorious series of those voyages begins, and the image of the one who had first opened the way presented itself to the mind of the historian in telling of their progress, and as the connection of the two records appeared spontaneous and natural to his mind, with the same spontaneity and naturalness he joined them in his narrative.

But to reach  $67\frac{1}{2}$  degrees it is not enough merely to enter Hudson Strait and reach the Bay, it is also necessary to thread the channel running into it from the North, now called Fox Channel, and to pass up it a good distance. At that altitude when in his heated fancy he was admiring the sight of the smiling regions of the Grand Khan, the master of the ship warned him to go back, and he was backed by the raging and threatening crew. Fear had seized possession of their minds and hearts and they could listen to no reason for continuing their course. The genius of the Pilot was obliged to yield to the claims of the master and the violence of the crew.

The heart is here oppressed with the painful thought of the injustice with which fame is distributed to men. When Hudson in 1610 immortalized his name by giving it to the strait and bay, 94 years had passed since Sebastian Cabot had made them both known to Europe, and not a palm of land on the surface of the earth bears the name of Cabot. And Hudson not only knew of the previous discovery by Sebastian Cabot, but his whole voyage was guided by the notes he had left of it. Of this there is no doubt. Among the various names he gave the new lands he went on visiting, there was even that of Hakluyt's Headland.\* Hakluyt was the famous collector of English voyages and navigations, a work to which we have had constant occasion to refer. It is evident from this that Hudson when giving his name to a promontory in the new lands wished by this honor to attest and publish his gratitude and

---

\* Purchas, vol. iii, p. 464.



that of the English for the meritorious work of that writer. This proof of affection and acknowledgment is all the more valuable because Hakluyt was still living, and it is something too rare to recognize the merits of living persons. Are we to believe that Hudson whose ambition it was to continue the struggles and achievements celebrated by Hakluyt, had never looked into his book, and only knew him by the fame which proclaimed his name loudly throughout England? The supposition is absurd. Others may have read his works out of zeal of patriotic affection and love of the excitement of the story of so many heroic deeds and such endurance; others who desired to follow in the same path and furnish materials for other like histories, must have read them through the enthusiasm which bore them on to similar achievements and for instruction. Hudson had read and studied Hakluyt, and he had seen on page 16 of the third volume the extract from Sir Humphrey Gilbert where he relates that Sebastian Cabot discovered that strait, and that he had found it designated in his chart hung in the gallery at Whitehall, and on page 26 he saw the account of Richard Willes who gave also the latitude of the strait.

Like Frobisher and Hudson, others who have been vaunted as bold and hardy discoverers enlarging our knowledge of North America, have all had the principal points of the path they wanted to pursue marked out for them in the narratives of Peter Martyr, Eden, Hakluyt, Willes, and Purchas, after the report of Sebastian Cabot. But they all had the reputation of being first, and hardly in the shadow is there a sign of the name of the Venetian who showed them the way.\*

---

\* Biddle, *Memoir*, p. 263 and s.

## CHAPTER XIII.

*Return to Spain.*

CABOT probably returned to Spain immediately after the return of this expedition, indignant at being stopped just as he stretched forth his hand to seize the coveted palm of victory. But in whatever way the expedition had resulted, it was in Spain a triumph for him that his work had been solicited by England which had tried it previously in other navigations: This was the most effective answer he could make to his detractors and enemies; and his genius and skill must have gained greatly in the esteem and confidence of the Government there. In fact, we find, not long after, a royal ordinance dated at Valladolid February 5, 1518, conferring on him the office of Pilot-Major.\* He was the third that attained to this rank. The first was Americo Vespucci, the lucky Florentine who left his name to all America; the second was John Diaz de Solis, the famous discoverer of the Rio de la Plata.† Three years after the latter's death Sebastian Cabot was appointed to this office, the salary of which was the noble sum of 125,000 maravedis a year.‡ The duties of the office are stated in the letter which King Ferdinand wrote to Vespucci August 6, 1508, when it was instituted.

---

\* Herrera, Dec. ii, lib. iii, cap. vii. "El Rey . . . diose titulo de Piloto Mayor al Capitan Sebastian Gaboto," Dec. ii, lib. ix, cap. vii.

† Herrera, Dec. i, lib. vii, cap. i. — Dec. ii, lib. ii, cap. viii.

‡ *Id. ib.* — "dal Re Ferdinando fui facto capitano cum provisione di cinquanta m. maravedis, poiij fui facto da questo Re presente (Carlo V) piloto maior cum provisione di altri 50 m. maravedis et per adiuto di cose mi da poiij 25 m. maravedis che sono in tutto 125 m. maravedis . . ." See App. xxvi.—It was the salary fixed for that office when Vespucci was appointed, —See Navarrete, iii. 178, pp. 300, 301.

The Pilot-Major was charged with the examination of Pilots in the use of the Astrolabe and Quadrant, ascertaining whether they joined theory to practice, giving certificates, giving them instructions for which they were to pay him, and with presiding over the construction of a *Padron* or model chart, which was to be called *Padron Real* (Royal Model) and to be successively corrected and improved from the information which all Pilots coming from the Indies were obliged to submit to the *Casa de Contratacion* in Seville.\*

The Pilot-Major resided at Seville near "La Casa de Contratacion de las Indias," (Ministry of Indian affairs) established in that city in 1503. To the ministry was annexed, though in what year is not known, a chair of cosmography the first occupant of which must have been Sebastian Cabot as it would seem from the Index of Professors as given by Navarrete.† From the king's letter to Americo Vespucci, it appears that the Pilot-Major by virtue of his office was "Censor of the Professor of cosmography."

Two years later, in 1520, Herrera relates a second time the conferring of the position of Pilot-Major, but with the addition of an order of the Emperor that no pilot should go to the Indies without the examination and approval of Cabot.‡ But it is not clear from his words whether this order was an addition made in that year to the authority of the Pilot-Major, or it referred to the duty of examining pilots in general, inherent in the office from the beginning. From the account of Ramusio's anonymous it would seem to refer to the general examination, and that this charge was included in the rights and duties of the Pilot-Major. "Do you not know," he

---

\* "... y porque á los que no supieron mas facilmente lo puedan aprender vos mandamos que les enseñeis en vuestra casa en Sevilla á todos los que lo quiesieren saber, pagandovos vuestro trabajo."—Navarrete iii, n. 7, p. 301.

† "... se estableció la catedra de cosmografía y navegacion que explicaba el cosmografo de la casa como lo hicieran *Sebastian Caboto, Alonso de Chaves, Alonso de santa Cruz*."—Navarrete, *Disertacion sobre la historia de la Nautica*, Madrid, 1846, p. 134.

‡ "Diose titulo de Piloto Maior a Sebastian Gaboto con orden que ningun Piloto pasase ha las Indias sin ser primero por el examinado i aprobado."—Dec. ii, lib. ix, cap. vii.

says, "in connection with this going to find the Indies by the north, what was done by a Venetian citizen of yours, who was so able and experienced in matters pertaining to navigation and cosmography that there is not his equal in Spain to-day, and his knowledge caused him to be placed over all the pilots that sail to the West Indies, so that they cannot do so without a license from him, and *on this account he is called Pilot-Major ?*" \* But on the other hand, if it was to be understood as a duty inherent in the office itself, why should Herrera have made special mention of that examination and approval? If one went with the other, when the first was told the second would be understood, and Herrera's repetition becomes useless. Hence I am inclined to believe that the first examination regarded in general all those who wished to take up the career of a pilot, and that the second was a special examination of those pilots who leaving our waters wanted to navigate the seas of the West Indies.

However this may have been, it is certain that Sebastian Cabot was placed in very high and extensive authority, and this appointment alone ought to be enough to give his name an honorable place in the glorious band of navigators in that age. But however high the office or important, its nature was such as to furnish the historian with but few details to record. The year following his appointment as Pilot-Major of Spain, or about that time,† we find him again in England, but the cause of his going thither is not known. On this occasion Cardinal Wolsey, the prime minister of Henry VIII and all powerful in English affairs, sent for him and made him great offers if he would reënter the service of England and make new expeditions and discoveries for her. But he excused himself on the ground that he could not accept without the permission of the King of Spain to whose service he was bound. He would gladly do it if he had that permission. At this time he met a Friar Stragliano Collona, a Venetian,

---

\* *Delle navigazioni et Viaggi, loc. cit. p. 414. D.*

† "24 Decembre, 1522 . . . hor ritrovandomi ja tre anni, salvo il vero, in Ingleterra." App. xxvi.

for whom he entertained great friendship, and who said to him : “Master Sebastian, you take such pains to benefit foreign countries, forgetting your own. Might it not be possible that it also might have some aid from you ?”\* These words made a deep impression on Sebastian, who at the time replied that he would reflect on it, and the friar coming back to him the next day told him that he had a way of making Venice a sharer in his navigations and could show him how it would be greatly to his advantage. Since he could not have done this if he accepted Cardinal Wolsey’s proposal, he wrote secretly to Spain not to give him permission to enter the service of England, but to recall him at once to Seville, as was done.†

Sebastian Cabot himself related these things to Caspar Contarini, Venetian ambassador to Spain, and we cannot add a syllable to his account or take one from it, for he is the only witness to his own words.

Still for the nonce he took no action on the new proposition, but kept reflecting on it and maturing it in his mind. Perhaps the delay arose from the difficulty he saw in the way of drawing Venice into the benefits of the navigation of the New World. Meanwhile at Seville he contracted a close friendship with a Jerome de Marin de Busignole from Ragusa in Dalmatia, and knowing that he was about to proceed to Venice opened himself to him under a vow of secrecy, and engaged him to appear in his name before the council of Ten and make known his intention of asking to be allowed to appear before them in person for the purpose of declaring by word of mouth what he had in his mind.‡

In September 1522 the Ragusan executed the commission.§ The Ten were in some doubt as to the seriousness of the proposal, but considering it to be a matter of grave importance, were unwilling to let it fall through. With the usual prudence and astuteness of that famous council they warily sent in ad-

---

\* “Messer Sebastiano vui vi affaticati cussi grandemente per far beneficio a genti externe non vi aricordate della vostra terra, non seria possibile che etiam lei havesse qualche utilità da vui ?”—App. xxvi.

† *Ib.*

‡ *Ib.*

§ App. xxv.

vance to ascertain what foundation there was for a good result. Rewarding the Ragusan for his pains with a sum of money,\* they made him write to Sebastian that it would give the Ten pleasure to receive him. This letter they themselves sent to the Venetian ambassador in Spain, informing him of the matter, and intrusting him to remit it directly or by the safest means to Cabot's hands. The ambassador was to pretend to know nothing unless Sebastian himself should disclose it, and then he was to try to learn his sentiments from his own lips, as far as possible, and see if he had any good foundation for his action.†

On Christmas Eve, 1522, Sebastian was at the Venetian ambassador's house by his invitation and received the letter in a secret conference. He changed color on reading it and remained for some time in doubt and alarm without saying a word.‡ The intrusion of a third person in what should have been a secret between the Ragusan and himself excited a suspicion of treachery; but he was soon reassured on the ambassador's telling him that he had been informed of the matter by the council of Ten with orders to deliver to him the letter. The conversation was interrupted for the moment, because the ambassador was called away, but was resumed later in the evening and continued at great length. In this conversation besides what we have related of Cardinal Wolsey's offer and the complaint of Friar Stragliano Collona and the subsequent reflections of Sebastian Cabot, the latter also related that he had at other times thought of transferring to his

---

\* "1522. Die 27 Septembris in Collegio intervenientibus et ballotantibus, dominis Capitibus Illustrissimis Concilii X.

"Chel sia imposto al Camerlengo del Consiglio nostro dei X, che dei denari della cassa sua, dar debbi in dono ducati vinti a Domino Hieronimo de Mariu Raguseo pro bona causa.

+16

-4

Facto mandato.

-0 "Archivio dei Frari, Venezia, Consiglio dei Dieci, Lettere sottoscritte, Filza N. 5, 1522."

† App. xxv.

‡ "Io ritiratomi con lui, li detti la lettera, lui la lesse et legiendola si mossè tutto di colore. Da poij letta, stete cussi un pocheto senza dirmi altro quasi sbigotito et dubbio." Ib.

own country of Venice the benefit of his navigations, and had talked on the subject with the Venetian Ambassador in England. But he says nothing of the result of this conversation, and we have been unable to find any trace of it elsewhere. Contarini was charged to find out from Sebastian in what way he intended to conduct his undertaking, so as to inform the council, and subsequently Sebastian would have been able to appear before them in person. But Cabot replied that he would only disclose his plan to the chief of the Ten, and for that purpose would proceed to Venice under the pretext of recovering his mother's dower. So far they were agreed. But Contarini, who could not well have liked Sebastian's refusal to disclose to him his secret, after admitting that the undertaking if successful would be of very great advantage to Venice, began to raise very serious doubts of the possibility of success, founded on the situation of Venice in relation to the new lands to which he would have to sail. But Sebastian held firm to his refusal to explain, saying only "I know ; for I have navigated all those countries, and I know it all well,"\* and again asserted that he had not accepted England's offer, because if he had done so "no way would have remained for Venice." Returning to the subject a few days later, Contarini repeated the difficulties in the way of the plan, and Sebastian cut short all discussion with these words : " And I tell you that the way and the manner are plain. I will go to Venice at my own expense, they will hear me, and if the plan I have thought out does not please them, I will come back also at my own expense."†

After these first conversations Sebastian returned frequently to the ambassador's, repeating his determination to go to Venice to perform what he had promised.‡ But the others did not show the same eagerness. Finally, on the 7th of March, he notified the ambassador that he was obliged to suspend

---

\* *Ib.*

† "et io vi dico che la via ed il modo è facile. Anderò a Venetia a mie spese, me udiranno ne piacendoli il modo per me excogitato, io mi ritornerò pur a mie spese." *Ib.*

‡ App. xxvii.

for a while his request for permission<sup>\*</sup> to proceed to Venice, for fear lest it should be suspected that he intended going to England; and that the suspension would last three months. He urged that in the meantime a letter should be sent him from Venice, of the same tenor as that written to the Ragusan, in which under pretext of recovering his mother's dower they should give him an excuse for going to speak to the Council of Ten.\* The Council of Ten with unfortunate slowness neglected to answer the letter of December 31, 1522, in which Contarini related his conference with Cabot; and only aroused themselves when they received the second of March 7, 1523, in which the ambassador, after mentioning Sebastian's repeated visits and insistence, wrote that he had requested to put off his going to Venice for three months for safety's sake, fearing that if he asked permission to leave at that time they would regard it as a proof that he was going to England. That after that period he would go to Venice. And that in the meanwhile he recommended that they should have the Ragusan write him as they had done before urging him to proceed to Venice to arrange his affairs. Then the council at last replied and sent the letter in the Ragusan's name which Sebastian had requested.† The pretext for sending for him was his mother and his aunt's dower for the recovery of which the Ragusan said he had labored, but his personal presence was absolutely necessary.‡ On July 26 Contarini wrote again to the Ten saying that he had delivered to Sebastian the letter written him in the Ragusan's name; and that he said he was still firm in his intention and would take steps to obtain the permission to leave from the Spanish Government.§

This is the last word we have been able to find on the subject. What further happened? It may be that Sebastian distrusted that in the length of the negotiations, the many dispatches to and fro, something might leak out and get to the ears of the Spanish Government, and cause him trouble, and therefore prudently let the matter drop. If so, Contarini, who from the first conference had manifested very

\* *Ib.*† *Ib.*

‡ App. xxix.

§ App. xxx.



little confidence in his proposal, would certainly not have run after him to renew negotiations. But in spite of Cabot's protests, I think it much more probable that he was driven to apply to Venice not so much by patriotic affection, as by his own need, because he saw no other way of carrying out his plans. It surely was not for the sedentary and peaceful life of an office-holder that he went to Spain, however lucrative and honorable the office may have been ; his heart could not but sigh for voyages and discoveries, and must have fretted greatly in that quiet occupation where he passed his time over charts and examinations. In this discontented condition his thoughts strayed to Venice, and he was pleased with the hope that in following his patriotic affections, he might break his chains and find an arm and a flag to carry him through the battle of the sea. But after he had sent the Ragusan to Venice, there returned to Spain from the Moluccas the ship, "Victoria," which had taken part in Magellan's expedition ; and this return at once aroused thoughts and plans of new expeditions. \* May it not have been that the hopes excited in Cabot by this new order of things weakened his intention of applying to Venice ? For, although he assured Contarini that the undertaking he proposed to his native country was easy and sure, it is impossible but he should have felt the force of the arguments brought against it by that very learned ambassador. † For my part, I stick to this latter explanation, and am confirmed in it by observing the same thing occurring again, as we shall see, in similar circumstances in England.

Harrisse calls Sebastian Cabot's plan of going to Venice perfidious. Oh, why ? Perfidious is one who breaks faith with another. What obligation had Sebastian Cabot towards Spain ? That of fulfilling the duties incumbent on the office

\* The Victoria returned to Spain September 8, 1522, and the Senate of Venice on the 22nd of the same month wrote to its ambassador in Spain the offer of Sebastian Cabot. Therefore his offer was before the return of the vessel.

† See App. xxvi.—Caspar Contarini, afterwards Cardinal, was a man of profound and extensive learning. Peter Martyr d' Anghiera applied to him when he met with any difficult question of geography or cosmography in writ-

of Pilot-Major. Did he ever fail in any of them? Neither Harrisse nor anybody else ever said so, or can say so. What he offered to Venice was outside of the duty of a Pilot-Major. It cannot even be said that the plan he proposed to Venice originated or was in any way helped by his office of Pilot-Major, for his idea of discovering a passage to the regions of the East across the New World was many years prior to his acceptance of that office. Is a man of honor forbidden to make use of the most valuable thing at his disposal?—But Spain would have been greatly injured?—And what of that?—There is never a new invention that while the most useful for some is not injurious to others: it is the natural order of things. And precisely in this matter of discovery the prosperity and wealth of Spain and Portugal mortally wounded and killed the prosperity and wealth of Venice. If Spain broke no moral law when for her own interests she carried off from her ally, unwary England, the science and ability of Sebastian Cabot, why should he be branded with perfidy in offering to his native land the surplus of ability and science which Spain showed no inclination to make use of? For it is well to remember that Sebastian Cabot's office was purely sedentary and none at this time had talked of employing him in navigation and discovery. Indeed, at the first likelihood of his being so employed he cut off his negotiations with Venice and was wholly at Spain's disposal.

And this is to act perfidiously!

In the course of this same year 1523, under date of November 16, we find 10,000 maravedis deducted from his salary as Pilot-Major for the benefit of Maria Cerezo, widow of Amerigo Vespucci, as had been done before from the salary of De Solis.\* The year following, at the end of May, in a note of the funeral expenses of Sir Thomas Lovel, K. G. we find a memorandum of reimbursement of a certain John Goderyk,

---

ing his history. "Agitatus es cura," he says in one case of this kind, "conveni gasparem Coutarinium, oratorem apud Cæsarem pro sua Illustri Republica Veneta, omni litterarum genere non mediocriter eruditum," Dec. v, 7.

\*Navarrete, L. iii, Doc. xi, xiv, pp. 308, 311.

for bringing Sebastian Cabot to London at the request of the deceased.\* In the absence of all other information we can merely record the fact.

---

## CHAPTER XIV.

*Repeated attempts to find a passage through the new lands of America to reach the eastern shore of Asia.—Magellan.—Resentment of Portugal against Spain on account of his voyage.*

WE have at last reached a place where we are no longer obliged to grope our way, but may run on swiftly for a while. But before going back to speak directly of Sebastian Cabot, I deem it best to cast a glance around us to recognize the place and time in which we now are. Let not the reader take it ill if I go back a little and refresh his memory of some things. If for a moment I leave the straight path of our story, the short time spent will be well rewarded by the greater clearness acquired by the things we shall afterwards say.

The problem which at this time agitated the mind of Spanish mariners was the same which troubled the English seamen's mind, to find a way across the new countries of America which allowed direct navigation from our regions to those of the extreme east. But many as the reasons were which counselled England to seek it by way of the north, Spain had just as many to lead her to seek it instead by way of the south.

Before Spain, the Portuguese had labored to discover a passage south of Brazil, but in consequence of the unsatisfactory

---

\*"Item paid the XVIIth day of feb. to John Goderyk of Tory in the countie of Cornewall drap in full satsyfacon and recompense of his charge costis and labour conductyng of Sebastian Cabott master of the Pylotes in Spayne to London at the request of the testator by Indenture of covauntes 43 s 4 d."

"Expenses of the funeral of sir Thom. Lovell, knt. of the garter, who died at his manor of Essynges, in Endfield, Midlesex, 25 may 1524, paid by his exccutors." I. S. Brewer, Calendar Domestic and Foreign, Henry VIII, t. iv, Part. i, p. 154, N. 366.

results of the expeditions of 1501 and 1503, they had given up the thought and turned all their attention again to the passage which the fortunes of Vasco de Gama had opened. Thus while the Spaniards wore themselves out in looking for a passage by which to bring the treasures of Asia across the West Indies, the Portuguese, partly by treaties and partly by wars, went on extending their possessions in the East Indies and the hope of new and unheard-of wealth for their country. Among their most distinguished officers in these conquests was Ferdinand de Magalhaens or, as he is usually named in history, Magellan, who from the experience acquired in those regions and the study and reflection he joined with experience, conscious of his ability not only to leave the common herd of officers, but also to rise to first amongst the first, returned to Europe in the hope of obtaining from his King a mission worthy of the gifts he felt he possessed. But his hope was altogether frustrated. Then exasperated at his King and country, he took himself to Spain and offered his services to Charles V, persuading him that the Molucca Islands in the Indian Ocean over which Portugal had already extended her dominion, were beyond the line of partition and belonged to Spain; and he offered to take Spanish vessels thither, discovering the passage so long sought after in the seas of South America.

His proposal was favorably entertained and preparations begun.

When this was known in Portugal there was great excitement as at an attempt on the rights of the Portuguese Crown, and strong remonstrance was made to the court of Spain. Prayers and threats were tried in turn on Magellan, to calm his resentment or frighten him into withdrawing from the enterprise for which he was preparing: his assassination was even openly spoken of, saying that a perjured citizen who attempted such injury to his country merited the cruellest death.\* When all this failed, recourse was had to ridicule, turning into jest Magellan's presumption, his dreams, and

---

\* "y otros aconsejavan que los matassen, porque el negocio que tratavan, era perjudicial a Portugal." Herrera, Dec. ii, lib. iv, cap. 10.

Spain's credulity.\* But this new weapon proved as blunt as the others, and on September 20, 1519, Magellan sailed.

It is outside of our subject to relate the endless labors, the hunger, the struggles endured by Magellan's expedition ; the fierce energy with which he dragged after him rebellious officers and sailors ; his death at the moment of victory ; the rage of the Portuguese and the cruel war they made on the weak remnant of the glorious expedition. For our purpose it suffices to record that on September 8, 1522, more than three years after the sailing of the expedition, the news reached Spain that the passage to the East Indies across the New World was found, and that the Spanish flag had made the circuit of the globe.

But of the five ships that sailed, only the *Victoria* returned to Spain, and of all the bold and hardy youths that were on the five ships, only 18 men saw their native land again.

The losses suffered by the expedition in men and property were enormous ; but after the discovery of the New World, the greatest and most glorious of so many glorious enterprises, in those days so celebrated for the feverish activity of discoveries and navigations, was the finding of the much-sought passage through the American lands to those of the East, and making the circuit all around the World. The rejoicing over the great event prevented grief and complaint from being heard, and the great hopes it gave of the future compensated with interest the losses of the present. Whilst on one hand, the fancy of adventurers, of men of letters, of all who were interested in the glory of those discoveries, roamed on the new broad horizons which Magellan's discovery had opened, the greed of merchants seized anxiously on the specimens which the *Victoria* brought back, and counted the vast wealth which that discovery promised. Orders were at once given to prepare a fleet for those parts, and when it sailed they set to work to fit out another to follow it as soon as might be.†

---

\*“Decian los Portugueses que el Rey de Castilla perderia el gusto porque Hernando de Magallanes era hombre hablador i de poca substancia, i que non saldria con lo que prometia.”—*Id. ib.*

† “Se avia mandato, que luogo se aperciesse una armada, y que partida

But great as was the rejoicing which the return of the *Victoria* spread over all Spain, not less strong and loud was the wail of sorrow throughout Portugal. Every one saw and felt that the meddling of another Power in the treasures of those regions was a disaster to the commerce of Portugal, the consequences of which were beyond calculation. When the King learned of the preparations making to send another fleet to the Moluccas, he began to storm the Spanish Monarch with remonstrances, using prayers and threats, every means possible, to stay Spain at that first step; and proposed that the matter should be suspended until it was ascertained whether the Moluccas were on this side or that of the line of partition.\*

The Emperor saw clearly what was Portugal's object in making this proposal: it was to stop the Spaniards in their preparations for the expedition, so that he might gain the time needed to place arms and ships enough in those islands to use force, when other means failed, and save his Kingdom from the threatened ruin. But it was important for Charles V, engaged as he then was in a war with Francis I, King of France, troubled with the Reform in Germany, and constantly threatened with revolt in Spain, not to bring on himself this new enemy. On the other hand, the question of the right of possession had been so thoroughly studied and discussed before Magellan's proposal was accepted that he could afford to wait calmly for the report of a commission. He therefore showed a good face to King John's proposal, and it was agreed to remit the question to a conference of competent persons nomi-

---

aquella, se pudiesse otra a punto, que la siguiesse." Herrera, Dec. iii, lib. vi, cap. 5.

\* "El Rey don Ivan de Portugal, que de todo era avisado, pareciendole que se le salia de las manos, el mejor y mas rico aprovechamiento que tenia, hizo muchos oficios con el Rey, para que no se embiasse armada a las islas de la Especeria, hasta que se determinasse a quien partenencian: y que no se le hiziesse tanto daño, como era quitarle su aprovechamiento, ni que se diesse ocasion a que se matassen los Portugueses con los Castellanos, como lo harian topandose la una armada con la otra. . ." Herrera, Dec. iii, lib. vii, cap. v. And Pietro Martire " . . . quo pacto cum Portugalensibus concludetur, qui se iacturam ingentem perpessuros ex hoc negocio conqueruntur, significabimus." Dec. v, cap. vii.

nated by both sides. \* The Emperor desired to associate with the conference, a committee of some of the most esteemed cosmographers and geographers of his Kingdom, to aid the discussion by their advice and report to him on its progress. Sebastian Cabot was a member of this committee.† The conference met in April, 1524, but as Portugal's interest was to have matters drag on as slowly as possible, there was much discussion but no conclusion come to, till the Spanish Deputies tired of the game determined to end it and on May 31, by a long declaration with their reasons, they established Spain's right to the Molucca Islands.‡

As soon as the declaration was received in Spain, government and private individuals set to work eagerly to make up for lost time. Not two months had elapsed when, on July 24, Commander Loaysa sailed from Corunna with seven ships to help Magellan's men who had been left in the islands of the Ocean, and secure to Spain possession of the Moluccas.§

---

## CHAPTER XV.

### *Sebastian Cabot put at the head of an expedition to the Moluccas.*

WHILE the government was supplying arms and provisions for Loaysa's fleet, and sending it to the new possessions in the

---

\* "Aunque el Rey conocia bien, que esto era dilacion, para que éntretanto tuviessen tiempo los Portugueses de entrarse en las Islas . . . . y sabia que el Rey de Portugal embiava ordenes y gente par ello, aviendo passado muchas embaxadas, replicas de una parte a otra . . porque la voluntad del Emperador era de conservar con el Rey de Portugal su deudo y amistad..etc." *ib.* cap. 5-6.

† "El Emperador....mandó yr a essa Junta a otros Cosmografos, y Pilotos, maestros de hazer cartas de navegar . . . para la declaracion del sitio de las islas . . . . que eran Sebastian Gaboto &c. . . ." *Id.* *ib.* cap. 6.—Cabot gave his opinion in writing, jointly with Friars Thomas Duran and John Vespucci, Americo's nephew.—See Navarrete iv, no. xxxv, p. 339. ed. 1837.

‡ Navarrete, *ib.* No. xxxvii, p. 343.—The first signature to the Declaration was that of Fernando Columbus, son of Christopher Columbus. See also Herrera, Dec. iii, lib. vi, cap. viii.

§ Herrera, Dec. iii, lib. vii. —Oviedo, Part ii, lib. 20, cap. 4.

Indian Ocean, a company was formed and organized among the merchants of Seville for a commercial expedition to the same places, with all the more hope and confidence of great profits because Cabot, whose authority as Pilot-Major was naturally regarded as of the greatest weight in such matters, had expressed the opinion that other islands besides those discovered were scattered over those seas, and not less deserving of exploration than the Moluccas.\* Some English merchants were associated with the Spanish, among others Robert Thorne, whose memorial to Henry VIII, urging the search for a northern passage to Asia, has been spoken of in our Tenth Chapter.†

To assure the success of this expedition, the merchants' company thought of giving the command of it to the Pilot-Major himself.‡ The supreme council of the Indies approved of their wish, and in September gave Cabot permission to take charge of the expedition.§ Well pleased with the duty, he at once set about making his preparations. But however honorable the office of directing a company of merchants, it was but ill suited to his genius as a discoverer : he felt himself invited to storms in new seas, the anxiety of dangers unseen by others, and the delight and glory of pointing out to the world the discovery of new lands and peoples. He had therefore hardly accepted the new charge before he devoted his whole energy to drawing the government into the enterprise, and from a mercantile one, as it was, to give it an entirely different direction, throwing the whole weight of it on the royal treasury, and leaving the merchants only the burden of providing the necessary funds for trading.

To this end, towards the middle of September, he proceeded

\* Herrera, Dec.iii, lib. iv, cap. 20.

† Hakluyt, vol. i, p. 215.

‡ "Las muestras que la nao Victoria traxo de las especias, y otras cosas de los Molucos, dio animo a muchos hombres de Sevilla, para solicitar a Sebastian Gaboto, Piloto mayor del Rey a ofrecer de hazer a quel viage, prometiendo de armarle para el."—Herrera, Dec. iii, lib. x, cap. i.

§ "Speramus fore ut Sebastianus Cabotus Baccalorum repertor, cui circiter Kal. Septembris supplicanti, ex nostri senatus auctoritate permissa est navigationis perquirendae potestas, brevior tempore ac felicioribus avibus sit rediturus, quam Victoria navis." P. Martire d'Anghiera, Dec. vii, cap. 6. . .



to court, and setting forth the great advantages of the coöperation of the merchants of Seville, he asked the government for four ships furnished and equipped with every thing needed.\* The government approved of Cabot's views, and on March 4, 1525, the conditions of its concurrence in the expedition were agreed on. After fixing the proportion of the expenses and profits of the government and of the merchants' company, it was settled that Cabot should have with him not less than three ships, with authority to increase the number to six, of the burden and crews fixed upon, and he should sail by Magellan's Strait to the Moluccas and other islands in those regions. From there he was to go in search of the islands of Tarshish and Ophir, of Eastern Cathay, and of Cipango, loading at each of these places and others that he should discover along his passage, all the gold, silver, precious stones, pearls, and the like, that he could find. † On his return he was to sail close along the whole southern coast of the new continent of America. ‡ It is unnecessary to say that Cathay corresponds to the northern part of the modern empire of China, Ophir and Tarshish are places mentioned in the Bible; from the former Solomon with his fleet brought great quantities of gold; § and the latter is named in one of the

---

\* "Quatuor navium classiculam, omnibus ad rem maritimam facientibus et commodis tormentorum vasis paratam, ab Caesareo aerario Cabotus poposcit, socios ait se reperisse Hispani, quae Sebilla dicitur, commerciorum omnium Indicorum emporio, qui sub spe magni lucri, ad classicule com meatum et caetera necessaria, ducatorum decem millium sua sponte summam obtulerint. Ad offerendam participum sociorum obligationem circiter idus septembris a nobis dimissus est Cabotus." *Id. ib.*

† "... a quatro de Março del año pasado de mil quinientos y veynte cinco, capituló con el Rey en Madrid, que yria con tres navios o mas, hasta seys, por el estrecho de Magallanes . . . . en demanda de las islas de Molucos, y de las demas que avian sido descubiertas . . . y así mismo en busca de las otras islas y tierras de Tarsis, Ofir, y el Catajo Oriental, y Cipango . . . para . . . cargar los navios del oro, plata, y piedras preciosas, perlas etc . . . que hallasse, assi en aquellas islas, como en otras tierras, que en el viage descubriesse. . . ." *Herrera, Dec. iii, lib. x, cap. i. E. App. N. xxxix.*

‡ "His perlustratis et prudenti diligentia pertractatis, nostri putati continentis latus australe universum abra dent." *Pietro Martire d'Anghiera, Dec. vii, cap. 6.*

§ "Classim quoque fecit rex Salomon . . . . misitque . . . in classe illa

Psalms as a very rich place, from which men werè to come with gifts to the Messiah.\*

It was long disputed among interpreters of the Bible where these two places were situated and to what modern lands they correspond, and the most divergent opinions were put forward. It is enough for our purpose that both were generally placed in the east, and as imagination had greatly worked up the wealth of those places, the desire to reach them was one of the most cherished dreams of navigators and discoverers. There was still greater desire to reach the island of Cipango, "abounding with gold, pearls, and gems," as Paul Toscanelli, the physician, wrote to Canon Fernando Martinez of Lisbon, "and the temples and royal dwellings are roofed with plates of gold."† Marco Polo had said that this island was to be found fifteen hundred miles from Cathay. Columbus was enraptured with delight when he thought he had arrived there.

The departure of the expedition was set for August of that year 1525 ; ‡ but a serious controversy between Sebastian Cabot and the merchants' company prevented it. He wanted for his lieutenant on the expedition Michael de Rufis, the others wanted him to take Martin Mendez.§ Cabot supported his selection by the fact that Rufis had added a caravel to the expedition at his own expense, which seemed to give him a claim on the second position. But the others set up the experience of Mendez, who had been commissary of subsistence

servos suos viros nauticos et gnaros maris . . . Qui cum venissent in Ophir sumptum inde aurum 420 talentorum detulerunt ad regem Salomonem. "Reg. iii, ix, 26-28 : et ió. x. 2 . . . "Classis . . . quae portabat aurum de Ophir, attulit ex Ophir ligna thyina multa nimis et gemmas pretiosas. . . . Nont sunt allata hujuscemodi ligna thyina, neque visa usque in presentem diem."

\* "Reges Tharsis et insulæ munera offerent, reges Arabum et Saba dona adducent." Ps. lxxi, 10.

† Fernando Colombo, *Historie*, cap. 8—See Tarducci, *Life of Columbus*, i, p. 58.

‡ "Est Cabotus Augusto mense proximi MDXXV discessurus," Peter Martyr d'Anghiera, l. c.

§ "Los Diputados de los armidores, por diferencias que con el general avian tenido, quisieron que fuesse Martin Mendez, y no Miguel de Rufis a quien pretendia llevar en este cargo Sebastian Gaboto." Herrera. l. c.

on Magellan's expedition, and was one of the honored survivors that returned with the *Victoria*. This was the apparent cause of the dispute, but the real cause must be looked for in the wrath of the merchants at the new direction given to their undertaking. We have no light by which to see into the proceedings; but from the nature of the facts themselves it seems to me possible to draw the conviction that the merchants could not have felt satisfied that the expedition should exceed the modest limits of a commercial enterprise, within which it was first conceived, and should take on the character and scope of a regular exploration and discovery. And I am of opinion that they found themselves bound to the government either by surprise or want of courage and strength to resist. And in truth they had looked for sure gain from the Molucca Islands, already discovered and visited; but Cabot was dragging them on a new uncertain expedition, all the more dangerous for the vastness of the field he proposed to cover; they were looking for gold, Cabot for glory. In such circumstances the choice of a lieutenant became a matter of the highest importance to the merchants; for, to let Cabot have one who would be his tool, devoted to his will, was the same as surrendering themselves bound hand and foot into his power, and to let him guide and lead the expedition where and how he pleased.

Cabot found it hard enough to hold his side of the question, for the fact that Mendez had already gone over the same course naturally pointed him out for the position, and the celebrity which clung to him as one of the few survivors of that famous expedition drew attention to him and made his appointment acceptable to all. But he held firm, understanding perfectly the merchants' object, and that to take as lieutenant a creature of theirs, was like hanging a stick between his legs to impede his journey. The dispute became bitter, and as neither side would yield to the other, the merchants, feeling that in their proposal they had the wall against their back, applied to the Emperor. They not only applied to him in order to win their cause in the question of

a lieutenant, but, as often happens in like cases of deep and lively exasperation that the eye sees every thing wrong where all was clear and fair before, the merchants loaded Cabot with so many and so serious charges that they demanded to have the command taken away from him altogether, and Captain Francis de Rojas put in his place.\* The sailing of the expedition was delayed in consequence.

It was a case that required a clean cut, free and resolute, without timidity or uncertainty ; the violent operation causes severe pain, but at least one of the parts gets well again. To take a middle course, and for fear of hurting one side or the other too much, try to divide the evil in halves, and by taking a little from one and a little from the other, hope to keep them united, is to lose one's labor, and end with the opposite of what was intended, for it leaves both in pain, and makes the exasperation between them more vivid and deep.

Charles V unfortunately followed this course. He summoned the deputies of the company, and showed them what a scandal would follow the substitution of another captain in command of the expedition, and induced them to be satisfied with Mendez, their choice, being appointed as its lieutenant ; and hoped to quiet Cabot in the humiliation to which he was subjected by the enforced acceptance of Mendez, by declaring that the latter "should only meddle with things that Cabot put under his charge, and only represent him when absent or unable to act, and not interfere in any other way."†

---

\* "Los Diputados . . . avian llevado al Rey un memorial, poniendo tantos defetos en la persona de Gaboto, que quando el armada no estuviera tan adelante, y tuviera tanta voluntad ques aliera con brevedad, le mandara quedar." — Herrera, l. c.

Item si saben etc. que estando proveydo el dicho sebastian gaboto por capitan general dela dicha armada los armadores y diputados della procuraron vista la ynavilidad y poco valor de persona suya che su magestad le quitase el dicho cargo y proveyese del al dicho capitan Francisco de Rojas N. 3 of the Interrogatories presented by Rojas himself against Sebastian Cabot. See. App. n. xxxv.

† "El Rey . . . a todos los compuso, y sossegó : y poniendo les por delante el escandalo, y inconveniente que de aquella division sucederia, con que se sossegaron en parte . . . Martin Mendez . . . fue provehido por Teniente general, con que no se occupasse, sino en las cosas que el General le cometiesse, y estando ausente, o impedido, no de otra manera." — Herrera, l. c.

The sad effects of this arrangement were soon seen. The fleet was at San Lucar de Barrameda, only waiting for a fair wind to set sail, when Mendez suddenly took his things and hurried to Seville to the council of the Indies to make his complaint and hand in his resignation. Catharine Vasquez, his mother, in her prosecution of Sebastian Cabot years after, accuses him of showing ill-will towards her son, treating him unfairly, and being his enemy, not being able to endure which her son left and went to give up his office.\* But her witnesses while confirming Mendez's sudden departure from the ship and his going to Seville, say nothing of any bad treatment or want of consideration of him on Cabot's part; although it would have been plain to everybody and there ought to have been no difficulty in finding witnesses. Only one of the witnesses speaks of it, and as a thing he had heard from Captain Francis de Rojas, that is to say, from a worse enemy of Cabot's than Mendez himself. On the other hand it is not at all likely that Cabot would have been imprudent enough openly to disregard the Emperor's orders just received, and right before his eyes, for Charles V was then at Seville. † The charge of Vasquez should then be taken with discretion, namely, that Cabot in his state of irritation against Mendez, did not hold him in that consideration which was due to the office of lieutenant, and Mendez, irritated in turn against Cabot, gave undue weight to this neglect, or else arguing from this commencement what might be expected later on, determined to provide for it at once and protect himself. The Bishop of Osma, President of the council of the Indies, quieted Mendez with fair words, and promising that things should change, sent him back to the fleet.‡ He then summoned Cabot before him, and also Rifos, whom Cabot employed

---

\*“...el dicho martin Mendez...viendo la mala voluntad en el tratamiento e obros de enemistad que le hazia el dicho sebastian caboto y la poca cuentas que hazia del se determino del bolver....e vino a quexar e quexó a los señores presidente e oydores del Consejo Real de las yndias....” *Sesta Pregunta de la Provança de Catalina Vasquez, madre de Martin Mendez.*—App. xxxiv.

† *Ib. Id.* ix witness.

‡ *Ib.* viii Pregunta.—Osma is a city of Old Castile in Spain, on an affluent of the Douro.

in all matters that should have fallen to Mendez, and according to Vasquez's charge, severely reprimanded and threatened them, and his threats were specially severe upon Rifos if he should interfere with the duties belonging to Mendez.\* These last words are sufficient of themselves to show how exaggerated is the charge made by Vasquez; for to threaten Rifos if he interfered with the duties belonging to the lieutenant, was the same thing as to threaten him if he obeyed the orders of the supreme commander of the fleet, since it is natural that he should interfere when and where his superior commanded; and besides, the Emperor having ordered that Mendez should only meddle with such matters as the General gave him in charge, it follows naturally that the General was free to give his commissions to others. It is also to be observed here that the witnesses refer to what they had heard say by John de Junco, who was Cabot's declared enemy.†

I see plainly that more than one reader will deem it superfluous to go into all these petty details, but the dearth of documents obliges us to make the most of every thing to get at the condition of things and minds at the time Cabot's expedition was preparing. For this purpose we must even allude to another serious charge in the proofs of Catharine Vasquez, although not the slightest support was given it by any witness. She says that Catharine de Medrano, Cabot's wife, who according to the charge possessed great influence over her husband, after vainly trying to prevent Mendez's appointment, conceived a bitter hatred for him, and employed a person to assassinate him.‡

But much more serious for the fate of the expedition is what Cabot himself puts in the third interrogatory of his answer. He says that Mendez, Rojas, and the other principal officers of the fleet, before sailing, held a secret meeting to

\* *Ib.* vii Pregunta.

† Pregunta xxx and following, of Sebastian Cabot's proofs in reply to the accusation of Vasquez. For this hostility of John de Junco towards Cabot as also for that of Francis de Rojas previously mentioned, the reader must be satisfied to take my word, and wait for the proof in the proper place.

‡ *Ib.* Pregunta v.

gether in Seville in St. Paul's church, and there bound themselves by an oath to unite on every occasion against Sebastian Cabot for the purpose of depriving him of the command of the expedition, and putting Rojas in his place. \*

Of the witnesses called by him to sustain this serious charge, one says that he had heard this secret meeting and the oath taken by those officers spoken of in Seville even before they sailed, and gives the name of the officer who told him of it, but he was not informed of the object of the meeting or of the oath. † The others all unite in testifying that the affair was publicly talked of in the fleet, and it was said further that the oath not only contemplated the removal of Sebastian Cabot and the substitution of Captain Rojas in his place, but also his murder.‡

It seems hard to think that any thing so serious could be believed and publicly rumored without some basis of truth. It may very likely have been exaggerated in the men's talk, and reached Cabot's ears in that shape, but there must have been something to it. If there was a meeting, and some compact between the officers, it surely was not in Cabot's favor: this is certain from what followed. But suppose it was a false report, a calumny; its spread amongst the men of the expedition was enough of itself to inoculate the whole with a poison fatal to all discipline and good order.

\*"Yten di saben questando en la çibdad de sevilla martin mendez e francisco de Rojas e otros muchos que yvan devaxo de la capitania del dicho sebastian caboto se juntaron en el monesterio de san pablo dela dicha çibdad e ay se conjuraron de ser en todo lo que se ofresçiere contra el dicho sebastian caboto e que querian alçar al dicho Francisco de Rojas, per capitan general." —Tercera pregunta.

† "... estando en la çibdad de sevilla antes que fuesen a sanlucar de barameda con las dichas naos oyo dezir al contador Valdez que se juntaron el dicho capitan Rojas e los otros capitanes y oficiales que yvan en la dicha armada e que avian fecho un juramento en san pablo o en san francisco de sevilla pero que no le dixo para que ni para que no . . . ." ix testigo.

‡ For the sake of brevity I give only a few words of the tenth witness "... yendo esto dicho testigo en la dicha armada oyo decir publicamente a la gente de la dicha armada . . . que avian fecho Francisco de Rojas e martin mendez.... concilio contro el dicho sebastian caboto para le matar e alçar por capitan general al dicho francisco de Rojas."

The witness was a sailor of the expedition.

This wickedness no doubt originated in the animosity of the merchants towards Sebastian Cabot ; but it appears from the very commencement so extensive and so deep that it cannot be explained by that alone. They wanted, it is true, and endeavored his ruin, but here are evident symptoms of the ruin and death of the whole expedition. This the merchants could not have intended, for it was a blow at themselves and their own interests. We must then look elsewhere. To understand the matter well, we must remember Portugal's alarm, when she learned of Magellan's expedition preparing, the efforts made to hinder its fitting out, to stop its progress, to destroy it when it reached its goal. Then the cry of grief at the return of the *Victoria*, the protests, complaints, prayers of the Portuguese King that Spain would not invade the rights of his crown: in fine, his subterfuges and craft to delay the conference and not come to any decision. When afterwards, on the declaration of the Spanish Delegates, Spain insisted on the recognition of her rights and ordered the preparations for Loaysa's departure to go on, the King of Portugal cried out and blustered, and there was even talk of war.\* Arms were not taken up, but Portuguese diplomacy recommenced an active campaign against the Spanish possession of the Moluccas, until at last it succeeded, and by the treaty of 1529 brought those islands under the dominion of its own crown.†

If, then, Portugal continued so urgently her complaints and negotiations, and never ceased till she had gained her point, can we suppose that during the preparation of Cabot's expedition she only gave vent to complaints, and not rather used every means, tried every way, made every attempt to

---

\*Peter Martyr d' Anghiera, Dec. vi, cap. x.

†“El Rey de Portugal...no teniendo por definido el negocio de la particion.. siempre se guexava y dezia, que era agraviado....pero viendo que el Emperador continuava en armar, estando muy firme que aquellas islas caian en su demarcacion, y que las queria gozar bolvio allevar el negocio por otro camino, aprovechandose de la necesidad en que vio que estava el Emperador de dineros . .en Zaragoza á veynte y dos de Abril deste año (1529)los mesmos Comissarios celebraron carta de venta. . . con pacto de retrovendendo perpetuo, por precio de trezientos y cinquenta mil ducados....” Herrera, Dec. iv, lib. v, cap. 10—Navarrete, iv, Doc. xli, p. 389



render it abortive? For we must consider that if Cabot's enterprise succeeded, and Spain learned the advantage of possessing the Moluccas, Portugal could never hope to rid herself of this dangerous neighbor in the seas of India. On the other hand, she could always hope for a good result if she could draw matters out to a great length, and weary Spain and the Emperor with expense and procrastination. It is therefore morally certain that Portugal, unequal to open warfare, fought underhand in every possible way the expedition of Cabot, and the most obvious and natural means was to blow on the merchants' anger, increase the distrust and disesteem among the officers, sow in all the seeds of envy and dislike, and so secure the failure of the expedition.

---

## CHAPTER XVI.

### *Sailing of the expedition.*

At last, all difficulties vanquished, the fleet left San Lucar de Barrameda on the 3rd of April, 1526, and put to sea.\*

The season, it is true, was not far enough advanced to be favorable for the voyage they were to make; but one of the seamen left in the Moluccas by Magellan's expedition having by great good fortune succeeded in gaining the shores of Europe, returned to Spain with the news of the cruelties practised by the Portuguese on the wretched survivors of that expedition and of their capture of the Trinidad. This news caused the order to sail to be given at once, in order to

---

\* "Despues de muchas dificultades, parti6 Sebastian Gaboto a los primeros de Abril, de este año, 1526." Herrera, Dec. iii, lib. ix, cap. 3.

The exact date of sailing is given in the narrative of Lewis Ramirez—"Salieron de la bahia de San Lucar a 3 de Abril." See App. xxxvii.

carry provisions and reënforcements to those remaining on the islands.\*

Sebastian Cabot commanded the flagship, with Francis de Concha in charge of accounts and Fernando Calderon as Treasurer. The Santa Maria del Espinar was commanded by Gregory Caro, who had with him Michael Baldes as chief of accounts and John de Junco as Treasurer. The third ship was called the Trinity, and commanded by Francis de Rojas with Anthony Montoya chief of accounts and Gonzalo Nuñez de Balboa for Treasurer. Michael de Rufis commanded his own caravel. Caspar de Ribas was chief constable of the fleet. Many noble youths and persons of quality took part in the expedition as volunteers. Amongst these Herrera places Michael de Rodas, whose name in the course of our story will acquire a sad importance, and of whom the Spanish historian says that he was very experienced in matters pertaining to the sea, and a man of worth, and that he went on board by the King's order but without any office.† But in the suit between Sebastian Cabot and Catharine Vasquez he is repeatedly mentioned, and generally as pilot of the flagship, from which we must presume that Herrera was mistaken, or else that he assumed the duties of pilot during the voyage.‡ In another place further on Herrera calls him a brother of Francis de Rojas captain of the Trinidad; and as the two surnames are always distinct and different not only in Herrera, but throughout the suit that was afterwards brought against Sebastian Cabot by the mother of Martin Mendez, we must conclude that if they were brothers they were only so on

---

\*“y porque en esta ocasion llegó un marinero, de los que avian estado en los Moluchos, y riferió el maltratamiento que avian hecho los Portugueses a los Castellanos, y los pocos que avian quedado, y como avian tomado la nave Trinidad, se solicitó con mas cuydado la partida de Sebastian Gaboto, por que los fuese a socorrer—”Herrera, *l. c.*

†“Fueron tambien en ella muchos hijos Dalgo, y personas principales voluntariamente . . . y Miguel de Rodas, que aunque muy platico a las cosas de la mar, y hombre de valor; no llevaba oficio, porque yva por orden del Rey . . .” Herrera, *ib.*

‡“ Yten si saben quel dicho sebastian caboto enbió a miguel de Rodas piloto de la nao capitana . . . ” *Pregunta vi*; and twice again in the vii and viii.

the mother's side, not on the father's.\* The whole number of persons was two hundred.†

On sailing each commander of a ship received a sealed packet containing orders for succeeding to the command of the fleet in case of Cabot's death. When they were to be opened we know not, but from the nature of the orders we should suppose as soon as they were at sea.

Francis de Rojas was named first, then came Michael de Rodas, and Michael Mendez third,‡ then followed other names. "It is difficult," Biddle justly remarks, "to imagine a scheme better fitted to nurse disaffection."§ Cabot's death or his retirement for whatever cause, from command of the fleet, must ever stand as an attractive prospect before the fancy of the privileged persons whose names were inscribed on that list. There were three government ships, and it is natural that in case of the death or disability of the commander of the flagship one of the other two captains should succeed to the command of the fleet. Indeed the secret orders assign the commander of the Trinidad, Francis de Rojas, to the succession. But if he failed, it was not the commander of the Santa Maria who was to take the place ; he came eleventh on the list, after the chief constable, after all the treasurers, the chiefs of accounts of the ships, even those of his own ship, Santa Maria del Espinar, who passed over the Captain's head. Was it accident, mistake, or was it intended ? Let us hasten to say that Captain Gregory Caro put at the bottom of the list, at the tail of his own subalterns, steadfastly maintained his loyalty to Sebastian Cabot ; how he was treated by the privileged officers who were to succeed first to his office, we shall soon see.

And now before commencing the sad story of the events

One witness to the *vi Pregunta* of the Probança of Vasquez: "oyo decir . . . que miguel de Rodas piloto mayor de la dicha armada . . . etc. . . ."

\* "Los dos *hermanos* Roxas y Martin Mendez." Herrera, Dec. 18, lib. ix, cap. 3.

† This number is given in a letter of Dr. Affonso Simão, the King of Portugal's agent in Spain. We shall give the letter in full further on.

‡ Herrera, *ib.*

§ Biddle, bk. i, ch. xviii, p. 133.

which follow, I must inform the reader beforehand, that we are in a most unfavorable position for understanding and judging Sebastian Cabot's conduct.\* His friend Peter Martyr D' Anghiera was dead; and the only two historians left who speak of Cabot, are Gomara and Herrera. Gomara published his work in 1552 at a time when as we shall see further on, all Spain was loading Cabot's name with reproaches and maledictions; and he dedicated his history to Charles V who just at that time was at the height of his anger at Cabot. Herrera lived later, but was still too close to that period to be able to strip himself wholly of that animosity not altogether blamable, which his compatriots had towards Cabot, and the information he furnishes us is taken in great part from the writings and memoirs of Sebastian's enemies. Add to all this that it is very little they tell us about him, and that little is generally so vague that it is difficult to gather its precise meaning and bearing. Take for example the way in which Herrera relates the events of the expedition from the day when it sailed from the shores of Spain till its arrival at the isle of Patos on the coasts of Brazil: "Sebastian Cabot was sailing to the Canaries, and the Cape Verde Islands, and then to Cape St. Augustine and the island of Patos, and near the Bay of All Saints he ran against a French ship and according to the opinion of the most practised seamen he did not conduct himself on that voyage as a sailor of experience, nor even as a good captain, for he ran short of provisions from badly distributing them; and as some minds remained dissatisfied about the Seville quarrels, and he took small pains to pacify them, there arose murmurs, and insolences in the fleet on account of the navigation and command; and so he arrived at the island of Patos greatly pinched with hunger."†

---

\* "while there exist so many causes for misunderstanding Cabot's conduct, and motives for misrepresenting it, the writer, unfortunately, whose statements have since been adopted, almost without question, prepared his history under circumstances little inclining him to impartiality." Biddle, *Memoir*.

† "fue navegando a las Canarias, y a las Islas de Cabo Verde: y despues al Cabo de San Agustin, y a la isla de Patos: y cerca de la Bahia de Todos Santos, se topó con una nave francesa, y segun la opinion de los mas platicos hombres de mar, non se guvernó en esta navegacion, como marinero de espe-

Biddle calls attention to the vagueness of this account which he observes is characteristic of falsehood. \* It is indeed strange that an historian over-abounding in details like Herrera, should be so sparing in his account of a matter of so much importance, and condense in a single period so many different matters, leaving the reader wholly at a loss to find any thing out, or see clearly what occurred. Here we complain of his vagueness ; we shall have more than one occasion to find fault with his open partiality in narrating and in judging facts, not to say his falsehood and injustice.

This injury can be partially repaired by the testimony of contemporary documents which we have succeeded in obtaining. But these are unfortunately of little use, and although enough to put in a good view the figure of Cabot, which confined to the shade left us full of doubt and suspicion, they are not sufficient for a full and calm judgment either of events or of the persons who took part in them.

These documents are 1. The heads of accusations presented against Cabot by Catharine Vasquez, mother of Lieutenant Martin Mendez, then deceased ; 2. Those presented by Francis de Rojas captain of the ship *Trinidad* ; 3. Sebastian Cabot's answer or defense ; 4. The Depositions of the witnesses summoned by both sides on the trial ; 5. The letter sent from *La Plata* during the same voyage by Lewis Ramirez who took part in it ; 6. The Requisition or Demand that Sebastian Cabot caused to be made on Francis de Rojas through the medium of Diego Garcia ; 7. The narrative of his voyage made by Diego Garcia who met Sebastian Cabot on the *Plata* : To these we shall add a letter of Dr. Affonso Simão to the King of Portugal, and another letter from Cabot himself to John de Samano secretary of the Emperor Charles V. †

---

riencia, ni aun como buen Capitan; porque le faltó la vitualla, por ser mal repartida : y como por las diferencias de Sevilla, ivan algunos animos mal satisfechos, y el tuvo poco cuydado en sossegarlos, nacieron murmuraciones y atrevimientos en el armada, por causa de la navegacion, y del gobierno ; y assi, llegó a la isla de Patos, con mucha hambre." Herrera. Dec. iii, lib. ix, cap. 3.

\* "The whole passage has that air of vagueness so characteristic of falsehood." Biddle, i, xix. p. 137, note.

† Dr. Simão's letter was published by Varnhagen in the *Historia Geral do*

The fleet was hardly at sea before Cabot set Lieutenant Martin Mendez altogether aside, and in every thing belonging to his office made use of the services of Michael Rifos or, if he was unavailable, of Fernando Calderon. This is the ninth charge brought against Cabot by Mendez's mother, and all the witnesses confirm it, nor does he in any way contradict it in his answer.\* We must therefore hold it for true, and blame Cabot for having looked out very badly for his own future and for that of the expedition. That he believed he could put no trust in Mendez's loyalty is easily comprehended; but without putting him altogether aside, he might have reserved the more delicate matters for Rifos, and employed his lieutenant in the others. Humiliating and degrading him only added fresh fuel to enmities already fierce and powerful, and gave a hold to his enemies for increasing the murmurs and hostility. He ought not to have forgotten that there was a strong party in the fleet leagued with Mendez, and the mortal offense he gave his lieutenant would produce a counterblow in the mind of all those that sided with him. In this way the expedition, already menaced in its juncture, received a new shock sufficient to dissolve it altogether. Had Cabot acted otherwise, either Mendez would have laid aside some of his ill-will and calmed down, which would have been a great gain for the success of the expedition; or else he would have continued implacable in his hostility to his Captain, and then the latter would not have wanted opportunities to take him at fault, and then strike his

---

*Brazil*, Madrid, 1854, p. 486—See App. xli.—The letter of Ramirez was published by the same Varnhagen in the *Revista Trimensal*, Rio Janeiro, 1852. T. xv.

Unfortunately I have not been able to procure this Review, and for the letter of Ramirez I have been obliged to content myself with a summary which was courteously sent me from Spain. Luckily the summary is tolerably full and embraces all the material part of the narrative. See App. xxxvii.

The excessive length of the papers in suit has rendered it impossible for me to give them all in the appendix: I shall however give as exact and faithful a summary of them as it is possible for me to do. The same reason of their length though in a less degree, has dissuaded me from reproducing in full the Interrogatories of Captain de Rojas, the demand made on him by Diego Garcia, and the narrative or *Derroterio* [Itinerary] of the same Garcia. I shall give the entire summary of Ramirez's letter just as it was sent me from Spain.

\* See. App. xxxiv.

blow, and remove him by an exercise of justice apparent to all. By this means the rigor of his justice would have improved the discipline of the crew and increased their esteem. Instead of that, he lowered himself in the opinion of every one, and gave his enemies the appearance of being in the right, and by furnishing them an opportunity for spreading the discontent in the ships, made it easy for them to win proselytes to their side. He did not even gain any thing in the security of his command by displacing Mendez so long as the other officers, tainted with the same pitch as Mendez, retained their respective commands, especially Rojas who was the first of all the officers after Cabot.

The ships stopped at the island of Palma in the Canaries to take in the necessary supplies for continuing the voyage ;\* and here further symptoms and causes of the latent dissolution of the expedition were immediately manifested.

Cabot in his answer to the charges in the suit under the fourth head, says that on this island, those who had met in conspiracy in St. Paul's of Seville, met again for the same purpose in the house of Alonzo de Santa Cruz who was one of the Inspectors for the merchants' company. Of the witnesses produced, one testifies that Santa Cruz was lame in one leg, and he often saw the persons mentioned by Cabot go in and out of his house, but cannot say whether those visits were on account of his sickness or not. It is very possible that they were visits of friendship on account of his illness, and yet their talk turning, as was natural, on their relations with Cabot, whom they hated, may not have had for its direct and sole purpose the renewal of the bonds and oaths of their union. But even if they were not real meetings for conspiracy, they were believed so by all the men in the expedition. On this point the witnesses called by Cabot all agree : they do not know whether those meetings were directed against Cabot or not, but they were publicly looked upon among the crews as conspiracies against the commander of the expedition, and publicly spoken of as such. †

---

\*Narrative of Lewis Ramirez, App. xxxvii.

† The witnesses' words are all in this tone : "IX testigo.—Dixo que no sabe

Whether it was the result of what was agreed on at these meetings or a thought originating in Martin Mendez's mind, the latter prepared a writing to send to the Emperor notifying him of the manner in which Sebastian Cabot was conducting the expedition. But Cabot was on the watch for what his enemies did and said, and by means of the trusty Rifos sequestered the letters of Mendez and all others that wrote to Spain, in order to assure himself of their contents.\* According to the charge of Rojas, he did the same thing at several other times on the voyage,† and with our present customs and way of thinking, this would be a very serious matter, and severely to be condemned; but it was differently looked on in the days of Sebastian Cabot, and to appreciate it at its true value we must put it in connection with the idea of his time.

So far as appears, among the ill-advised sealed instructions which the government gave Cabot, there was one requiring him to inform the Captains at the island of Palma of the course he intended to take on the voyage. Upon this injunction, as Cabot said nothing, Rojas accompanied by the others appeared before him and demanded in right of the royal orders to know what course he intended to follow. Cabot tried to evade giving a direct answer, saying that he had had an understanding with the sovereign as to what he was to do: but Rojas, who was not a man to be imposed on by such answers, insisted on his right; yet Cabot held firm and would tell nothing.‡ The witness who confirms this charge of Rojas

---

otra cosa desta pregunta mas de quanto dixo que oyo decir en la dicha ysla de la palma y en la dicha armada que los capitanes y oficiales..... se avian juntado en casa del dicho santa crux veedor por los dichos armadores e que lo oyo decir a muchas personas de la dicha armada publicamente.”

\*Probança de Catalina Vasquez, Pregunta xix.—Rojas, Interrogatory No. vi.

† Rojas, *Ib. ib.*

‡ “ . . . el dicho Capitan francisco de Rojas juntamente con los otros capitanes de la dicha armada, visto como el dicho sebastian gaboto no quesia dar ni dava la dicha derrota como por su magestad le hera mandado le pidieron que se las diese . . . y respondio que su magestad y el se entendian muy bien . . .” In continuation Rojas puts in Cabot's mouth an insolence towards the Emperor, but the thing is too unlikely in the person who would have said it, and in the circumstances in which it would have been said.—Interrogatory . . . by Captain Francis de Rojas, No. v.



adds that Cabot, to quiet the Captains' inquiries gave them the course as far as the Cape Verde Islands, but as his deposition is somewhat confused and not very reliable, I adhere to the single account of Rojas.

From the Canaries the fleet sailed to the Cape Verde Islands, and from there to Cape St. Augustine in the Province of Pernambuco in Brazil. Rojas at this place accuses Cabot of having changed a quarter in the direction of their voyage on leaving the Cape Verde Islands, which, he says was the cause of their touching at Cape St. Augustine.\* I confess I do not see the force of this charge, for I find others keeping the same course that Cabot took then, they sailed from Spain to the Canaries just as he did, from the Canaries to the Cape Verde Islands, and from these to Cape St. Augustine in the Province of Pernambuco.† Diego Garcia, who led another Spanish expedition to the regions of La Plata, and of whom we shall have more to say anon, did the same thing that same year.‡ This Garcia, so far from being friendly to Cabot, was rather his slanderer, and twice accuses him of incapacity in navigation on this same voyage from the Cape Verde Islands to Cape St. Augustine. The first time he accuses him of not knowing how to choose the proper season for the voyage, "because," he says, "every navigator and pilot who wants to sail to these parts must know enough to sail at the time when the sun makes summer there . . . and Sebastian Cabot with all his astrology did not know enough

---

\* Interrogatory, No. VII, "Item si saben que por su mal navegacion y gobierno en el paraje de las yslas de cabo verde mudo una quarta de nuestro viage por la qual dicha quarta asi tomada fuymos a dar en el cabo de sant agustin e provincia de pernambuco."

† [It seems to me that Rojas is complaining that Cabot went to St. Augustine at all; and not that it was bad navigation to sail thither by way of the Canary and Cape Verde Islands. Cabot's destination was the islands in the Molucca Passage, and his course lay around Cape Horn or through Magellan's Strait, but by shaping his course too far to the west he came to Cape St. Augustine instead of keeping to the east of it on his way south. I presume Cabot must have altered his course for the purpose of taking in supplies in Brazil.—Translator.]

‡ "Desde ysla de buena vista herimos vela en la buelta y demanda del cabo de San Agostin . . ." Relacion y derrotero de Diego Garcia. Vid. App. xxxviii.

for that.”\* In making this accusation, the vain and conceited Garcia, as he will be proved further on, did not say or did not know that Sebastian Cabot’s departure from Spain was hastened by the bad news received from the Moluccas. In fact, Peter Martyr tells us that the sailing of the expedition was fixed for August 1525, precisely for the purpose of taking advantage of the favorable season for that voyage,† and after the sailing had to be suspended for that year on account of the disagreement with the merchants, there is no doubt but what the following year also they would have waited for the same season, for without Diego Garcia’s teaching, it was well known in Spain what was the proper season for sailing to the southern parts of the New World.‡

Soon after this the presumptuous Garcia turns again to bite Cabot, but the meaning of that bite is an insoluble enigma. Speaking of the crossing from the Cape Verde Islands to Cape St. Augustine, he notes the difficulty of sailing in the currents that flow from the Gulf of Guinea, and adds: “Sebastian Cabot did not know how to take these currents, for he was not a sailor, and did not know how to navigate.”§ Having said this, without adding any motive or reason in support of his charge, he resumes the thread of his narrative and goes on to describe his voyage.

\* “. . . por qual quier navegante e piloto que ha de navegar en aquellas partes a de conoscer de navegar en el tiempo que el sol haga verano en aquella parte . . . y esta navegacion non supo tomar sebastian gaboto con toda su astrolugia. . . .” *ib.* [Verano, summer in modern Spanish; but spring in old Spanish. Translator.]

† “Est Cabotus Augusto mense proximi anni MDXXV discessurus.” Dec. vii, cap. 6.

‡ Peter Martyr after saying that Sebastian Cabot was to sail in the month of August, thus continues: “nec citius quidem, quia nec prius queunt ad rem tantam necessaria parari, nec per celorum cursus debet prius illud iter inchoari: oportet quippe tunc versus equinoctium vela dirigere, quando sol estatem nobis et dierum longitudinem ablaturus, ad antictones penetrare incipiat. . . . Quo tempore brevissimi sunt apud populos arctos dies, longissimos Cabotus assequetur.” App. xxxiii.

§ “. . . este camino se ha de navegar con grande resguardo y saber de marineria porque ay grandes corrientes que salen delos rrios de guinea que abaten los navios . . . estas corrientes no supo tomar Sebastian Gaboto porque no era marinero ny sabia navegar.”

I have already said in another place, but it seems well to repeat it here, that I stop to gather all such trifling details, because in the scarcity of more serious documents I think it necessary to treasure up every thing that shows the circumstances Cabot was in, and how he was surrounded by enmity and aversion.

They reached Pernambuco in the month of **June**, and stayed there for fresh supplies.\* Thence the ships resumed their voyage, but **contrary** winds drove them back to the harbor, and for three or four times that they renewed the attempt, they were compelled to yield every time to the fury of the sea and seek shelter from the land.† This forced stay lasted more than three months.‡

At Pernambuco there was a Portuguese factory, and Rojas under the VII and VIII heads of his Interrogatories makes this further accusation against Cabot, that these Portuguese, to divert the Spanish expedition from sailing to the Moluccas, got around him telling him marvels about the riches of La Plata, and that he hankering after that gold suddenly resolved to give up the voyage to the Moluccas and stop on that river ; and for this purpose he began to scheme with some persons in the expedition in order to draw them into his plan. He goes on to say that he opposed the change with all his might, in order to keep his oath, and because he saw the aim of the Portuguese, and on this account Cabot, not being able to overcome his opposition, had him arrested. §

Rojas was blinded by his hate for Cabot (the motives and

\* Lewis Ramirez, App. xxxvii.

† Proofs of Sebastian Cabot, Interrogatory xiii. The witnesses are unanimous in confirming this. I cite as samples a few words of the first witness and of the eighth. The first says : "Sabe ques verdad lo contenido en la dicha pregunta e lo sabe porque vio haçer a la vela tres o qnatro vezes a la dicha armada para llevar el dicho viaje de tarsys e ofir e porque vio ansymismo quel tiempo les hera contrario e que por esto surgió en la costa del brasyl en hernanbuco" . . . and the eighth . . . " el dicho capitan caboto mando que las naos fuesen su viaje . . . e fue forçado . . . surgir en la dicha costa . . . . adonde estovieron con viento contrario tre meses y medio poco mas o menos."

‡ *Ib.* Interrogatory xiv. The ten witnesses called all unanimously confirm the Interrogatory in their deposition.

§ See App. xxxv.

proofs of which we shall soon see), and in the blindness of this hate, he did not see that he was asserting something wholly incredible. For who could believe that a man who from the love of discovery, postponing all thought of gain, would have had the nature and aim of the expedition changed, and from commercial which it was, had altered its purpose and object to exploration and discovery, and thereby drawn on himself the unrelenting war of those who fitted the expedition out :—who could believe that such a man, not at the first sight of gold but at the mere promise of it, would suffer himself to be suddenly dazzled, and resolve at once to change the nature of the expedition, and to the brilliant contests in the unknown waters of the Ocean should prefer the inglorious labor of groping about in new lands of savages in search and gathering of gold? And would not the suspicion that the Portuguese were talking for the purpose of hindering the passage of the Spanish expedition to the Moluccas, which Rojas says presented itself to his mind, not present itself spontaneously not only to Cabot's, but to every one's else?

But why should Rojas have so impudently distorted the truth? Because a charge of insubordination and treachery hung over his head, and it was too much for his advantage to appear to his judges as a victim of his zeal for the honor of Spain and his loyalty to the Emperor's orders. Nor was he a man to hesitate at a lie to gain his end.—Of this too we shall have the clearest evidence further on.—Moreover his remark is not only contradicted by the intrinsic arguments of the deed itself, it is openly belied by the authority of Ramirez an eye witness and impartial relator of that voyage.\* And Rojas himself shows that it is false and calumnious, for, as happens when passion rules the mind, wishing to give proof of what he asserted, he was not aware that the reasons he presented bore the visible imprint of falsehood. He concludes his accusation by saying that Cabot decided on the change “more from want of courage than desire of wealth.” † Sebastian Cabot afraid of the sea! The man who first

---

\* See App. xxxvii.

† “Mas por falta de animo que por Riqueza.” No. 7.

touched the frozen shores of Greenland, first penetrated into Hudson's Bay, whose courage and hardihood terrified even his own mariners !

But Rojas does not stop here. In the fury of his attack he attempts a more grave and terrible charge, saying that Cabot even tried to have him put to death. His words are : "A few days after that, the said Sebastian Cabot continuing in his hate and deadly enmity against the said Francis de Rojas, and seeing that he more than any one else asked and advised that they should follow the voyage which was ordered by His Majesty, to carry out his evil intention more freely he resolved to have the said Captain Francis de Rojas treacherously murdered, and to put it in execution he had two armed men at certain times in his room to stab him, and as he could not put it into effect, God not permitting such great wrong and treason, in order that per fas or per nefas his damnable intention might have effect, he issued process against him, without hearing him or giving him a copy of it, suborning witnesses to depose falsely against the said Captain.\*

Rojas has charged Cabot with so many accusations evidently false and calumnious, that without fear of offending truth we might set this accusation also down amongst the calumnies without further inquiry. But as the slightest appearances suddenly assume the substance of great realities to minds over-excited by passion, I am willing to admit that either deceived by the creations of his own fancy, or seduced by the false suggestions of some evil spirit (for a brood of such always gathers around a mind agitated by violent passion),—I am willing to admit that he really believed in the truth of

---

\*". . . desde a poco días continuando el dicho sebastian gaboto en el odio y enemistad capital que contra el dicho francisco de Rojas tenia y visto como el mas que todos le requeria e aconsejaba que siguiese el viaje que por su magestad le hera mandado para mas libremente cumplir su mala voluntad acordó de hacer matar a traycion al dicho capitan francisco de Rojas-y para ponerlo en efecto tuvo dos personas armadas ciertas veces en su camara para que le matasen a puçaladas e como no pudo efectuar no permitiendo Dios tan grand maldad y traycion porque por fas o por nefas su dagnada voluntad aviese efecto hizo proceso contra el sin le oyr ni dar traslado sobornando testigos para que depusiesen falsamente contra el dicho Capitan. . . ." No. ix.

an intended assassination. For Cabot's complete acquittal it suffices for the present to say that the only witness called by Rojas in support of the fact, could give the judges no other proof than this, that a certain person had told him that he with another had been employed by Cabot to kill Rojas. And this witness who so deposes, very rarely departs a hair's breadth from Rojas's accusation, but repeats it often entirely in the same words, even in the case of those accusations which other proofs and testimony show clearly to be false and calumnious.\* However, the course of the narrative will furnish direct proof that Rojas was lying impudently when he accused Cabot of having at Pernambuco yielded to the wheedling of the Portuguese, and consequently his vaunted opposition to the alteration of the scope of the expedition falls to the ground. The real truth is that the faction hostile to Cabot had derived great advantage from the long stay at Pernambuco in ease and idleness. The possibility of gathering together from the different ships gave opportunity and incentive for communicating their ideas, favoring one another's proposals, gaining new partisans, and maturing plans. Mendez and Rojas were the recognized leaders in this movement of insubordination and mutiny, and it may be that becoming bold from the number and zeal of their followers, they did not go so cautiously to work as the dangerousness of the affair required. Hence Cabot, who always kept his eye on them, when he deemed he had a sufficient hold on them, came down on them unexpectedly, seized their papers, and imprisoned them both.† It is not possible for us at this

---

\* "Oyo decir a Alonso bueno. . . . quel dicho Sebastian Gavoto lo tubo a el e a francisco casar ala puerta di su camara aparcebidos para dar de puçalados a Francisco Rojas."—See App. xxxv.

† Yten sy saben quel dicho Sebastian Caboto estando surto en pernambuco sobre la dicha costa del brasy l mando prender a los dichos Francisco de Rojas e a Martin mendez por los juramentos e motines que avia hecho e de cada dia hazia contra el dicho sebastian caboto.—Probança de Sebastian Caboto, xv Pregunta.

For Rojas, see also his ix, x, and xi Interrogatories; for Mendez, the x Interrogatory of the Proofs presented by his mother Catharine Vasquez against Cabot.

Rojas speaks of this new seizure of his letters at Pernambuco in his vi Interrogatory when charging that previous seizure at Palma Island.

distance of time, and without the necessary documents, to decide whether in this arrest Cabot acted with all the prudence required in so important a matter ; but we can safely declare that he was incredibly imprudent and unwary in his conduct after the arrest. He immediately began inquiries on all sides for proofs of their guilt and the treachery : then, after keeping them for some days confined on board the *Santa Maria* commanded by Caro, whether because the results of the inquests did not show sufficient grounds for continuing this severity towards them or because he hoped by a proof of kindness to bring them to better sentiments, he sent to release Rojas, and bring him to his ship, where he rebuked him in a friendly way for his conduct, and made him see the danger he brought upon himself personally and on the whole expedition, and expressing confidence that in the future he would give no cause for suspicion or complaint, sent him to his own ship and restored him to duty. In this release there is no mention made of Mendez, but no doubt he was included, as we find him likewise at liberty in the sequel.\*

It was a grave error to proceed to the arrest of Mendez and Rojas unless he was almost certain to show clearly their guiltiness ; to set them free after being arrested, and what is more, to restore Rojas to his former rank and command, was an error so grave that it is a wonder that a man like Cabot should make it. To believe that a resolute, energetic, proud man, as every thing indicates that Rojas was, should let himself be affected, if guilty, by a proof of kindness, was on the part of Cabot unparalleled ingenuousness. For men like that to feel under obligations to an enemy is not a motive for friendship and concord, it is a prick to move fierce hate : the duty of gratitude is a burden which weighs intolerably on their heart and they can feel no peace till they rid themselves of it, and the

---

\* *Yten si saben que antes que el dicho sebastian caboto se partiese de pernambuco que es en la dicha costa del brasyl embio al dicho francisco de rojas a la nao trenidad y lo torno en su oficio de capitan como de antes lo hera e le amonosto de parte de su magesta que fuese leal e que serviese bien e lealmene a su magestad. XVI Pregunta de la Probança de Seb. Caboto, App. xxxvi. See also Nos. X and XI of the Interrogatory of Francesco de Rojas, App. xxxv.*

only way they can do that is by exterminating the enemy who in addition to all the rest, humiliates them with the burden of gratitude.

But it could not have been out of tenderness of heart that Cabot released Rojas : it was more likely for want of sure evidence of his guilt to enable him to strike with every appearance of justice. This was a much more serious matter ; for some natures are so weak that they count themselves lucky if they can get clear of an accusation in which they are more or less truly entangled, and cautiously preserve a prudent silence for fear of worse ; but high-spirited natures like Rojas the more they feel implicated in an accusation from which they escape by the height of good fortune make all the more noise, complain of surprise and injustice, protest their innocence before God and men, and call themselves victims of the abuse of power. In the XI interrogatory of his charge, he calls witnesses to declare whether it was said on the ships that Cabot “kept him imprisoned on account of false reports made about him, and as it was just that if he was guilty he should not be let go without receiving the chastisement he deserved, he demanded that if he had in any wise offended against the service of His Majesty and the good order of the said fleet he should be punished for it without mercy, and if not, in the name of God and His Majesty he demanded the chastisement of those detractors who had deposed falsely against him as they were the persons who had sown tares of discord in the said fleet.\*

In this manner the enmity of the opposite party was blown into a flame, and in the opinion of men in good faith the good name of Cabot was injured and the authority of that of Rojas increased.

---

\*“ Yten si . . . yo dire publicamente . . . come el dicho Sebastian gaboto me avia tenido preso por falsa relacion que de mi le avian hecho y que pues hera tan justo que si yo tubiera culpa no me soltara sin dar el castigo que por ella merecia que le Requeria que si el aviese ecedido en alguna cosa contra el servicio de su magestad y buen aviamento de la dicha armada le castigase syn perdonarle cosa alguna y donde no que de parte de Dios y de su magestad le Requeria castigase a las personas y detratores que contra el falsamente avian depuesto pues heran cabsa de meter discordia e zizaña en la dicha armada . . . ”



## CHAPTER XVII.

*Continuation of the Voyage.*

THEY left Pernambuco on the 29th of September.\* When they reached the latitude of Cape Faro they were struck by a violent storm in which the flag-ship lost her small-boat. Arriving at a place that promised shelter for the ships with a mountain near by with plenty of timber for building, they stopped there for the purpose of replacing the lost boat.† The place is the same that was afterwards called the Bay of Saint Catharine, in 27° 35' S. L., the name then given to it by Sebastian Cabot.‡ But where they expected to repair a great loss, they encountered another still greater and irreparable. At the entrance of the bay rise three small islands, and the ships made for the channel which runs close to the largest of them, called St. Catharine, by the same name as the bay. Cabot, apprehensive on account of their ignorance of the place, and the lightness of the wind, had ordered them to stop ; but Michael Rodas and Anthony de Grajeda, one the pilot, the other master of the flag-ship, insisted that it was possible to go ahead ; Rodas even pledged his own head and his companion's if the ship was lost.§ But Cabot's fears were not overcome by their assertion, and he ordered soundings to be taken

---

\* "Al poco tiempo de haber salido de este puerto (29 de Setiembre) sufreron etc." Ramirez. See App. xxxvii.

† *B* and the vi Interrogatory which will be given in full very soon in a note. All the witnesses testify unanimously in confirmation of what it contains.

‡ "Salieron deste puerto que llamaron St. Catalina." Ramirez, l. c.

§ "oyo decir este testigo al dicho capitán sebastian caboto que le dixo que surgiesen porque hera el viento escaso e aquellos dixeron que los dexase andar que se sí perdiere la nao que les cortase la cabeça e questo dezia el dicho miguel de Rodas." X witness to the viii Interrogatory.

first, and charged Rodas himself and Grajeda to take them.\* They reported that it was perfectly safe to proceed.† On their word the ship was advancing quietly when a sudden shock told them they had struck on a bank.‡ Michael de Rodas tore his beard in despair, and wept, and cried, “Hang me, Captain,”—but the ship was lost for ever.§ Captain Francis de Rojas in his interrogatories accuses Cabot of escaping from his ship as soon as it ran on the bank, which disheartened the others, so that each one thought only of saving himself; which, he says, was the cause of the loss of the ship, for if it had been attended to at once it could easily have been got afloat.¶ The charge is a serious one, and if true would be a foul brand on Cabot’s forehead. But can it be accepted and believed with no other evidence than the word of Rojas, who not once only, but repeatedly proves himself most clearly a liar and slanderer? Besides, where he declares that but for him and his energy, zeal, and courage the whole or most of

---

\* VI pregunta. — “Yten si saben quel dicho sebastian caboto enbio a miguel de Rodas piloto de la nao capitana e anton de grajeda maestre de la dicha nao capitana a sondar entre la ysla de santa catalina y la tierra firme para que mirasen si avia lugar para llevar las naos en buen puerto porque estavan surtas entre tres yslas pequenas que estavan junto a la dicha ysla de santa catalina porque avia de hazer un batel para la nao capitana porque perdio el que tenia a cabo frio con una gran tormenta.”

† VII pregunta. “Yten si saben quel dicho miguel de Rodas piloto e anton de grajeda maestre fueron a sondar entre la dicha ysla de santa catalina y la tierra firme e se bolvieron al dicho capitan sebastian caboto e le dixerion que avian sondado e que avia lugar para carracas.”—Probança de Sebastian Caboto.

‡ “Yten sy saben que la dicha nao capitana que se perdio en la ysla de santa catalina fue por culpa del dicho miguel de Rodas piloto de la dicha nao e de anton de grajeda maestre de la dicha nao porque no sondaron como el dicho sebastiano caboto les mando.”—VIII Pregunta de la Probança de Sebastian Caboto. All the nine witnesses confirm the guilt of Rodas and Grajeda.

§ “. . . estando ansi perdida estava el dicho miguel de Rodas mesandose las barvas e llorando e diziendo ahorqueme el capitan. . .” The witnesses to the viii Interrogatory.

¶ “tocó la nao capitana su un banco lo qual visto por el dicho sebastian gaboto con falta de animo la desamparó luego y se fue huyendo a tierra e visto la gente de la dicha nao quel capitan della huga y los dejaba desamparados perdieron el animo de remediar la dicha nao y cada uno procuraba como mejor podia de salvar su persona e que a cabsa delo qual perdio la dicha nao lo que no hiziera sy el dicho sebastian gaboto no huera y la desamparara. . .” No. 15.

the cargo of the ship would have been lost; \* a witness who belonged to the crew of that ship and was present at the misfortune and the landing of the persons and things, says the merit of saving the most of the cargo was wholly due to the orders and activity of Cabot. †

In their distress for the loss of the flag-ship they all felt a happy sense of relief on learning from some Indians in canoes that there were Christians, i.e. Europeans, in the neighborhood. Indeed, one of them presented himself the next day and said there were fifteen of them, all belonging to Loaysa's fleet, left there in consequence of a great storm which the fleet suffered from in that sea. The rest too, as was natural, ran to see and welcome them as soon as they knew of their arrival. ‡

After the accident to the flag-ship, instead of building a small-boat, they had to think of constructing a galiot to carry as much of the cargo as they were able to save from the wreck. § But the portion saved was less than that which they were forced to see perish, and the loss of the ship was a blow which the expedition never got over.

The witnesses called in the suit between Cabot and Vasquez say unanimously that in the flag-ship the expedition lost heavily in provisions and ammunition; and one testifies that in

\* "si por el dicho capitan francisco de Rojas que como buen servidor de su magestad arriesgo su persona no fuera se perdieran las dichas cosas o la mayor parte dellas . . ." No. 16 of his interrogatories

† "sabe e vio ansimismo que todo lo que se pudo salvar de la dicha nao se sacó e se puso mucha diligencia en ello porque así lo mandava el dicho capitan sebastian caboto e se hazia así e lo vio así este testigo por que estava en la dicha nao capitana al tiempo que se perdió." X witness to ix Int. of Cabot's proofs.

‡ Ramirez, App. xxxvii. These men belonged to the crew of the S. Gabriel, one of the seven ships of Loaysa, which was commanded by Don Rodrigo de Acunha. Terribly beaten about by a violent storm for many days, he had the good fortune of finding refuge in this bay. But a great part of his men, worn out by the sufferings endured, dreading those which still awaited them, on landing here, refused to continue on the voyage, and as he insisted on their returning to their duty he was so far from moving them that it was all he could do to escape from them with his life. Only a few of those who remained on shore were alive; the most of them were drowned by the capsizing of a boat they were in. See Navarrete, v, Doc. No. xv, p. 313, &cs.

§ Ramirez l. c. —Cabot in the xvii Question of his proofs.

his opinion they lost no less than half of their stores of food besides shrouds, sails, anchors, and all sorts of marine stores that were stowed there for the fleet's use ; and that this ship alone was more valuable than all the others together.\* To this loss, which was incalculably great in the case of an expedition contemplating a long voyage, must be added another still greater, that all or nearly all the expedition fell sick, and for the most part, to fall sick and to die were the same thing. On this all agree ; Ramirez in his narrative, Cabot's accusers, and Cabot himself.† The voyage from Pernambuco to St. Catharine had been most laborious, and as many of the expedition were not seamen, but persons engaged in trade, who followed Cabot for the account of the Merchants' Company with a view to the gains hoped for from the Moluccas and the fancied lands of Ophir and Tarshish, these unaccustomed to long and laborious navigation, all reached St. Catharine already broken with labor and suffering. To restore them they needed a healthy climate, good and wholesome food, and instead of these they found the direct opposites : the climate especially, with its intense heat, its moisture, and the exhalations from the low grounds and rank vegetation, proved fatal to them. They caught a violent fever against which there was no defense ; they were taken down with the disease and never got up again. Many of the sailors even, yielded to the malignant sickness. And the very few who came out clear from that pestilence might count it a miracle. The greater part of the men were sick, say some of the witnesses ; all or nearly all were so, say the others.‡

---

\* "parece a este dicho testigo que la dicha nao capitana hera los dos partes de dicha armada. . . . porque en la dicha nao yvan muchos aparejos para la dicha armada de xarcias y rescates y ancoras y velas e otras muchas cosas y mucho mantenimiento e que cree este testigo que avia mas mantenimiento en la dicha nao capitana que no en todas las otras naos e que lo cree por que al tiempo que se perdio la dicha nao vio lo que avia en ella. . . ." x testigo á la xii Pregunta. See also ix Pregunta.

† See Rojas, Interrogatory xvii. — Cabot, Pregunta x of his proofs. — Ramirez, App. xxvii.

‡ Pregunta x de la Probança de Sebastian Cabot.

I. Testigo. . . en la ysla de Santa Catalina adolesció mucha gente o todo de lo que yva en la dicha armada e se murieron alli muchos dellos de calenturas que les dio e de la tierra que los provo. . . .

And better than by the witnesses' words we are told so by the state of the fleet, when it again sets sail to continue the voyage.

Besides the fifteen Spaniards of Loaysa's fleet there were at that bay two others who had belonged to that of John Diaz de Solis, and were with him at the discovery of the Rio de La Plata. These were Melchior Ramirez and Henry Montes, and they fraternized more closely than the others with Cabot's people.

"These," says Lewis Ramirez in his narrative, "informed the captain of the great treasures of the country, and that ascending the River de Solis and entering Paraguay they would find a ridge abounding in gold, silver, and other metals, *with which they might fill their vessels.*"\* The general asked them for a specimen of that gold and silver, and they told how some of their companions being near those mountains were able to observe the pieces of gold obtained from that ridge, and which the Indians were carrying. Wishing to go back to that place they were attacked by Guaranis to rob them of the slaves they were taking loaded with the metal; and that on this account, and because they had sent to Spain a little before, as much as two arrobas,† of gold, they only kept a few pieces, that they had set aside for the Virgin of Guadalupe‡ the only

III. Testigo....vio la mas de la gente de la dicha armada cayeron malos....

V. Testigo ...los mas dellos cayeron todos malos....

VIII. Testigo....enfermaron toda o la mas parte de la gente....

IX. Testigo....murieron hartos de los que yvan en la dicha armada....todos que no quedo ninguno de los que yvan en la dicha armada adolescieron....

X. Testigo....en la ysla de santa catalina adolesció toda la gente....que no quedo ninguno.

The answers to the xii Interrogatory repeat and confirm this, that nearly all were taken sick, and many died immediately, or within a few days after they left St. Catharine's Bay.

\* "... los quales informaron al capitan de la gran riqueza de la tierra y de como saliendo del rio de solis y entrando por el Paraguaj llegarian a dar con una sierra abundante en oro, plata y otros metales, con los pudierian llenar las naves." See App. xxxvii.

† The Arroba is a Spanish weight equal to 25 pounds of 16 ounces each.

‡ Guadalupe is a city of Spain in the province of Toledo, where there is a

pieces of gold they showed. To their offer to go with him, the Captain replied that his road did not lie that way.\*

From the narrative of Ramirez it is clear that it was at the Bay of St. Catharine that Cabot was first told of the wealth of the Plata; a further proof that Rojas lied when he accused Cabot of believing the words of the enemies of Spain, the Portuguese, at Pernambuco, and on their stories deciding at that time to stop his expedition at the Plata. Ramirez is a witness free from all suspicion, for he was present all through, and wrote his narrative from the banks of the Plata itself, more than two years before the expedition returned to Spain; at a time not only when nothing could have been known of the suit which was brought after the return to Europe, but he was even ignorant whether Rojas and the rest were still alive, and whether he himself would ever return to Spain; and he was the first to give an unofficial account of the voyage, and sent it to Spain by the first ship of that expedition which revisited Europe. It agrees perfectly with what Cabot says in his defence to the charges made by the mother of Martin Mendez.† All the ten witnesses produced by Cabot not only confirm his words, but one of them even mentions the persistency of the two Spaniards to overcome Cabot's reluctance, and winning over to their views the wishes and hopes of the men who accompanied him. One of the latter who went home with Montes and saw the quantity of gold Ramirez tells of which he was keeping, speaks of it in these words: "He told the men of the expedition that never

---

celebrated sanctuary dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. It is the same sanctuary after which Christopher Columbus named one of the islands of the Antilles.

\* "a la offerta que ellos hicieron de acompañarle contesto el capitan que no era aquel su camino." See App. xxxvii.

† "Yten si saben que en la dicha ysla de santa catalina se hallaron dos onbres que avian ydo con el capitan juan diaz de solis e dixeron al dicho capitan sebastian caboto e a toda la gente de la armada que fuesen al Rio de solis porque avia ay grandes riquezas de oro e plata e que unos compañeros suyos avian ydo alla e traydo mucho oro y plata lo qual avian enbiado a españa e que los dichos sus compañeros bolvieron otra vez alla y traxeron ciertas muestras de oro y plata al dicho capitan sebastian caboto las quales muestras vieron la gente de la armada el uno de los quales se llamava enrique montes y el otro melchor ramirez natural de la villa de lepe." Pregunta xviii.

were men so fortunate as those of the fleet, for it was said there was enough silver and gold at the River de Solis to make them all rich."\* Another relates of Montes that he showed the men of the expedition his specimens of gold, and told wonders of the riches of that country, and that they might load all their ships with gold and silver. † Their words naturally gained the power of effective eloquence from the fact that they had been companions of Solis, and were eye-witnesses of what they related, and offered themselves as safe guides sure of the way.

A fleet in normal condition, trusting and agreeing with its commander, with provisions and ammunition, in good health, would doubtless have felt its constancy shaken by such words, and every heart would have struggled between continuing the voyage to the end as determined on, and stopping at the prospect of such unexpected abundance of gold. Now that every thing was wrong, minds heated with disputes and suspicions, bodies weakened by pestilence, the strength of the ships half destroyed, most of the provisions lost, it would have been an almost incredible miracle if they had resisted the temptation. But why speak of temptation? The fleet was in a condition to take advantage of the offer as of a providing by Heaven for their necessities. Indeed, when we see them afterwards sailing from St. Catharine, there are so few men fit for duty that it is difficult to muster hands enough to work the ship; and death will continue on the voyage to make fresh victims of those left; and the scarcity of provisions in consequence of the unexpected stopping at Pernambuco, the additional delay at the Bay of St. Catharine, and the loss of the flag-ship will be such that on arriving at the mouths of the river they will be in distress.

---

\* I Testigo . . . . "Dixo que. . . fue a buscar a Enrique montes e le hallo e vio como tenia unas cuentas de oro e un poco de plata e como dezia a la gente de la dicha armada que nunca onbres fueron tan bien aventurados como los de la dicha armada porque dezian que avia tanta plata y oro en el Rio de solis que dezian que todos serian ricos. . . ."

† III Testigo. . . "e que ansymismo vio este testigo las dichas muestras de oro y plata que las mostro a este testigo e a otros el dicho Enrique montes e que le dezia mira hijos que desto se cargara las naos de oro e de plata. . . ."

On the other hand, Cabot and a few besides regarded the expedition as aiming at the coveted discovery of Ophir and Tarshish, but most of them had in view the wealth of the Moluccas, for which alone the merchants of Seville had for the first time united to get that fleet together. Stopping then at the Plata the precise purpose of the expedition was abandoned, but its object was substantially achieved. And even if Cabot was anxious to keep up to the level of the purpose in view, what means had he of repairing the ruin of his fleet? He might maintain respect and obedience to his authority with a stronger hand; he might hope that his men now overcome by fatigue and sickness might recover once they were away from the deadly air of St Catharine; but how supply the want of food? He could not at St. Catharine, for his men were nearly all sick, and if he did not hurry away there would soon be none of them left, and the Indigenes, good and willing as they were, were only able to afford a scant relief for a few days. For the sick they could do nothing, for the food of the country so far from helping to restore them to health is said by one of the witnesses to be a principal cause of the sickness, the stomachs of the Spaniards not being accustomed to it.\* And how little European food they had left is shown by the fact that when they came to the Plata and wanted to ascertain the fertility of the soil, they could only collect from all the vessels fifty-two grains of wheat for sowing.† What was there left for a prudent commander to do in such circumstances? To seize the only means of safety open to him.‡ That is what Cabot did. He assembled

---

\* The ninth witness to the x Interrogatory of Sebastian Cabot says. “. . . murieron hartos . . . y cree que a causa de ser la navegacion larga e mudar los ayres y tierras y *bastimentos* adolesçieron e murieron . . .”

† “Senbraron en el mes de setiembre LII granos de tigre q no se hallo mas en las naos . . .” From the inscription on the chart of Sebastian Cabot of 1544. See App. No. xxxix.

‡ “. . . el qua dho Capitan Sebastian Caboto vino a este Rio por caso fortuito, porque la nao capitana en q yva se le perdio, y visto que no podia seguir el dicho su viaje, accordo de descubrir con la gête que lleava el dicho Rio, vista la grãdissima relacion que los Indios de la tierra le dieron de la grãdissima riqueza de oro y plata, que en la dha tierra avia. . .” ib. “Yten sy saben



his officers, put the matter before them, and by their advice and approval decided to keep the fleet at the Plata. Only two officers were against it, or if we take only disinterested witnesses, a single one, Rojas. We have already seen how he boasted of having opposed the change of the voyage at Pernambuco; but that, except in his boast, there is no hint from any quarter that any thing of the sort was thought of at Pernambuco, that all the circumstances contradict it, and the testimony of Lewis Ramirez absolutely denies it. It is therefore clear that Rojas in the bitterness of his enmity towards Cabot maliciously altered the place where this deliberation was held, because at St. Catharine there was every thing to excuse Cabot, and at Pernambuco every thing would have shown him to blame. His opposition at St. Catharine is mentioned by one of the witnesses called to testify whether the voyage was altered with or without the approval of all the officers. "From there," the witness says, "they sailed for the River de Solis, and it seemed to the witness that it was with the agreement of the said officers, because the witness saw no attempt of the said officers to prevent it, except that he heard say that the said Captain Rojas urged that they should not go to the River de Solis, but continue their voyage."\* What motive had Rojas in this opposition? It can be inferred with certainty, by setting it all down to his enmity towards Cabot. He opposed the change because Cabot proposed it: in the desperate circumstances in which the fleet was, he would have supported it, if Cabot had

---

que perdida la dicha nao capitana no pudo el dicho sebastian caboto seguir su viaje porque la dicha nao capitana hera la mitad de la armada e tambien porque toda la gente enfermo luego con el ayre de la tierra que los provo."—xii Pregunta de la Probança de Seb. Caboto.

The witnesses confirm this, especially the X, who stops to tell the enormous loss of provisions on the flag-ship, shrouds, sails, anchors, every sort of ship tackle. The X repeats and confirms the same thing with new testimony to the xix Interrogatory.

\*" . . . . de alli se partieron para el Rio de solis, e le paresçe a este testigo que seria con acuerdo de los dichos ofiçiales por queste testigo no les vio hazer diligencia ninguna a los dichos ofiçiales para que no fuesen salvo que oyo decir quel dicho capitan Rojas le avia requerido que no fuese al Rio de solis syno que seguiese su viaje . . . ."

shut his ears to the splendid promises of the River de Solis.

The other opponent of the change was Mendez, if we credit the XX interrogatory of the accusation which his mother Catharine Vasquez brought against Sebastian Cabot. But no witness answered this interrogatory, and nowhere else is there any mention of his opposition. The witnesses also declare in many places that Cabot always acted in matters of importance by the advice of the officers. Most of all then he would have asked their advice and conformed to it in this the most important matter of all, one that altered substantially the nature and scope of the expedition.\*

They sailed from the Bay of St. Catharine February 15, 1527, and if, notwithstanding the great number sick and the many dead, they were able to complete the construction of the galiot in a relatively short time, it was due to the assistance of the natives influenced by the pressure and zeal of Henry Montes who had acquired great authority over them.†

The state of the expedition, in consequence of the loss of the flag-ship and the number sick or dead, was most desperate, but it would be childish to suppose that in the general distress there was any taming, or even temporary cessation, of personal enmity. Human minds brutalized by passion are not so noble. But rather, when misfortune gives a good chance to vent their rage, with fierce eagerness they seize on that, and the grief and complaint become weapons to strike with and to kill. What we are going to relate shows that this must have been true in the case of this expedition.

Here is the fact as Cabot briefly tells it in the twenty-third point of his defense. "Let the witnesses tell whether they know that Cabot being with his fleet at the island of St. Catharine found sufficient information that the said Francis de Rojas, Martin Mendez, and Michael de Rodas had stirred the whole fleet to mutiny against him, and he, having the said information and issuing process against them, although they

\*"Dixo que...todas las cosas que hazian que tocavan al servicio de su magestad e a la dicha armada lo hazian con su consejo e acuerdo de los dichos oficiales. . . ." x witness to the xvii Interrogatory of Cabot's proofs.

† Ramirez, l. c.

deserved capital punishment, was loath to inflict it, but treating them with mercy, deposed them and left them on the said island.\*

Here, by way of parenthesis, I think it well to anticipate a difficulty which might present itself later to the reader. Cabot and the witnesses say that these officers were deposed at the island of St. Catharine; others say, instead, the island of Patos. To explain the matter, it should be known that in the bay where Cabot was then, there is an island of some size, called by him St. Catharine, from which the bay is named. Near this island there are others not so large, one of which is called Patos; † and it was at the latter that Cabot really deposed the three officers; but he indicates the place by the general name of the bay.

The witnesses called to answer Cabot's interrogatory testify to the arrest and deposal, but for the causes they either know nothing or merely repeat what was generally reported in the fleet, that there had been an attempt to get the men of the expedition to rebel against their leader. Only one in his testimony throws a ray of light on the obscurity which confronts us. He relates having seen the anchor weighed and the sails set of the caravel while the men of the expedition were on shore, and he heard it said in the fleet that they wanted to mutiny with this vessel, but he did not see, nor hear tell who they were who wanted to mutiny; but it was reported that Cabot had hot words about it with Baptist de Negron, the master of the caravel.‡ From this testimony it appears

---

\*"Yten si saben questando el dicho sebastian caboto con la dicha su armada en la dicha ysla de santa catalina ovo ynformacion vastante de como los dichos francisco de Rojas y martin Mendez e miguel de Rodas amotinavan toda la gente de la dicha armada contra el dicho capitán y avida la dicha ynformacion y hecho proceso contra ellos aunque merescian pena de muerte no se la quiso dar usando de piedad con ellos desterro en la dicha ysla de santa catalina." Int. xxiii.

† "la dicha nao aporto al puerto de los patos que cerca de la dicha ysla de santa catalina."—vi witness to xxii Int. of Cat. Vasquez.

‡ VIII. testigo. ". . . este testigo . . . vio quel dicho capitán caboto mando echar en la dicha ysla de santa catalina a los dichos francisco de Rojas e martin mendez e miguel de rodas pero queste testigo non sabe porque ni por que no lox dexo mas de quanto vio este testigo que traxeron il leme y las velas de

that an attempt at mutiny was made, but failed ; and as the name of Rojas was not mentioned nor that of the other two, we must presume that they did not openly show themselves, but remained ready to come forward if the affair showed signs of succeeding. But it could not have been difficult for the commander of the expedition to recognize at once who were at the head of the attempt. The previous acts at Pernambuco must have kept him always awake not to lose sight of the three most dangerous officers, to watch their words, and to count their steps. And this continual suspicion with his constant watchfulness was, no doubt, what caused the revolt to miscarry, and consequently the first steps of the inquiry were at once directed towards these three.\* After the deposal of Mendez, Rifos, who had performed the duties of Lieutenant of the expedition, assumed the title.†

An addition at the end of Sebastian Cabot's proofs says : "There was another inquiry made by Sebastian Cabot while on the ships, on which he commanded the arrest of Francis de Rojas, Martin Mendez, and Michael de Rodas, and on this he found their guilt for which he abandoned them, and there are in it certain opinions which he took in order to decide what he should do in the matter. It was made July 2, 1526, without interrogatories." ‡

la caravela de la dicha armada estando la dicha gente en tierra e questo testigo pregunto que porque trayan el dicho teme e velas de la dicha caravela e que oyo decir a la gente de la dicha armada que porque se avian querido alçar con la dicha caravela pero questo testigo no oyo decir ni vio quienes fuesen los que se querian alçar con la dicha caravela e que oyo decir este testigo a la sazón a la dicha gente que avian reñido el dicho capitán sebastian caboto con el patron de la nao de la trinidad que se llamava bautista de negron sobre la trayda de las dichas velas y leme."

\* IX. test.— "Dixo que lo que desta pregunta este testigo sabe es que vio tomar ciertos testigos de ynformacion contra los dichos francisco de Rojas y martin mendez e miguel de Rodas no sabe este testigo porque causa ni si fue bastante ni si no porque este testigo no vio los testigos de la dicha ynformacion e no sabe otra cosa."

† See the xviii Interrogatory of the proofs of Catharine Vasquez, and the testimony in relation to it.

‡ Ay otra ynformacion hecha por sebastian caboto estando en las naos por la qual mandó prender al capitán Rojas e a martin mendez e a miguel de Rodas e por ella funda la culpa que tenian para los desterrar ay en ella ciertos par-

The date of the year and month informs us that this inquiry does not relate to the arrest and deposal made at St. Catharine, but the first arrest at Pernambuco. Indeed, we know that they left there the 29th of September 1526, after staying three months: therefore in July they were at Pernambuco. But this inquiry was called up anew at St. Catharine when the conduct of these officers had to be again investigated, and it served as the basis of the severe judgment given against them. Since at Pernambuco Cabot's severity went no further than the arrest of Rojas and Mendez, it must be supposed that Rodas had not greatly compromised himself at that time, and that his conduct grew worse in the sequel.

The mother of Mendez, in her XIV interrogatory, also claims damages from Cabot for the losses her son suffered in his property from not being allowed to be present when every thing they could save was taken out of the flag-ship to put into the galiot:\* and Rojas in the 19th point of his accusation charges Cabot with keeping him a prisoner for many days; † and according to one witness Martin Mendez was kept many days in arrest. ‡ The arrest, then, must have been some time before the departure. But as Rojas himself boasts of his zeal and care for the sick and convalescent, it cannot be placed very soon after the arrival. According to me, it must have been when, recovering from the first alarm created by the sickness and the deaths, the most of the convalescents began to regain their strength, and the galiot being completed they were preparing to load her. Then the three officers were arrested and sent under guard on board of Gregory Caro's vessel.

---

eçeres que tomo para determinar en lo que sobrello avia de hacer hizose a dos de julio de mill e quinientos y veinte y seys años esta hecha syn ynterrogatorio.

\* "... protesto ... de covrar del dicho sebastian caboto ... toda la hazienda que en la nao capitana se le avia perdido por no estar presente en ella; la qual el salvara como otros muchos salvaron la suya por estar presentes . . . ."

† "Le tornó a prender y tuvó preso muchos dias."

‡ "Dixo . . . . quel dicho Martin Mendez despues de aver estado muchos dias preso en la nao del dicho capitán caro" . . . . vi test. xi Pregunta de la Probança de Catalina Vasquez.

Rojas in his interrogatories could not omit mention of his second arrest, and as he could not say it was for his opposition to the changing of their voyage, for he had given that before, he says he was arrested for his great care of and interest in the sick, and because he took great pains to save the stores of the flag-ship. His zeal in those matters had won him the affection and gratitude of all, at which Cabot being jealous caused him to be arrested and deposed, the only way in his power to throw odium on him.\* It would be a waste of words for us to stop to take up and discuss this new charge; let us, then, go on. During their confinement, Rojas and Mendez made a great noise, protesting their innocence, demanding justice, and trying by every means to interest their companions in their favor. But their companions were not moved, and Cabot, informed of what was passing, paid no attention to their clamor.† When the time came for sailing, he sent the chief constable of the fleet to the Santa Maria del Espinar with a boat to take the three prisoners and leave them on the island of Patos. Informed of the fate that awaited them, the three cried loudly and protested that they were innocent and were treated with violence solely out of the captain's enmity towards them; but their clamors were dispersed by the wind, and the expedition put out to sea leaving them on that island.‡

---

\* See his 17, 18, and 19 Interrogatories "...por razon destas bonas obras que hazia ala gente como por aver sydo cabsa que las cosas de la nao perdida se salvarsen e visto que toda la gente por Razon dello le tenia buena voluntad de envidia que al dicho Francisco de Rojas tuvo se le acresento y doblo el odio y mala voluntad que con el tenia. . . . por rrazon de la dicha invidia y enemystad capital. . . . syn tener cabsa ny el dicho capitan aver dicho ni hecho cosa porque le tornó a prender..." No. 18.

† See proofs of Catalina Vasquez.—Int. xi, xii, xiii, xiv, xv.—Int. of Francis de Rojas, xix.—App. xxxiv and xxxv.

‡ "estando la gente ya embarcada para partir de la vaya delos patos... hizo sacar... y llevarlos a dejar en aquella ysla. . . ." De Rojas Interrogatory, No. 20.

"Este testigo vio como el alguazil mayor de la dicha armada llevo a la dicha nao del dicho capitan caro..... e llamo a los dichos martin mendez etc...." viii test. xvi Pregunta de la Probança de Catalina Vasquez: The other witnesses repeat the same thing.

"Dixo queste testigo vio como... el dicho alguazil los llevo a tierra e que los dichos martin mendez e capitan Rojas yvan dando bozes quexandose del dicho capitan general demandando a dios justicia....etc." ix test. xvi Pregunta ...also other witnesses. See likewise xviii Pregunta.

Rojas in the 22nd point of his accusation and the mother of Mendez in her XVII interrogatory, assert that Cabot in abandoning them left them slaves to a rich Indian of that place, and Rojas says that the inhabitants of the island were cannibals who had already eaten many Christians, and Cabot's hope in abandoning them was that they should be treated in the same way.\* The impudence of this assertion is beyond measure. In the first place it is well to mention that neither of the two witnesses called by Vasquez knows any thing about it. The first has seen the three prisoners delivered to one of the principal inhabitants of the island; the other has heard say that Cabot *recommended* them to two of the principal Indians of the place; they know no more.†

Then as to the character of the place, the calumny of Rojas is answered by the fifteen Christians of Loaysa's fleet found there and two of Solis's expedition, concerning whom neither Rojas nor anybody else ever said that they were subjected to ill-treatment or violence on the part of the inhabitants of those islands. On the contrary it appears that Henry Montez had acquired a certain authority over them, for on his invitation they willingly helped Cabot's men to build the galiot. He is answered by Diego Garcia, the envious adversary of Sebastian Cabot who sought every opportunity of backbiting and

\* XVII Pregunta de la Probança de Catalina Vasquez :—"Yten si saben et cetera que despues quel dicho capitan sebastian caboto mando hechar y hecho a los dichos martin mendez e francisco de Rojas en la dicha ysla nombrada santa catalina los dio por esclavos a un yndio mayoral de aquella tierra que se llama topadera diziendo ay te dexo estos cristianos para que te aga cunas e anzuclas...."

No. 22 dell' Interrogatorio del capitan Francisco Rojas:—"Iten si saben etc. que la gente de aquella tierra comen carne humana y an muerto y comido en ella muchos cristianos y para que asy hiziese aldicho capitan lo dejo en la dicha ysla el dicho sebastian caboto y sobre esto le dejo por esclavo de un indio principal de aquella tierra...."

† VI Witness: "dixo que vio quedar a los dichos... en poder del dicho tapavara (the rich Indian) pero que lo demas contenido en la dicha pregunta este testigo no lo sabe ni lo oyo dezir."

The ix witness : "...dixo queste testigo oyo dezir publicamente... que al tiempo que dicho sebastian caboto avia mandato dexar a los dichos... les avia dexado *encomendados* a dos yndios mayores de aquella ysla e que lo demas contenido en la dicha pregunta que no lo sabe."

setting him in a bad light, and who says of the inhabitants of that island: "They are a good race of people, who treat Christians well, and gave him a quantity of food, because they were good Indians;"\* and after a few lines more, he adds that "they were the best people in that region."† In fine, Rojas belies his own calumny by his experience in remaining a long time among those Indians, and returning safe and sound to Spain, and if Mendez and Rodas lost their life there, it was not the Indians that took it, but Rojas himself was the cause of their sad and premature death, as we shall see further on.

Then, as to the fact of leaving them as slaves to an Indian, here is the interrogatory to which Cabot produced ten witnesses. "Whether they know that when they left Francis de Rojas, Martin Mendez, and Michael de Rodas at the said island of St. Catharine, the said Sebastian Cabot delivered to them all their property and clothing, and two butts of wine, and gunpowder, and fire-locks, and many other things and recommended strongly to the principal Indians of the place to treat them well."‡

The first witness says as to the delivery of their property and the other things named in the interrogatory, that with his own eyes he saw it done: he has no personal knowledge about the recommendation, but knows that it was generally reported in the fleet.§ The second witness testifies to both; the

\* "...e andando en el camino allegamos a un río que se llama el Rio delos Patos questa a veynte e syete grados que ay una buena generacion que hace muy buena obra á los cristianos e llamanse los carriores, e alli nos dieron muchas vituallas que llama myllo e harina de mandioco e muchas calabaras e muchos patos e otros muchos mantenimientos porque heran buenos yndios," *Relacion y derrotero de Diego Garcia*.

† "... hera . . . mas buena gente que en aquellas partes." *Ib*.

‡ "Yten si saben que quando quedaron en la dicha yslla de santa catalina los dichos francisco de Rojas e martin mendez e miguel de Rodas el dicho sebastian caboto les entrego todo su rescate e ropa y dos botas de vino y çierta polvora de lombarda y escopetas y otras muchas cosas y que los encomendo mucho a los yndios mayorales de la tierra que les hiziesen buen tratamiento. . . ." xxiv Pregunta de la Probança de Caboto.

§ "Dixo que la sabe como en ella se contiene en quanto a lo que toca a entregarles . . . lo contenido en la pregunta porque se lo vio entregar este testigo a los susodichos estando en tierra e que en lo que toco al encomendalles a los



fourth and seventh by hearsay ; \* the third and fifth as eye-witnesses.† The sixth confirms both on hearsay, with the addition that when it was impossible to get from the ship some wine that belonged to Rojas, the latter ordered it divided among his servants ; and the servants afterwards complained about that wine to Michael Rifos, Cabot's Lieutenant : and that besides the things delivered to them the three deposed officers sent to ask for more, and had them.‡ The ninth, an eye-witness, remembers the delivery and recommendation, and the interpreter who explained to the Indians Cabot's recommendation and his promise to them that on his return he would stop there and if he found they had treated them well he would make them many presents.§ The tenth saw the delivery of all their things to the three officers, and relates that he heard that as they did not like the wine of one cask they had on shore, Cabot ordered another of good quality to be given them in place of it.||

The reader must not think I have stopped unnecessarily to

dichos yndios que no lo vio este testigo pero que lo oyo decir asy a la gente de la dicha armada.”

\* II.—“Dixo que oyo dezir lo contenido en la dicha pregunta publicamente a la gente de la dicha armada.—iv id. vii id.

† III.—“Dixo que la sabe como en ella se contiene porque lo vio asy pasar . . .”

“Dixe que la sabe como en ella se contiene porque lo vio asy . . .”

‡ “Dixo que oyo dezir . . . quel dicho capitán sebastián caboto avia dado a los dichos capitán Rojas e martin mendez e miguel de Rodas todos sus rescates e ropas syno fuera cierto bidro y cierto vino que no se podia sacar de la nao e que por cierto bidro de aquello vino e otras cosas que avian quedado avia dicho el dicho capitán Rojas que se diesen a sus criados. . . e que despues le paresçio que les vio andar en pleyto a los criados del dicho capitán Rojas con miquel Rifos teniente del dicho sebastián caboto. . . e que ansimismo oyo decir a la dicha gente que . . . caboto los avia encomendado a los yndios que los tratasen bien.”

§ “Dixo que sabe e vio . . . que les dexo . . . sus rescates . . . y sus caxas con todo lo que dentro tenian . . . que así mismo vio que los encomendo a los yndios principales de la dicha ysla por una lengua que estava allí para que se lo dixese a los dichos yndios para que los tratasen bien y les diede lo que oviesen menester por quel bolveria por allí y les daria muchas dadivas.”

|| “Dixo que . . . vio como . . . caboto mando que diesen . . . todo lo que tenian en las dichas naos que fuese sugo . . . e que oyo decir . . . que una bota de vino que tenia en tierra non hera muy buen vino . . . caboto mando que les llevasen otra bota de vino.”

collect all this evidence ; for it will not be idle to remember it when the tempest now gathering over Cabot's head bursts upon him.

It will be useful likewise to see how Herrera, the classic historian of Spanish navigation, has presented to his readers the account of these events; we have already quoted in its place the passage where rapidly and with a vagueness which to Biddle seems indicative of falsehood, he relates the voyage from the coast of Spain to the isle of Patos.\* Let us resume his narrative at that point and follow it. Herrera says then : "The provisions ran short from improper issue . . . and so he came to the island of Patos in great famine. He was well received by the Indians who gave him a great quantity of victuals with which he supplied the ships, although he repaid them ill, for he took four sons of the principal men. He passed on till he entered the river which they called then De Solis, and is now La Plata, leaving on an uninhabited island the General's Lieutenant, Martin Mendez, Captain Francis de Rojas, and Michael de Rodas ; because he not only had ill-will towards them, but they had freely found fault with his government ; and in fact he did not go to the Spice Islands, because he had not provisions, and the men would not follow him as they feared to be badly managed in the Strait (of Magellan)."<sup>†</sup>

Let us put aside the capture of the four young Indians, which we will examine hereafter, and first look into the rest. Herrera gives as the cause of the provisions running short that they had been improperly issued. But

---

\* See ch. xvi.

† " . . . llego a la isla de Patos, con mucha hambre. Y fue bien recebido de los Judios, que le dieron mucha victualla, con que abasteci6 los navios, aunque se lo pag6 mal porque tom6 quatro hijos de los hombres mas principales. Pass6 adelante, hasta entrar en el rio, que entonces llamavan de Solis, y aora de la Plata, dexando en una isla despoblada al Teniente de General, Martin Mendez, al Capitan Francisco de Rojas, y a Miguel de Rodas ; porque demas que les tenia mala voluntad, con libertad reprehendian su gobierno : y en efeto no pass6 a la Especeria ; porque ni lleva vitualla, ni la gente le quis6 seguir temiendo de ser mal gobernada en el estrecho."—Herrera, iii, lib. x, cap. i.

were they not unexpectedly blockaded by the fury of the sea at Pernambuco for three months? Herrera says not a word about that. And the four months or thereabouts that they were detained at the Bay of St. Catharine by sickness and the necessity of providing themselves with a galiot? Of this Herrera says nothing. Thus the period of seven months and over must have made some decrease in their stock of provisions! And the loss of the flagship? Herrera continues dumb; for him the shortness of food was owing to improper issue: where, then, when, how they were improperly issued he does not say, and has not a word more on the matter.

Let us come to the second point.

“He passed on, leaving on an uninhabited island Mendez, Rojas, and Rodas, because he not only had ill-will towards them but they had freely found fault with his government.” Here falsehood is accompanied with the purest hypocrisy. First, the historian says the inhabitants of Patos supplied Cabot with food, so that he was able to re-victual the ships; consequently the island was inhabited, and with good people. Then he says Cabot left the three officers on an *uninhabited* island. But if they were left at Patos, how can he say it was uninhabited? One would think the historian saw the contradiction and to hide it, after mentioning Patos, instead of saying “here he left the three officers,” he uses the general term, island, with the indefinite article so that the reader is naturally led to suppose that it was some other place, and cannot but condemn Cabot’s cruelty, and pity the three unfortunates.

But the hardest part is the conclusion of the account, from which I suspect that Herrera had no knowledge of the suit afterwards brought against Cabot, and that his account is not to be attributed to bad faith, but to the falsehood of the documents he had at hand. In that suit Catharine Vasquez, mother of Mendez, in her XX interrogatory, and Rojas in his VII, VIII, IX, and XII interrogatories accuse Cabot of wanting to give up the voyage to the Moluccas for the Plata in spite of the remonstrance of his Lieutenant Mendez and of Captain de Rojas. Rojas, in his 9th and 10th points accuses

Cabot of having first tried to have him killed and then arrested him because he opposed his wish to stop the expedition at the Plata ; and again, in the 13th and 14th, accuses him of refusing, in consequence of his unfortunate wish to stop at the Plata, to go as Rojas wanted to go to the aid of Loaysa's ships, which according to some, were lost in the Strait of Magellan ; and Catharine Vasquez for her son Mendez in her XXIV and XXV interrogatories, and Rojas in his XXV, call on Cabot to answer for the damages they suffered by his not continuing the voyage to the Moluccas. And here Herrera, after all these documents, after the public trial concerning them, comes forward to say that Cabot did not proceed to the Moluccas because his men would not follow him, and they would not follow him because they feared he was not able to manage the fleet in the strait !

When they left the Bay of St. Catharine they were still nearly all sick, \* but it seemed prudent to escape as soon as might be from a climate which had been so severe on their bodies weakened by fatigue and want of food. A change of air was judged to be the best means of restoring their strength. But on putting to sea so few were found fit for any work, and even these so weak, that they were hardly able to manage the vessels.†

---

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### *Exploration of the River La Plata.*

ARRIVING at the mouth of the Plata, before proceeding further, we must remind the reader how far the knowledge of the region Cabot stopped to explore, had then extended.

The first expedition which the Spaniards sent to the south-

---

\* "Yten si saben que quando se embarco la dicha gente, que casi toda ella estava doliente . . ." Int. xx of Cabot's proofs. The witnesses depose unanimously in accordance with the Interrogatory.

† "... no podian los marineros marcar las naos a causa de yr tan dolientes y flacos."ix witness to the same Interrogatory.

ern seas of America, in search of a passage to the eastern countries of Asia, was in 1508, and was led by John Diaz de Solis and Vincent Yañes Pinzon, the latter a former captain of one of Christopher Columbus's ships on the discovery of the New World. They went as far as the 40th degree of South Latitude, but did not discover the great estuary into which the River La Plata empties. Seven years later, in 1515, Diaz de Solis returned alone to the same region, and to make sure of his search he began to hug the coast from Cape St. Augustine in Brazil, and went on step by step taking note of every bay and harbor that he came to. In this examination he discovered the great river which was afterwards named Rio de la Plata. Its numerous sand banks and rocks prevented him from venturing in with his vessels, but he thought the discovery too important to leave altogether unexplored : and so taking his long-boat he began to ascend along the west bank. He had not proceeded far before he saw groups of Indians on shore. Not being able to hold any communication with them in words, a mute conversation was begun between the two sides by signs, and Solis thought the Indians invited him to land ; and as he saw them lay on the ground near their feet something they held in their hands, he concluded they meant to say that they not only invited him to land, but offered him every thing they had. Trusting his interpretations of those deceitful signs, he ventured on shore, and not to excite suspicion, wishing, it is said, to capture some of the natives to take to Spain as specimens, he landed poorly armed and with few men. This first act of imprudence was followed by a greater, when seeing the savages slowly retreating among the tall trees of a neighboring forest, he followed them almost alone. He had hardly entered the woods when a shower of arrows was shot from concealed enemies, and before he had time to lay his hand on his arms, he and all with him fell dead. Then the hidden savages burst forth, leaping and yelling with delight, fell upon them and stripped them, and then dragging their bodies to a great fire outside of the woods, roasted them at it, and in sight of the others who, beside themselves with grief and fear, witnessed from the boat,

the horrid scene, they devoured them with noisy pleasure. When the horrible story was told on the ships, there was a discussion what should be done, and it was decided to return to Spain.\*

Cabot on entering this estuary stopped at a small island called S. Lazaro, and remained there for a month to give his men time to recover somewhat from their loss of strength. In the meanwhile they were seeking for information about the place, and they hailed with joy the sight of a Spaniard, one Francis del Puerto, who had taken part in Solis's expedition, and remaining there as a slave after the sad end of the leader, had lived through humiliations and sufferings beyond description. He not only confirmed the tale of the great wealth of that region, but even pointed out the way to reach it. Encouraged by his words, they took him to the ships as guide on their voyage, and on May 6, 1527, they left S. Lazaro to go up the river.† But they went away sick at heart on account of those they left dead at S. Lazaro. The voyage from the Bay of St. Catharine to this island was only a few days,‡ but the labor of that short navigation was enough to cause the relapse of the convalescents, some of

\* "Lo mataron, i comieron con todos los Españoles que sacó, i aun quebraron el batel. Los otros que de los navios miraban alçaron anclas i velas, sin osar tomar vengança de la muerte de su Capitan." Gomara, cap. lxxxix.

Herrera, Dec. ii, lib. i, cap. vii.

Pietro Martire d'Anghiera, Dec. iii, cap. x.

† "Señala la magnitudo del rio y cuenta los muchos trabajos que pasaron hasta llegar á un puerto que llamaron de S. Lazaro, donde se detubieron un mes para informarse de la tierra. Un tal Francisco del Puerto, cautivo desde la derrota de Solis, les enteró de la mucha riqueza del pais y del camino que deben seguir para dar con la referida sierra. Con esto el Capitan determinó salir de alli el 6 de Mayo." From the narrative of Ramirez, App. xxxvii.

"... e se fueron el Río arriba por la gran notiçia que tenia un ombre que hallaron en el dicho Río de Solis que dezia que avia por el Río arriba grand fama que avia mucho oro y plata."

Answer to the xx Int. of Cabot's proofs.

‡ "Salieron deste puerto que llamaron St. Catalina el 15 de Febrero de 1527 llegando despues de seis dias a St. Maria punta a la desembocadura del Río de Solis." Ramirez, ib.

whom died on the way;\* and others after arriving at S. Lazaro.† But not all were able to depart: the most of them, from sickness or loss of strength, were unable to stand another voyage, and had to be left on the island for further care and rest; for which reason they gave the island now used as an infirmary, the name of the well-known saint in the Gospel. But even those who went, between the sickness and famine they had gone through, were so sickly and weak that on sailing they had not enough strength to hoist two anchors out of the water, with their stocks entangled in the aquatic plants of the river.‡

Cabot's course up the Plata is all involved in obscurity, and the few intimations the authors here and there give us of his voyage do not always serve to direct our steps, but sometimes by their mutual contradictions, rather increase our embarrassment. I will try my best to advance on their dark and dangerous road; and if at times the reader shall not find me exactly collecting these intimations and putting them together in the order he would like, I beg him beforehand to mitigate the rigor of his judgment by the thought of the difficulty the matter presents.

Herrera says nothing of the island of S. Lazaro, and from the mouth of the Plata transports us directly to the island of San Gabriel, thirty miles further up. Here Cabot left the ships and began the ascent of the river in long-boats.§ The information received from the Indians showed the Para-

\* "despues yendo por la mar, algunos dellos que yvan enfermos murieron." x Witness to the x Int. of Cabot's proofs.

† "Se murieron en el dicho Rio muchos e que se fueron a una ysla que se dize san lazaro e que alli estovieron ciertos dias e que ansymismo se murio alli mucha gente." Answers to xx Int. of Cabot's proofs.

Three other witnesses repeat the same thing.

‡ "Yten si saben que por falta de gente que como dicho estava doliente se dexaron dos anclas y dos cubos de la nao santa maria del espinar por los escobenes en el dicho Rio de Solis porque la gente estava muy doliente y no tenian fuerça para travajar ni sacar las dichas anclas." xx Int. of Cabot's proofs. All the witnesses answer in the affirmative.

§ "Metiose en el Rio de la Plata, subió descubriendo por el, y a poco mas de treynta leguas dió en una isla que llamó San Gabriel." Herrera, Dec. iii, lib. ix, cap. 3.

guay as the shortest course to the gold mountains.\* He continued therefore the ascent towards the Paraguay, and not more than seven leagues beyond San Gabriel he found on his right an affluent with good depth of water at its mouth. He approached it with the design of stopping there, but the natives, aware of his intention, quickly gathered in a great multitude and prepared to oppose him. The small number of the Spaniards and their extreme weakness would have made them avoid the labor and danger of an encounter. But Cabot quickly perceived that prudence at this moment would have been taken for fear; they would have been too elated, and their savage minds have acquired too much confidence for new attacks; and a sudden check on their first attempt would have produced a very bad effect on the Spaniards already disheartened and weakened by so many causes. He therefore ordered an immediate onset.† The brave savages fought valiantly, but their valor had to yield to the skill and weapons of the Spaniards. One particular related by the historian Gomara shows the fierce mirth of the savages. In the battle they had killed two Spaniards, and might have carried them off to eat them as they were accustomed to do with their enemies; but they would not, saying scornfully that these were soldiers, and they had learned from Solis and his companions, what kind of meat they made.‡ After driving back the Indians they secured the place with a small fort to which they gave the name of San Salvador.§

The vicissitudes of the voyage from the island of S. Lazaro

---

\* "Oy como segun informacion de los mismos indios el camino mas breve para ir a la sierra era entrar por el Paraguay." Ramirez, App. xxxvii.

† "The natives had collected and made a very formidable show of resistance, but Cabot without respect of peril, thought best to expugne it by one meanes or other, wherein his boldness tooke good effect as oftentymes chaunceth in great affayres." Eden, fol. 316.

‡ "En el puerto de S. Salvador . . . le mataron los Indios dos Españoles i no los quisieron comer diciendo que eran soldados que iá los havian probado en Solis i sus compañeros." Gomara, cap. lxxxix.

§ "Surgió alli, y con los bateles siete leguas mas arriba descubrió un rio, que llunó San Salvador, muy hondable, y seguro puerto para las naos, hazia la misma costa del Brasil, adonde metió su armada . . . Levantó una fortaleza . . ." Herrera, Dec. iii, lib. ix, cap 3.



to this place are not known, but they could not have been few, nor slight. Ramirez mentions them in a few, but significant words : " Both they and the others underwent great trouble and hunger." The others, to whom he refers, are the sick left at S. Lazaro. As soon as Cabot had got his little fort of San Salvador ready, he sent the galiot to S. Lazaro to fetch the sick, who leaving the island on August 25, 1527, reached the fort of San Salvador on the 28th. \*

Here they all remained together till the end of the year to regain their health and strength. But for many their rest came too late, and the fort of San Salvador was also afflicted with many deaths. Cabot, in his defense, mentions that he was obliged to remain on the Parana more than half-a-year to give the sick and convalescents time to recover, but does not say where or when this was.† From the indications furnished by Ramirez there can be no doubt it was at this time at Fort San Salvador. Hither were transported the sick and convalescent from S. Lazaro ; and the state of those who came with the ships is shown by their abandoning two anchors at that island from inability to weigh them. This was the time when the general condition of the men made it necessary to take a rest. It also agrees with the calculation of time. We have seen that the galiot sent to S. Lazaro to fetch the sick made the passage from that island to San Salvador in three days. Cabot must have taken a little longer, for the galiot went over an explored and safe course, whereas he was making the voyage for the first time, and therefore had to move with caution, and slowly, on an unknown way. But, as the passage was short, the difference cannot have been great. Consequently, as he left S. Lazaro on the 6th of May, we cannot be far out in thinking he

---

\* " Unos y otros padecen muchos trabajos y hambres, hasta que el general mandó la galeota para conducir la gente y azienda de S. Lazaro, de donde salieron el 25 de Agosto para llegar el 28 al nuevo sitio desde el general habia hecho asiento y una fortaleza para la defensa." Ramirez., App. xxxvii.

† " Yten si saben questava la dicha gente doliente en el Rio de Parana, que entra en el dicho Rio de solis mas de medio año convaleciendo de la dolencia que avian tenido en que en este comedio murieron muchos dellos." xxii Int. of Cabot's proofs.

reached San Salvador in the second half of May. Then as the first stop recorded after San Salvador is New-Year's Island, where he arrived on the first day of 1528, \* we have from his arrival at San Salvador till that at New-Year's seven months. Subtract from this the time spent in ascending the Parana from San Salvador to New-Year's, and you will have the *half-year and more*, that Cabot tells of.

Biddle quotes from Hakluyt the directions of an Anonymous author for the navigation of La Plata, in which after mentioning the five mouths which the Parana empties through, he uses these words to indicate the distance from one of them : "From the isle of Martin Garcia unto *St. Salvador* is nine or ten leagues. This is an island which standeth two leagues within the first mouth *where Sebastian Cabot took possession.*" † The island of Martin Garcia is at a short distance from the San Gabriel group which are nearly opposite to Buenos Ayres, only a little more to the north, and so called after Solis's Pilot who was buried there. ‡ And as it is clearly apparent from Herrera's words that he speaks of *an island of San Gabriel, standing alone, by itself*, and he must, under the name of San Gabriel, mean the group of five islets instead ; Biddle suspects that the Spanish historian, from want of exactness, meant by San Gabriel the island of Martin Garcia, misled by its nearness to that group. He is brought to suspect this by Eden's account which says expressly that De Solis was killed in attempting to take possession of the island of Martin Garcia, and that it was the same afterwards carried by Cabot. § Finally Herrera himself says that from the place where Cabot on his arrival left his ships to the river which he called San Salvador was a distance of seven leagues. Now the Directions referred to put the distance from the island of Martin Garcia to the *Port of San Salvador* at *nine leagues* ; but the same Directions say that the Port was *two leagues* beyond the mouth of the river. And as Herrera is speaking of the mouth of the river, deducting the two leagues from there to the port

\* This will be seen later.

† Eden fol. 316, and App. xxxix.

‡ Hakluyt, vol. iii, p. 729.

§ Biddle, bk. i, ch. xx, p. 150.

there remain exactly seven leagues, as Herrera has it. This fully confirms Biddle's suspicion. It is not a matter of any historical importance, but still it ought to be noticed.

Leaving Anthony de Grajeda at San Salvador in charge of the fort and the ships, Cabot with the boats and a caravel entered the Parana on his way to the mouth of the Paraguay. \* Both banks of the river were inhabited by the Guaranis, "a warlike, treacherous, and haughty people," says the Spanish historian, "calling all slaves that are not of their language, with whom they were always at war, in which they were very bloody and cruel, killing all they could and sparing no man his life. . . . Great bands started out and crossing all the lands of the nation, extending more than five hundred leagues, they came to the land of Peru, and after doing great destruction, returned victorious to their home : but some of them remaining in the mountains there, continued to do great damage." † This account of Herrera's, stripped of the sentiment of lofty contempt which the white man felt for the natives of the lands he discovered, and reduced to its true proportion, means that the Guaranis were a noble people that would endure no masters, not less fearless to meet the enemy openly than crafty in catching him in ambush and snares ; but themselves intolerant of a yoke, they were overbearing in imposing it on others, and without pity or mercy for a conquered enemy.

\* "Levantó una fortaleza, dexando en ella alcuna gente, y con la demas en los bateles y caravela determinó de descubrir a quel rio." Herrera, Dec. iii, lib. ix, cap. 3. "Continuaron pues el viaje dejando la fortaleza a cargo de *Gregorio Caro*." Ramirez, l. c.

Caro's name in Ramirez is certainly a mistake in copying, for we shall have conclusive evidence further on that Anthony de Grajeda was commandant of the fort, and that Gregory Caro was in command of another fort much higher up.

† "La mas principal generacion de Indios de aquella tierra son los Guaranis, gente guerrera, traydora, y soberbia, y que llaman esclavos a todos los que no son de su lengua, con los quales sempre andavan en guerra, en la qual eran muy sangrientos, y crueles, matando a quantos podian, sin tomar hombre a vida. y ... salieron grandes compañías, y caminando por todas las tierras de su nacion, que se estenden mas de quinientas leguas, llegaron a tierra del Pirú, y despues de aver hecho grandes destruyciones, se bolvieron vitoriosos a su naturaleza : però quedandose algunos en aquellas sierras, hizieron siempre grandes daños . . . ." Herrera, Dec. iv, lib. viii, cap. 12.

At the sight of the strange people ascending their river, the fierce savages raised their undaunted fronts and rushed to arms. Ramirez gives no details ; he only says that on the first day of the year 1528, the Spaniards stopped at an isle, to which they gave the name of New-Year's from the date of their arrival, and from there Cabot dispatched his Lieutenant, Michael Rifos, with thirty-five men to pacify and punish the tribes that thought of rebelling against them, and that Rifos obtained a complete victory and returned with great booty.\*

No one will wonder that so fierce a people should let themselves be so easily beaten by a handful of ours, if he considers that the poor savages met the enemy with naked breasts and primitive arms, whilst ours, besides being well protected and governed by sense and discipline, also carried fire-arms. As these arms, less by wounds and death than by the noise and flash of their discharge, always carried at first into the disordered multitude of the savages an impression of invincible terror, they could not have failed of their effect on this fearless people who had never before seen or heard them. This first experience of the power of the strangers seems to have made them cautious of provoking a second. I say *seems*, because Ramirez puts their defeat at the island of New-Year's, but does not say where that was, and omits entirely fort San Espiritu which Cabot raised on the Parana. Herrera gives the fort, but omits New-Year's and the combat. But as the Spanish historian expresses it in these words : "Sebastian Cabot, after *making peace with the Guaranis*, built the fort of San Espiritu while it lasted,"† it seems to me that the expression, *after making peace*, naturally presupposes a war ; and so interpreting events and localities in the order that appears to me most natural, I have placed the stay at New-Year's im-

---

\* "Continuan pues el viaje . . . y llegar á la isla Año nuevo este mismo día 1528. Desde aqui mandó el cap : gen : a Miquel Rifos con 35 hombres para apaciguar y castigar a los tribues que trataban de rebelarse contra ellos . . . Consignase la completa victoria, y el rico botin que adquirieron . . ." Ramirez, App. xxxvii.

† "Aviendo hecho Sebastian Gaboto la paz con esta generacion (Guaranis) mientras la pudo conservar, fabricó la poblacion de Sanctus Spiritus que dixeron la fortaleza de Gaboto." Herrera, Dec. iii, lib. viii, cap. xii.

mediately before the raising of the fort. It is true, Herrera in another place surrounds the raising of the fort with different circumstances, but the two sets of circumstances are not incompatible with each other and may very well have occurred together. This other passage is as follows: "At thirty leagues' distance (from San Salvador) he came to a river called Zarcarana, where he found a people of good intelligence and made another fort, which was called Sanctus Spiritus, and for another name the fort of Gaboto (Fort Cabot)." \* In my view, Cabot, after defeating the Guaranis, and forcing them to terms, resumed his advance by the River, and further up, at the mouth of one of the numerous affluents that run into the Parana, where the situation and the population seemed to him better fitted for the establishment of a small fort, he stopped and built the fort of San Espiritu. The Zarcarana was afterwards named the Terceiro by the Spaniards. But the reader must not, on hearing the term fort, suppose it meant in the usual sense: for Cabot's forts were, and could be, only huts or groups of huts more or less secured on all sides by banks of dirt, stones, wood, any thing to prevent a sudden attack by the natives. This, which is easily enough imagined of itself, is expressly stated by Diego Garcia, in connection with the very fort constructed at this place. † He left Gregory Caro in command of a small garrison in this fort, and continued his exploration. ‡

These garrisons, small as they were, for a few men with the terror of their arms sufficed to keep the Indians in suspicion and dread, were a constant and serious drain on Cabot's strength already much reduced; but prudence demanded he should secure his rear by keeping continually before the eyes

\* "A treynta leguas de camino llego a uno rio que se llama del Zarcarana, halló gente de buena razon, hizo otro fuerça, que se llamó Sanctus Spiritus, y por otro nombre la fortaleza de Gaboto." Herrera, Dec. iii, lib. ix, cap. 3.

† "... es esta casa una casa que tenia hecha de paia Sebastian gavoto que la tenia por fortaleza e llamavala la fortaleza de Sant<sup>o</sup> Spiritus . . ." Relacion y Derrotero de Diego Garcia. App. No. xxxviii.

‡ The appointment of Caro and Grajeda as commandants of the two forts will be made clearer by documents later on.

of the Indigenes a salutary terror in those little forts, and have in them a safe refuge in case of misfortune, and a sure and quick means of communicating with his ships. ✓

On occasion of the battle fought near the island of New-Year's, Ramirez tells of a custom of those savages which deserves mention. At the death of one of their sons, as a mark of the sad loss suffered in his death, they cut off a finger; and as often as a new loss of the kind occurs they make a new amputation from their hand.\*

The two banks of the river which they were ascending were thickly peopled: this is unanimously attested by Ramirez, Ramusio, and Herrera. But of their customs and condition, Herrera only says "they were a very intelligent people:"† and Ramusio gets out of it with these few words: "Finding the country always beautiful, with inhabitants without end, who ran to see me as a wonder.‡ Ramirez seems to speak of them in more detail in his narrative, but the abstract which I have only mentions the mere fact.§ Ramirez also hints at great suffering from hunger endured by the Spaniards from scarcity of victuals.||

On reaching the junction where the Paraguay and the Parana unite their waters, Cabot chose what seemed the larger, and was the Parana; but when he found it taking him eastwards he suspected he might find himself in Brazil, a Portuguese possession, and went back and entered the Paraguay. ¶ The few hints given by one of Cabot's interrogatories on the

\* ". . . la rare costumbre que los Indios tenian de cortarse un dedo a la muerte de sus hijos." Ramirez, App. xxxvii.

† "Halló gente de buena razon" Dec. iii, lib. ix, cap. 3.

‡ *Narrazioni e Viaggi*, T. i. fol. 415.

§ This abstract every now and then says: "Habla luego de las diversas tribus comarcanas, sus costumbres, productas de la tierra etc." and even in this place mentions that there is a description of the customs of the peoples they met. See App. xxxvii.

|| "Durante este viaje . . . faltaron hambres por la escasez de viveres." *Ib.*

¶ "De allí fue descubriendo el rio arriba de Parana que es el de la Plata: halló en el muchas islas y rios: y siguiendo la mas corriente, al cabo de docientas leguas llegó á otro rio, al qual llaman los Indios Paraguay, dexó el rio grande a mano derecha, pareciendole que se iba declinando hazia la costa del Brasil." Herrera, l. c.

trial, joined with Ramirez's narrative, afford us a glimpse of one of the most terrible moments recorded in the history of famine.\* We have already seen from Ramirez that before reaching the mouth of the Paraguay the galiot was in great distress for food : the hope that the longed-for mountain which held such treasures was not far off, and the trust that the region further on must relieve their despair, had kept them up ; and from the very rage of hunger they drew breath to increase their labors for the purpose of ending their sufferings. But when they entered the Paraguay things were at the last extremity. Food had given out altogether on the galiot, and no appearance of relief of any kind was apparent on either side of the river. They ate the most unclean animals, they chewed the wildest plants : † many called on God for death, no longer able to endure their torments ‡ A sad event occurred to heighten the horror of their condition. Having stopped the advance of the galiot, Cabot made some of the men land to see if they could find in the woods and the deserts of that land something to relieve their hunger. At evening they returned, all except a young boy. To comprehend the grief with which they noted his absence, we must remember the brotherly union as of one family, which exists between those of the same ship, especially in lands very far from home ; and remember that they were in entirely new regions, where the character of the inhabitants and the nature of the animals roaming in the dense forests rising lofty and impenetrable on either bank, were alike unknown. Great fires were immediately lit, that their brightness in the obscurity of night might serve as a beacon to the straggler : from time to time in the deep silence

---

\* The Interrogatory is the xxvi, but as it is too long to insert here entire I give only a little bit of the witnesses' depositions. For Ramirez, see next note.

† "Llegan por fin á abocarse con el Paraguay por el qual se encaminan, y en el que los trabajos y el hambre se duplicar, á causa de haberseles concluidos por completo los viveres, viendose precitados á comer los animales mas inmundos y las plantas mas agrestes." Ramirez, l. c.

‡ " . . . avian padescido en el camino mucha hambre, e deseavan todos la muerte antes que la vida por queste testigo se la oyo demandar a Dios a muchos dellos por no pasar el trabajo y hambre que pasavan." VI witness to said Interrogatory.

reigning over all the land they shouted, discharged their firelocks, and guns, to warn the unfortunate one in which direction were his brethren. But the night passed without any one appearing. In the morning Cabot sent out a band of men who pushed through the thick woods, calling their brother, and making the forest and the mountains near echo back their shouts and the sound of their fire-arms. But evening came and they went back tired to the galiot, with no trace of the lost one. The next day Cabot sent the same band, which moved about all day hunting and calling by every possible means ; but no one was seen, no one answered.\* Cabot could not yet move on and abandon that boy of his ; but the officers got around him and begged and conjured him to do so ; that he had done every thing possible to recover the lost boy ; his not answering so many calls was a sure sign he was either dead or hidden in the woods so deep that he could neither hear them nor find his way out ; perhaps the wild beasts had already torn him in pieces, or surely would do so, shut up and lost in the inextricable maze of the forest ; let him consider the desperate straits they were all in, and not leave all to die of starvation for the thin hope of finding the lost one. Their remonstrances were only too just and well-founded : and the galiot was ordered to proceed on her course.†

But if they all followed obediently the will of a captain who led them into such great sufferings, in their secret heart many, and perhaps most, cursed him, his discoveries, and the mountains he pursued and which fled ever further from them. The interpreter and head of this discontent was a certain Francis de Lepe who, cautiously dropping a word about their desperate condition, and finding the

---

\* The fact is narrated with great detail in the second interrogatory annexed to Sebastian Cabot's proofs. The witnesses, some of whom were not only present like the rest at the occurrence, but were part of those sent to find their lost comrade, confirm and add new details to Cabot's account.

† "entonces los oficiales de su magestad dixeron al capitan general que se fuese por que no peresciese toda la gente porque si alli estovieramos toda la gente se destruyera y muriera de hambre." II Interrogatory annexed to Cabot's proofs.



soil ready for the seed, began to talk with some of the most trusty of them about seizing the brigantine which followed the galiot, and going off on their own account where at least they could get something to eat. There were with the Spaniards some Indians brought as guides and interpreters, and the hunger they were suffering from gave more torture to these poor savages, accustomed to obtaining the little food necessary for their frugal wants with all ease from their fertile lands, than to the Spaniards. So that it was not hard for Lepe to bring over some of them to accept the charge of guiding the deserters to where there was plenty of food, whether they actually knew where to find it, or only made promises in order to escape from present agony. The interrogatory puts the number of conspirators at thirty-five, one witness says forty, an extraordinary number considering the necessarily small number on the galiot. But the safest way is to hold to what the other witnesses are contented with saying, and call them indefinitely many. Among so many it was too difficult to preserve secrecy. In fact one Lewis of Leon, a sailor, to whom it was proposed to take part in the flight, did not refuse, but moved, as it seems, by a strong sense of duty, disclosed the affair to the Chaplain, with whom he was accustomed to converse, and to whom consequently he could tell it without exciting the suspicion of the others, begging him, to give immediate warning of it to the Captain. Cabot after hearing it, and receiving from the sailor's own mouth more exact information, arrested Lepe and the others named as in the plot, and gave them a brief trial: the accomplices he punished in various degrees; and commanded the chief to be hanged at once.\* The wretch died resigned saying: "As I pay for all, I wish you all a good voy-

---

\* "francisco de lepe y otros... querian yr a buscar de comer que stava alli uno o dos yndios que yvan con ellos en un vergantin que heran naturales de a quella tierra que les dixo que los llevaria presto en tierra donde hallasen de comer e yuan de villa fuente le dixo a este testigo... e queste testigo entonces lo dixo a un capellan de la dicha armada que hera su compañero para que le dixese al dicho capitan general, e quel dicho capitan general le llamo e se ynformo deste dicho testigo de lo que sabia e queste testigo le dixo lo que sabia e que despendrió al dicho francisco de lepe v a otros muchos e hizo su ynformacion y ahorco al dicho francisco de lepe." VI witness to the xxvi Interrogatory.

age.”\* This promptness and severity in punishing had a terrifying effect on all and none durst try it again.

But strong as Cabot's determination was to continue this course in the hope of soon finding some spot to relieve their hunger, he was forced to admit that it was no longer possible to trust to the uncertainty of hope without placing himself and all the rest in great risk of dying of hunger. He therefore stopped the galiot, and sent back the brigantine, as fast as they could row, to get victuals at some huts they had passed on their way. The place was at a good distance, but their own necessities and the danger in which they had left their comrades added strength to the rowers, so that they were soon at the village. They refreshed themselves, loaded, and departed; and the quickness with which they returned was marvellous.†

Restored by the food brought by the brigantine, they resumed their way with fresh vigor towards those gold mountains, which seemed to grow ever more distant, but whose existence received fresh and surer confirmation.

Further on, they found a population much more numerous than the others, of which they had heard already on their way, and the chief who ruled them, by name Yaguaron, was one of the most powerful on that river. They had been told a great deal in his favor, but the reception he gave them surpassed their anticipations: they were treated with great courtesy and friendship, and furnished bountifully with food. They stayed there several days, for the needed rest, and gave the place the name of Santa Anna.‡ These people were in the habit of wearing in their ears rings and little plates

\* “oyo este dicho testigo decir al dicho francisco por todo quando lo llevavan ahorecar que pues el avia sido culpado y pagava por todos que dios diese buen viajo ” Deposition of the viii witness.

† “Para remediar tan urgente necesidad manda el capitan un vergantin á todo remo en busca de bastimentos á unos caserios bastante distantes, volviendo al poco tiempo bien provistos.” Ramirez *l.c.*

‡ “Con esto pudieron llegar á dicho pueblo que se hallaba regido por un indio principal llamado yaguaron el qual les recibió muy bien y los proveyó de abundantes viveres. En este puerto que recibió el nombre de S. Aña estubieron algunos dias.” Ramirez, *l. c.*

of gold and silver: and this sight was full of comfort and hope for the Spaniards. Not satisfied with ascertaining from them where they obtained these metals, Cabot sent Francis da Puerto to the neighboring populations to make the same inquiry. The information brought back was that about seventy leagues further on there was a people called Chandules, from whom they got the ear-rings and plates in exchange for other articles they gave them. Their joy on hearing this was increased on learning that this people dwelt near the chain of mountains from which those metals were dug. They therefore set out again on their way, panting for a speedy termination of their labors, and the fulfilment of their hopes.\*

To hasten their arrival at those longed-for places, Cabot sent forward the brigantine under the orders of his Lieutenant-General, Michael Rifos, to explore a river called Nepetin which according to the Indians had its source in those mountains. The mission of Rifos had a most unhappy result in an encounter with a people called the Agales; but the abstract of Ramirez in its extreme brevity leaves us uncertain how it happened. But as after the encounter Cabot came to a determination which decided the future of the whole expedition; and Herrera also mentions a battle after which Cabot made the decision which Ramirez puts after the encounter of Rifos, there can be no doubt that the combat related by Herrera must be that of Rifos. This settled, with the assistance of both writers, we will put together, as well as may be, the last act of this most unfortunate expedition.

Herrera relates that at thirty-four leagues from the mouth of the Paraguay they found for the first time a "laboring people."† Then all the other populations hitherto seen were true

---

\* " . . . y como vieron que los Indios llevaban orejeras y planchas de oro y plata, quisieron saber de donde lo traian asi los deste pueblo como los de otro inmediato á donde si mandó a Franco del Puerto. Este pudo averiguar que los chandules, pueblo distante casi 70 leguas, se lo daban en cambio de otros obietos. Determina el general continuar el viage hasta los mismos chandules, que segun desian se hallaban cercanos á la sierra. . ."—Ramirez, l. c.

† " . . . y entrando por el a las treynta y quatro leguas, halló gente laboradora, que hasta entonces no la havia visto . . ."—Herrera. *ib.*

children of the forest, whose wants were supplied by the natural fertility and abundance of the land, and they lived together with that broad liberality and community of goods which existed among the savages discovered by Christopher Columbus. Hence perhaps one of the reasons why the navigation along the river had met no other obstacles after the combat at the Island of New-Year's, was that the inhabitants of both banks accustomed to find easily and naturally in the free products of their land wherewith to satisfy their wants, saw no harm or danger to their food and maintenance in the strangers' arrival. But it seems that the Agales by the sweat of labor forced from the soil what they required for living, and therefore must have had very definite notions of mine and thine : although others took no umbrage on seeing strangers come down on their land and carry off the products which the land freely gave to all, a very different impression was received by the Agales who had sweated to bring them forth. To this we may perhaps add that this people very far from the place where the Spaniards had made the Guaranis feel the power of their arms, knew little or nothing of that fact, and therefore had no reason to stand in awe of the foreigners.

This was the people among which Michael de Rifos arrived with his brigantine. The Spaniards, feeling secure from the pacific behavior of the people hitherto met, went quietly on, and three of them went ashore to gather dates, as they had been in the habit of doing without danger or interference all along the way. But here they were suddenly attacked by the natives and all three killed.\* So far as appears, Rifos did not think he ought to land immediately and revenge this wrongful act, influenced by the necessity of having the population friendly in order that they might reach the mountains and obtain the treasures they were dreaming of. He therefore approached the main population with signs of good friendship ; and at first he was well received ; but after-

---

\* "Y le tomaron tres que avian ydo a cortar palmitos para comer." Herrera, Dec. iii, lib. ix, cap. 3.

wards, as they feared, says Ramirez, to be punished for the slaughter they had done ( and this slaughter I think was of the three killed as told by Herrera), they treacherously slew Rifos, with some of his men. At this sight, the rest, livid with fear and anguish, rushed at once to the galiot which, owing to the peculiar nature of the river, was following at a distance. \*

From the words of Ramirez it seems that Rifos had imprudently landed with a number of his men, and they were massacred whilst standing unsuspecting in face of the good reception they met. But they died not unavenged, according to Herrera, who says the Spaniards slew many of them. But if they had slain many hundreds, the slaughter of the enemy could not compensate the loss of the twenty-five men they left there. † Cabot's entire strength on leaving Europe was 200 men, to which were afterwards added a few Christians found at the Bay of St. Catharine. ‡ Now of these men of his, many died at that bay, many in the crossing to the Plata, many at San Lazaro, many at San Salvador.§ If the adjective, many, is taken in the restricted sense of a score or less, the small number becomes very large, taken in relation to the whole number of the men. Two had been hanged, three deposed and left at the Isle of Patos, some remained with Grajeda to guard the ships in the harbor of San Salvador, others were in garrison with Gregory Caro at Fort San Espiritu. There could

\* "Tratan de celebrar paces con el pueblo de los agales, y al principio son bien recibidos, pero como temiesen los Indios ser castigados por las muertas que ante habian hecho, matan traídosamente al teniente del vergantín Miguel Rifos con algunos suos volviendo los restantes tristes á la galeota, que les habia seguido desde lejos y con dificultad por las condiciones especiales del Rio." Ramirez—App. xxxvii.

† "Alli se hizieron tan grande resistencia que no pudo passar adelante, mató muchos Indios, y le mataron veynte y cinco Castellanos." Herrera, Dec. iii, lib. ix, cap. 3.

‡ The reader may remember that Martin of Biscay who was hanged on the Parana was one of those taken along from the Bay of St. Catharine. However, the greater part of the fifteen Christians found there continued to remain in that place, as will be clearly seen a little further on.

§ Not to repeat citations, the reader is referred to what was said in Chapters XVII and XVIII.

therefore, only have been few who followed Cabot on the exploration of the river. From these few, taking now twenty-five away, what force had he left to meet future dangers and secure control of the gold mountains? Indeed, he found himself with the galiot in such danger from the small number of men at his disposal, that he was forced to release and arm for the common safety those he was taking along as prisoners for their complicity in Lepe's plot.\* In addition to this, a rumor was brought from the river that a Portuguese fleet was advancing by the Rio de Solis. † How was he to face this new enemy? It was a fresh torment to his feelings to behold his plans again destroyed; and that, too, just as he reached out his hand to pluck the palm of victory. But the necessity was pressing, and no human force could oppose it. And he gave the command to retreat.

---

## CHAPTER XIX.

### *Diego Garcia.*

RETURNING now down the Parana we meet another explorer coming up the river on the same exploration as Sebastian Cabot is making. He belonged to a very common class of explorers abounding in the XVI century, and but for his connection with Cabot history would not probably take note of him. But he made a narrative of his voyage, and speaks there of Cabot; and as his words inspired by bitter enmity towards

---

\* "El dicho capitan Caboto llevaba presos con grillos a ciertos ombres que dezian que heran en el motin e que despues los solto a causa que los yndios le mataron los cristianos que yvan en vergantín."—I witness to the xxvi Interrogatory of Cabot's proofs.

† "El desgraciado esito de esta espedicion y el saber que andaba una armada portuguesa en el rio Solis fueron motivos para que el general determinase volverse rio abajo hasta el Parana."

Ramirez, App. xxxvii.

"Alli pensó en dar la buelta."

Herrera, Dec. iii, lib. ix, cap. 3.

him, were greedily picked up by Cabot's enemies and became bloody weapons against him, this has given a certain importance to his voyage, and wherever Cabot's work on the Plata is spoken of there is always mention of this other explorer and of their meeting. Who he was, how, and for what purpose he was sailing, was told and printed as long ago as 1601 by Herrera. His name was Diego Garcia, and he is the same person mentioned in our XVI chapter as a braggart and coxcomb. He was born at Moguer, a little Spanish city on the Tinto a short distance from Palos, whence Christopher Columbus sailed on his first discovery, and he was sailing for the account of a modest Spanish company.\* But in spite of this open and decided declaration, Charlevoix has built a story all invention from the bottom up. He has made of Diego Garcia a Portuguese general, and says he was in Brazil, a possession of the crown of Portugal; that as soon as he knew of Sebastian Cabot's voyage up the Plata, apprehensive for the neighboring possessions of his country, he hurried across the provinces of Brazil to cut off his road. But Cabot, learning of his advance, quickly got his men together and descended the river in all haste, to put himself in safety. And all this he embellishes with a series of bold deeds and adventures as strange and surprising as in a regular sensational romance.† It is incomprehensible how Charlevoix, pretending to write history, could believe or invent such tales when he had his way clearly marked out in Herrera. His error was the cause, I believe, of even the way Biddle made a false step or two; for he likewise makes Garcia a Portuguese, in spite of Herrera's distinct assertion. But if he errs in this, in all else he adheres to the Spanish historian's account. But acute as he was in dissecting every question that undertook to treat of Cabot, having no aid from any documents that could throw any light on the obscurity of this exploration, as he saw the figure of Diego Garcia, appearing like a vision now and then; he fixed his gaze on that and thought of it till

---

\* This will be reported to better advantage a little later.

† Charlevoix, *Histoire du Paraguay*. Liv. i, p. 26. et suiv.—Paris, MDCCLVI.

he seemed to see in it something mysterious. And with this notion, starting from the point that he was a Portuguese, he whets his ingenuity by accumulating argument upon argument to convince the reader that Diego Garcia was an agent of Portugal sent to follow Cabot, to watch his course, to aid the rebels in the expedition in their work, if necessary, and if occasion offered, even take the command of it in order to divert it from the Moluccas and keep it on the American coast.\* And his reasoning is so close and strong as easily to convince the reader who has no other source of information. Instead of stopping to refute Biddle's reasoning, since new arguments have stripped the figure of Garcia of its mysterious appearance, and reduced it to its very poor proportions, we shall only remark that Diego Garcia sailed from Spain more than five months after Cabot, and at such an interval between them he surely could not have been sent to help the rebels.

We are able to complete the imperfect information given by Herrera with Garcia's own narrative, an authenticated copy of which we have before our eyes. Although defective in many places, in the part which we are concerned with it is almost entire, and enables us to follow with security the course of his navigation.

Some Spanish gentlemen, with Don Ferdinand de Andrada at their head, formed an association for the exploration of the river discovered by John Diaz de Solis, and applied to the government for the necessary approval. This was given, with an obligation annexed that the expedition should also go in search of John Cartagena and the French priest whom Ferdinand Magellan had deposed and abandoned at the strait which afterwards took his name.† Diego Garcia was placed at the head of this expedition.

---

\* "This expedition, under the command of the Portuguese, was hastily got up to watch his movements, and probably to act in concert with the disaffected, with an understanding as to certain points of rendezvous in case the mutineers should gain the mastery . . ."—Lib. i, cap. xvii, p. 128.

† "El conde D. Hernando de Andrada y otros se ofrecieron de hacer una armada, y embiarla a la parte del Mar Oceano Meridional. . . en la parte que dezian el Rio de la Plata y aviendo capitulado con el rey, se concertaron que llevase a su cargo esta armada Diego Garcia, vezino de la villa de Monguer,



The expedition sailed from the port of Corunna, where it was fitted out; left Cape Finisterre, according to Garcia's narrative, on the 15th of January, 1526; according to Herrera's history the 15th of August of that year.\* The difference between the two dates is enormous, and the preference would naturally be given to Garcia's authority. But as Diego Garcia sailed from Corunna to the Canaries to victual his vessels, and sailed from the Canaries according to his own account and Herrera's on the 1st of September, it seems rather difficult to believe that he was seven months and a half taking in provisions. Consequently, I am inclined to think that in Garcia's narrative there is a mistake in the name of the month, and prefer Herrera's date, as he had other documents by which he might have corrected any error in the narrative. In mentioning his departure from the Canaries on the first of September, Garcia calls attention to his wisdom in choosing a season for sailing to the southern lands of the New World, and contrasts with his vaunted knowledge the ignorance of Sebastian Cabot, who with all his astrology did not know the difference of time in the course of the seasons there and in the New World, and consequently did not know enough to choose the proper season for sailing to those parts. † We have already seen in its proper place how unjust and uncalled-for this charge against Cabot is, and how foolish

con el qual se hizieron ciertos capitulos . . . . entre los quales fue . . . . que . . . . procurasse por todas las vias posibles de buscar a Ivan de Cartagena, y al clerico Frances, que en su compania dexo Hernando de Magallanes."—Herrera, Dec. iii, lib. x, cap. i.

\* "Sali de la coruña que allí me fue entregada la armada por los oficiales de su magestad que fue de mil quinientos e veynte e seys a quinze de enero del año parti del Cabo de Finisterre."

*Relacion de Diego Garcia.*

"Partio Diego Garcia . . . a quinze de agosto de este año (1526) del Cabo de Finisterre. . . .v. . . .salí de las Canarias a primero de Setiembre." Herrera, Dec. iii, lib. x, cap. i.

† ". . . nos partimos en primero de setiembre del dicho año porque entonces esta el sol en calma a treze de setiembre porque va a hacer verano en la parte que nos y vamos a descubrir . . . y esta navegacion no supo tomar sebastian gabot con toda su astrulugia tomó la contraria como ombre que no. . . nada."  
—From the Narrative of Diego Garcia—App. No. xxxviii.

and false was Garcia's boast of his wisdom; and it is not necessary to add any thing here.\*

From the Canaries he passed over to the Cape Verde Islands, where he took on more provisions;† and from there he sailed towards Cape St. Augustine.‡ Here he boasts again of his ability in overcoming the currents which are met in that crossing, and derides the ignorance of Cabot who did not know enough to do the same.§ But, as we remarked in another place, he does not tell us how or in what Cabot was at fault; he derides and passes on.|| From Cape St. Augustine he sailed to Cape Frio, thence to the Bay of St. Vincent, and thence to the Plata.¶

On arriving at the Plata, he stopped his ships at its mouth, and putting together the brigantine which he took along in pieces, he began with that to go up the river, and so came to the harbor of San Salvador where Sebastian Cabot's ships were. Anthony Grajeda, who was guarding them, at the sight of the brigantine, thought it was Rojas and Rodas and Martin Mendez who were coming with sinister intentions, and with some canoes and an armed boat advanced boldly against him; and they were on the point of battle when Garcia recognizing Grajeda, was aware that they were Sebastian Cabot's men, and, making himself known in turn, animosity and fear ceased on either side.\*\*

\* See ch. xvi.

† “. . . tomamos la derrota delas islas de cabo verde . . . y alli tomamos mucho Refresco . . . de todas las cosas que uvimos menester . . . —” *Ibidem*.

‡ “Destá ysla de buena vista herimos vela en la buelta y demanda del cabo de san agostin.”—*Ib*.

§ “. . .este camino se ha da navegar con grande resguardo y saber de marineria porque ay grandes corrientes que salen delos rrios de guinea que abaten los navios ala vanda del uurnester que van corrientes á las yndias de castilla estas corrientes no supo tomar sebastian caboto porque no era marinero ny sabia navegar.”—*Ib*.

|| See ch. xvi.

¶ *Ib*.

\*\*“En las islas de las Piedras surgieron y armaron el bergantín que llevaban en piezas, con el qual fueron el rio arriba . . . y . . . vieron dos naos de Sebastian Gaboto, cujo Teniente era Anton de Grajeda, que salió con ciertas canoas, y un batel armados, pensando que eran los dos hermanos Rojas y Martin Mendez que ivan contra el . . . hasta que Anton de Grajeda fue conocido de Diego Garcia, y van tomando las armas para llegar a las manos; y al cabo conocieron, que era el armada de Sebastian Gaboto . . .” —Herrera, *ibidem*.

Grajeda gave Garcia a festive reception and told him the good news he had just received of a great victory gained by Cabot over the Indians with the death of more than four hundred of the latter.\* After this Diego Garcia returned to his ships, and exchanged his largest ship for the brigantine of a Portuguese.

I must pause here to discuss the bargain at some length. To the reader it may appear altogether useless and perhaps a stumbling-stone in the narrative ; but it is not so : I rather ask the reader to give it his attention, for further on we shall have occasion to recall it, and it will aid us if we have the fact well present.

Diego Garcia's narrative from his sailing out of Corunna harbor to his arrival at the Bay of St. Vincent, except the two places where he lays hold of Cabot, contains merely the distances of the course sailed over, and the geographical position of the different places, with special mention of those where he renewed his supplies, and such as it is so far, it will continue to the end. Only at the Bay of St. Vincent he stops to tell something else. On this bay, which is in the 13th degree of South Latitude, had lived for thirty years a Portuguese bachelor and he had his son-in-law with him. Their occupation was hunting Indians and sending them to Europe to be sold for slaves. Diego Garcia landed on this bay to get fresh provisions for his ships, and remained here till the 15th of January of the following year, 1527.† As was natural,

Herrera almost always speaks of Diego Garcia's voyage in the very words of the latter's narrative ; and therefore instead of quoting directly from the narrative, I quote from Herrera, because in the narrative as it has reached us there are many gaps.

\* “. . . nos hizo mucha onrra dio nos nueva de su capitan general e como a quel dia avia visto una carta suya en la qual le avisaba como avia muerto mas de quatrocientos Yndios e que iba con gran victoria por el Rio arriba haciendo guerra á los yndios.”—Diego Garcia's narrative.

† “. . . de aqui fuemos adelante e allegamos al cabo de sant' Agostin e tome my navegacion la buelta del cabo frio. . . e de aqui fuemos a tomar Refresco en san vicente que esta en xiii grados. . . .

“. . . . alli estuvimos hasta quinze de enero del año syguiente de xxvii e aqui tomamos mucho refresco de carne e pescado delas vituallas de la

while here he saw and became acquainted with the Portuguese bachelor and his son-in-law, and had many opportunities of talking with them. In these conversations they came to a profitable agreement. The Portuguese had on hand a fine supply of 800 slaves, but the harvest was useless to him for want of the means of sending them to market to Europe. The big ship of 100 tons which carried Diego Garcia suited his purpose and he offered to buy it. Diego accepted the offer and the bargain was made. In place of the ship he sold Garcia bought a brigantine from the son-in-law of the Portuguese.

To Diego himself the contract must have seemed atrocious, for he takes over a page and a half of folio to discuss it and argue that he had not done wrong. His reasoning is, that the ship on account of her size was wholly unsuited for the exploration he was to make of a river, and that he had previously told Don Ferdinand de Andrada and his partners so in Spain, and that they only intended to have her laden with slaves; and he did so because they violated His Majesty's orders concerning the conditions his fleet was to have, and did not keep the agreements made and signed with him; and that he had the consent and approval of all his officers for the exchange of his largest ship for the brigantine.\* But, either there was not this approval, or if there was, the enormity of the act seemed to him and his accomplices to render it necessary to find some pretext to color the wicked bargain in the eyes of their men. For it was determined that Garcia should sail on the large ship as far as the mouth of the Plata, and the brigantine should join him there and make the exchange. Why

---

tierra para provision de nuestra nave e acqua e leña e todo lo que uvimos menester." *Ib.*

\* "...este bachiller con sus yernos hizieron con migo una carta de flete . . . para que la truyese en espana con la nao grande octocientos esclavos e yo la hize con acuerdo de todos mys oficiales. . . que allegando en el Rio mandaremos la nao, porque la . . . no podia entrar en el rrio porque muchas veces le dijo al contador Don Fernando e á los factores. . . que aquella nao no podia entrar en el rrio que hera muy grande y ellos no quisieron syno hacermela llevar cargada con esclavos e asy lo hize e asy la mando cargada de esclavos porque ellos no hizieron ny me dieron la armada que su magestad mandó que me diessen lo que con ellos yo tenia capitulado. . ."—*Ib.*

this delay in exchanging? At first sight it might appear to be because the ship was excellently adapted for Ocean navigation and could not be used for that of the Plata; but Herrera's words give us to understand otherwise. He says that Diego Garcia, when he reached the mouth of the Plata and had gone up the river some leagues with a brigantine, coming back to his ships, "determined to exchange the largest below the river, saying that it was in great danger from the squalls which occurred at that season, *making that a pretext* for profiting by the freight, which the Portuguese bachelor had paid him for the transport of the 800 slaves that he had agreed with him to carry to Portugal: and *to give color to this cupidity*, he said that he had protested to Count Ferdinand de Andrada that this ship should not have been given him, because it was very large and of no use for the navigation and discovery of the Rio de la Plata, and not according to the agreement with the king; and so the ship was then taken to the port of St. Vincent to take on the slaves."\* Then the men of the expedition would know nothing of the bargain concluded at St. Vincent, if the squalls which they met on entering the Plata were put forward as the reason for the exchange. And see how all the circumstances unite to prove the fraud and artifice of Diego Garcia's conduct. Cabot on arriving at the Plata entered it at once with all his ships: Garcia ascended it with a brigantine for about thirty leagues for a trial. Why? In order that on his return he might be able to say that the large ship would be in great danger in that navigation, and it was necessary to make an exchange. It had been settled at St. Vincent that the exchange should be made for a brigantine, but some excuse was required for the opportune presence of the

---

\*" Bolviose Diego Garcia a sus naos y determinó de embiar la mayor fuera del rio, diziendo que estava en gran peligro de las Gurupadas, que en aquel tiempo avia: tomandolo por ocasion para aprovecharse del flete, que le avia de pagar el Bachiller Portugues por el porte de ochocientos esclavos, que avia concertado de traerle a Portugal: y para dar color a esta codicia dixo que avia protestado al Conde don Fernando de Andrada que no le diesse esta nave, porque era muy grande e inutil para la navegacion, y descubrimiento del rio de la Plata, y contra lo capitulado con el Rey; y assi se fue luego la nao al puerto de San Vicente a cargar los esclavos."—Herrera, l. c.

brigantine without exciting suspicion. And a pretext was found in the bachelor's son-in-law, whom Diego Garcia said he was taking as interpreter on his voyage. Really, any one that reflects on it must think it very odd to take an interpreter at St. Vincent for wholly new countries twenty-one degrees further south. But a captain's authority can make very unreasonable things pass for probable. It was therefore settled that this son-in-law should go with them as interpreter, and should join them with a brigantine at the mouth of the Plata. There might be a good deal said on this point too ; for it is rather strange that the interpreter, instead of going at once on board of the ships with them, should make a voyage by himself of twenty-one degrees to join them. But as we know not how the matter was colored, it only remains for us to mention it, and pass on. Lo ! now, all seems chance and luck. The squalls, the too large ship, the brigantine providentially arriving in the nick of time : and so the exchange must appear to everybody fair and reasonable.

The exchange made, Diego Garcia took all his ships to the spot where Cabot's were, and anchored alongside of them. Then with two brigantines and sixty men he proceeded towards the Parana ; and so he came to Fort San Espiritu, which was, as has been said, merely a house thatched with straw and put as far as possible in a state of defence under the orders of Captain Gregory Caro. Diego Garcia had been very friendly with Grajeda at Fort San Salvador, seeing him with two ships, and a considerable armed force ; but when he saw what a mean hut Fort San Espiritu was, and how few men were there on guard, he assumed the tone and airs of a conqueror, and summoned Caro to give up the fort to him, saying that the exploration of the River de La Plata had been entrusted to him. Caro, as a frank and loyal officer, answered "that he held the place in the name of his Majesty and Cabot ; but in all else was ready to do him any service in his power." This resolute answer silenced at once Garcia's arrogance.\* Coming thus into

---

\*"Haliaamos alli un gregorio caro e le requerimos que se fuese de aquella conquista porque no hera suya, e el nos Respondio muy bien, dijo que todo lo

friendly relations, Caro told Garcia there was a rumor among the Indians that Cabot, who was a good way up the river, had met with a severe defeat by the Indians, with the loss of many of his men, and therefore if Garcia continued on up the river he begged him to ransom the Spaniards he should find captured by the natives, and he would repay the price of their ransom ; and, if he found that Sebastian Cabot was dead, not to abandon him in that place.\*

Now see the boast Garcia durst make of his navigation from Fort San Espiritu to Port St. Ann ! We are in that long tract of the river in which is the island of New-Year's, where Cabot was obliged to stop, to fall upon the Indians, who were either muttering rebellion or had already revolted, in his rear. Cabot would naturally ascend the river step by step, because the road was altogether new, and it was therefore necessary to examine every spot, treat with the Indians, quiet their suspicion, gain their affection, awe them or fight them, as the case might require ; all this must needs consume much time. Garcia, on the contrary, had the way already opened, the river safe, because already examined by Cabot's ships, no danger from the inhabitants, because they were held in awe by Cabot's forts and the memory of his weapons ; so that Garcia could move with safety and at his ease. With all this difference in circumstances Diego Garcia has the boldness to brag that he travelled in only 27 days over what took Cabot five months.†

obedecia e que stavan en aquella casa por su magestad e por sebastian gavoto que estava a mi servicio." Diego Garcia's narrative.

\*"e dio nos nuevas de su capitan que le habian dicho los yndios como el capitan sebastian gavoto hera arriba desbaratado e muerto mucha gente y que me rogava que si alguno hallase por aquella parte donde yva descubriendo que lo Rescatase que el me pagaria el Resgate e que se encomendaba mi merced que sy fuese su capitan muerto que no lo dejase en el Rio que lo sacase"—Ib.

Herrera by an oversight has changed Sebastian Cabot's rout into a victory : —"que si subiesse por el rio, procurasse de rescatarlos Castellanos que hallasse presos, porque aunque sabia que Sebastian Gaboto avia desbaratado los Indios, era imposible que no huviesseen peligrado algunos ; y que el pagaria el rescate, y que si hallasse muerto a Sebastian Gaboto, le rogava que no lo dexasse alli —." Dec. iii, lib. x, cap. i.

† "De alli me parti viernes Santo por la mañana y en veinte e siete dias anduvo tanto quanto anduvo sebastian caboto en cinco meses." From his narrative.

There is nothing surprising in such a stupid boast coming from a conceited braggart like Diego Garcia ; what surprises us is that a grave historian like Herrera should pick up even this stone to throw at Cabot. \*

A hundred leagues beyond the fort of San Espiritu, Diego Garcia joined Sebastian Cabot at the port of St. Ann, which, as set down by Garcia himself, is in 28° South Latitude. † Besides the testimony we have seen from Ramirez, Diego Garcia's own narrative, although very worn in this place, shows that Cabot's defeat occurred higher up. ‡ We must then suppose that Cabot retreated to St. Ann after his loss, to recuperate under the friendship of the good Prince Yaguaron.

Of his meeting with Sebastian Cabot, Garcia does not give one word, but Ramirez has something on the subject. The Portuguese fleet which was rumored among the Indigenes to be coming up the River de Solis, the report of which had been one of the causes of Cabot's retiring, turned out to be only Diego Garcia's brigantine. The doubt and alarm were quickly turned to joy when they saw their brethren, and it was at once proposed that they should unite, and with abundant supplies ascend the river : but for whatever reason, the good intention was not carried out; and the two captains, separating, followed each his own course on returning.§

Cabot, on arriving at Port San Salvador, put a caravel under sail, and with her sent two of his officers, Ferdinand Calderon and George Barloque, to the Emperor. It seems that in his constant loss of men, and the condition of his expedi-

\* Dec. iii, lib. x, cap. i.

† "Llegaron cien leguas mas arriba de la casa fuerte al puerto de Santana, que así llamo Sebastian Gaboto, adonde le mataron hasta veynticiuco hombres." Herrera, *ib.*

"y este rio esta en xxviii grados y esta de Santa Aña que hasta aqui descubrimos." Diego Garcia's *narrative*.

‡ "e descubrio sebastian gaboto e hasta nueve leguas por el paraguay arriba e de aqui . . . dos lugares le mataron la primera gente . . . que traya . . ."

The text is very worn here.

§ " hasta al Parana, donde encontraron otra armada del emperador, cuyo capitau Diego Garcia de Moguer, trató de unirse a nuestra armada para volver, bien pertrechados á la dicha sierra ; por al fin no hubo convenio entre a los generales, siguiendo cada cual rumbo distinto."—Ramirez, l. c.



tion growing daily more desperate, he had sustained himself with the hope of reaching the treasures of La Plata, and thus accompanying the news of his stopping on that river with the dazzling announcement of those riches. The Spanish people and government, in that case, would have overlooked the failure of his expedition, and even blessed his decision to cut it in halves. And he, far from sinking in public esteem, would have gained an increase of respect and authority. But his defeat had rendered it absolutely impossible, and the refusal of Diego Garcia took from him his only means of succeeding; and he then decided to send to Spain to report to the government the state of affairs, and to ask for aid.

He gave the two officers a letter for the Emperor, in which he explained the sad events of the voyage, and the causes which had made him cut it short. He spoke of his determination to explore the river discovered by Solis, of the different provinces he had already been through, and of the different races of people dwelling in them, and how great wealth could be got from them; and asked for men and means for colonizing the territory. In support of his account and of his demands, he caused some Indians and various specimens of the products of the land to be taken on board, with samples of silver, a little gold, and other metals.\*

---

\*“y aviendose topado con el (Garcia con Cabot), se bolvi ron juntos adonde estava Gregorio Caro: y de alli Sebastian Gaboto escribió al Rey, dandole cuenta de su viage: y la causa porque no avia continuado la navegacion a la Especieria: y de las muchas provincias que avia descubierto en aquel rio de la Plata, y diversas generaciones de Yndios que avia en aquella tierra, del qual se podia esperar de sacar muy grandes riquezas: y con esta relacion embió al contador Hernando Calderon, y a Jorge Barloque. Traxeron en uno de sus navios algunos Yndios y muestras de lo que avia en la tierra, y plata, y algun oro, y otros metales, pidiendo gente, y licencia para poblar.”

Herrera, Dec. iv, lib. i, cap. i.

— “mandan á Espana a Nersi Calderon y Rosel Barco con una carabela y algunos presentes de oro y plata, para que expongano á S. M. las necesidades de la armada y manden proveer lo necesario.” — Ramirez, App. xxxvii.

The difference in the two officers' names is not so likely owing to a mistake in copying as it is to the difficulty in making out the original letter of Ramirez.

## CHAPTER XX.

*Cabot's Return to Spain.*

AT the end of October in that year (1528) the two officers appeared in Toledo, and made known their mission to the Emperor.\* The idea of colonization was very well received, and the Merchants' Company of Seville was invited to share in the expense that would be incurred. But both then and afterwards, in spite of all solicitation, the merchants refused all further contributions. The failure of their project of trade with the Moluccas, made them hostile to any proposal with which Sebastian Cabot was connected.† Then the Emperor, whose hopes had been raised by the report of the officers and the sight of the objects which they brought as samples, assumed the entire cost himself, and gave strict orders that it should be provided at once, it being too important to secure immediate possession of lands already of vast extent, with the promise of still more if the possession of the first was secured.‡ But

---

\* Herrera, Dec. iv, lib. i, cap. i. The edition consulted by me gives the year as 1527; but this is an evident error, whether an oversight of Herrera's or a mistake in printing.

† “y porque los armadores avian gastado su parte en aquella armada (que no avia ydo a la Especeria, que era el fin con que lo avian hecho) y era justo que no perdiessen el gasto, les mandió embiar la copia de quanto Sebastian Gaboto escrivia, para que si quisies-en embiar el socorro que pedia platicassen sobre ello, para participar del provecho, donde no, le avisassen porque su Majestad estava determinado de mandar hazer el gasto para este socorro por entero, quando los armadores no lo qui-iesen por su rata. . . Los armadores de Sevilla en todo esto año se resolvieron en no hazer lo que el Rey pedia, porque avian gastado mas de diez mil ducados y no esperavan bien del provecho que ofrecia Sebastian Gaboto.” Herrera, Dec. iv, lib. i, cap. i.

‡ “En Sevilla se hazia por orden del Rey gran diligencia para que los armadores de los navios que llevó Sebastian Gaboto contribuyessen en el gasto del socorro, que se avia determinado que se le embiasse al rio de la Plata: y porque

the imperial will encountered an obstacle stronger than all his power. Just at this time his financial distress was extreme. At war with the Pope, with France, and with Venice, he had armies everywhere ; and in face of the enormous expense of arming and maintaining such hosts, his ordinary revenues were exhausted, and the courts of Castile firmly refused to grant him extraordinary subsidies.\* Meanwhile the armies were mutinous and threatening, because their pay was in arrears : and the only expedient to quiet them was to deliver the property and persons of the wretched populations to their fury and greed. Let it suffice to recall the soldiery of the Constable de Bourbon and the pillage of Rome. It was precisely at this time of extreme pressure that Charles V made the sale of the Moluccas to Portugal, as related above, notwithstanding the cries of wrath and sorrow raised throughout Spain.†

In this state of affairs, instead of providing for further expenses, it was much to carry on the most urgent public service of permanent necessity. So days went by, and weeks, and months, and nothing was put aside for the cost of the La Plata colonization.

Here would be a fit place to stop awhile to consider Cabot's operations on the Plata, and his letter to the Emperor would be our best guide. But unfortunately this is either lost altogether or lies hid among the archives of Spain. The chart which he made of that country, and which would at least have furnished great aid in tracing his route and the extent of his exploration, is also lost. Hence we are confined to

se resolvieron de no gastar mas en aquella empresa, el Rey mando que se hiziessen las provisiones a costa de la Real hazienda ; y por mucho que se entendia que convenia embiar a quel socorro, para conservar el dominio de docientas leguas de tierra que se avian descubierto . . ." Id. Dec. iv, lib. viii, cap. 12.

\* Robertson, Hist. of Charles V. Book v. Feb. 11, 1527.

† "El Rey de Portugal . . . bolvio allevar el negocio por otro camino aprovechandose de la necesidad en que vio che estava el Emperador de dineros . . . en Zaragoza a veynte y dos de Abril deste anno (1529) los mesmos Commisarios celebraron carta de venta . . . con pacto de retrovendendo perpetuo por precio de trezientos y cinquenta mil Ducados."—Herrera, Dec. iv, lib. v, cap. x.

the few notices gathered here and there in the Spanish historians as our only guides in following his labors and enterprise. This chart, according to the testimony of Eden, showed that "From the mouth of the river, Cabot sayled up the same into the lands for the space of three hundredth and fiftie leagues as he writeth in his own Carde."\* Ramusio is, therefore, mistaken in saying 600.† Herrera gives a long list of the populations discovered by Cabot, and ends by saying that he omits the names of 27 others, differing in name, language, and customs, for fear of being tedious.‡ He says nothing in particular of any of them, except the Guaranis, who were the principal race of Indians in those regions; so that we are unable to form even an approximate idea of their importance: but, even supposing that many of these populations were small in number and occupied no great extent of territory, still taken all together, with their different customs and language, they must have extended over a vast region, and the work of exploration among them performed by Sebastian Cabot must have been immense. When, a few years later, a dispute arose between Spain and Portugal for the possession of some of the regions of the La Plata, Spain brought forward a long enumeration of tribes, its rights over which it defended on the ground that Sebastian Cabot had built forts on their lands, exercised there civil and criminal judicature, and brought those populations under the authority of the Spanish sovereigns.§ His efforts to ascertain, as far as possible, the condition of the tribes and lands farther in the interior, are attested by the information he gives on the invasion of the Guaranis in Peru, and that which he obtained from them regarding that rich country.||

---

\* Eden Dec. fol. 316.

† "lo volsi navigare (La Plata), et andai all' insù per quello più di seicento leghe." App. xix.

‡ "Passados estos ay veynte y siete naciones d nōbres, y lenguas, y così diferentes ritos, quepor no dar molestia se dexan de nombrar." Herrera, l. c.

§ "Que Sebastian Gaboto avia edificado en aquellas tierras fortalezas e exercitado iusticia civil y criminal, y traido a la obediencia Real todas las sobredichas generaciones." Herrera. Dec. iv, lib. viii, cap. ii.

|| "Y aviendo hecho Sebastian Gaboto la paz con esta generacion . . . .

Of the experiments made in cultivating the soil, we need no testimony to assure us, considering that Cabot had entered that river on account of his want of provisions, and therefore was under absolute necessity of obtaining from the soil the means not otherwise procurable. But we have express record of it in Gomara and Eden.\* Herrera speaks of it, relating the marvellous productiveness of some animals brought there from Europe.† Sebastian Cabot himself refers to it in the legend or inscription which he affixed to those places in his chart of 1544. We have already mentioned this, when speaking of the great distress to which his men had been reduced; but, as it is short, it will be well to give the inscription here in full. "The people," he says, "on reaching this land, wanted to know if it was fertile, and fitted for the cultivation of grain, and in the month of September, they sowed 52 grains of corn, which was all they could find in the vessels, and in the month of December, they gathered from them two thousand and fifty grains; and the same fertility was found with all other seeds." ‡

Of his method of acting towards the Indians, we can only glean a hint here and there in the Process. To the charge of wilfully remaining in La Plata, he opposes ten witnesses who testify that he never undertook any thing of importance without first consulting his officers. One of the witnesses, whose charge it had been to call the officers to these consultations, firmly asserts that this was done both at sea and during their residence on shore.§ The 28th interrog-

con el amistad destes supo muchos secretos de la tierra, y huvo de ellos oro y plata de la que trayan del Peru." Herrera, *ib. ib.*

\* Gomara, cap. lxxxix.—Eden, fol. 255-317. † Herrera, *ib. ib.*

‡ " . . . la gente en llegado aq̃ lla terra quiso connoscer si era fertil, y aparejada para labrar y llevar pan y sembraron en el mes de setiembre lli granos de tigre q̃ no se allo mas en las naos y cogierõ luego en el mes de deziembre cinquenta y dos mill granos de tigre, q̃ esta misma fertilidad se hallo en todas las otras semillas." V. App. No. xxxix.

§ " Yten si saben quel dicho sebastian caboto . . . no fazia cosa alguna sin que primero lo consultase con los capitanes e ofiçiales . . ." V. Pregunta de la Probança de Seb. Caboto. All the witnesses answer it in the affirmative. The ix, the one referred to in the text, deposes: "todas las cosas que . . . hazia lo hazia con acuerdo de los ofiçiales . . . por queste testigo por mandado del dicho

atory speaks of his great diligence as well in the government of the expedition as in laboring to provide for all its wants. The 29th shows equal diligence and care in relation to the Indians whom he wished every one to respect and treat with kindness, and the nine witnesses called unanimously confirm the truth of the interrogatory. And while he was solicitous for their welfare, he was equally severe if they were wanting in their duty and took advantage of the Indian's simplicity and feebleness. We have seen the fate which Francis de Lepe met in Paraguay for attempting to incite his companions to mutiny and rebellion.\* The same fate befell one Martin of Biscay, one of those left in the Bay of Saint Catharine from the ship of Don Rodrigo de Acuña in Loaysa's expedition, and who afterwards joined Cabot's fleet. This Martin, accustomed to going about freely amongst the Indians of that bay, with no other restraint than his own discretion, found it hard to submit to the regular discipline of the expedition; and when on the Parana, suffering from hunger, he joined a companion from his own province, and both together entering an Indian cottage, first threw down and beat the owner, then carried off every thing they pleased, and finally seizing a canoe and forcing two Indians to row it, they fled, and escaped by land to another tribe. Cabot, ascertaining their place of refuge, sent a band of his own men and of Indians together, to take him by surprise, and on capturing him, hanged him in a summary fashion.† Indeed his severity went so far that we, with our customs, should think it cruelty and barbarity. To clear him from such

---

capitan yva a llamar a los dichos oficiales para ello e los vio platicar sobre las cosas que havian de hazer ansi en la mar como en la tierra."

\* See ch. xx.

† "Yten si saben quel dicho sebastian caboto maudó justiciar a dos ombres . . . uno dellos entro en casa de uno yndio principal e le dio de palos e le ropa todas las vestes que tenia que eran unos tirus de paño de lana que viene de la tierra dentro e una canoa e llevaba dos yndios por fuerça e se yvan a unos indios que heran nuestros enemigos . . ." Pregunta xxvi de la Probança de Seb. Caboto. The particulars indicated are by the vi, viii, & ix witnesses: the vi says: "el dicho capitan general avia enviado a otros yndios que los traxesen;" and the ix "enbio a çiertos cristianos e yndios trar el y le traxeron . . ."

stain, we must remember what wild times those were, and in what a desperate condition he was, so that he was forced to become unfeeling in order to make his authority respected and feared. This Biscayan, as he was hoisted on the gallows, fell to the ground, the rope around his neck breaking ; when raised up, in the condition which may be imagined, he cried out with all his might : "Mercy ! Mercy !" Cabot sent for another rope and ordered him again to the gallows.\* Another who was caught stealing public stores, and on the point of fleeing with what he had stolen, had both ears cut off, as a punishment, and as an example to others.†

The small number of men remaining, after deducting those sent to Spain with the caravel, did not allow of his extending further his explorations and discoveries ; and his whole aim now was to keep the Indians in the favorable disposition towards the Spaniards to which he had brought them, and to prepare for the work to be done when the expected reënforcements should arrive from Europe. But his best-laid plans, the good order maintained amongst the natives and the Spaniards, all the fruit of so many labors and sufferings were destroyed in a moment by the licentiousness of a few bad men.

We saw from Ramirez that Cabot and Diego Garcia, unable to agree on a joint course against the natives, took each his own way, that is to say, each acted with his own force independently of the other. The Guaranis, among whom they remained after the peace concluded with Cabot, endured the presence of the strangers quietly and patiently, but the bad conduct of Diego Garcia's men aroused their spirit and restored their natural ferocity. We are not told how nor why, but it is almost certain that the trouble was about women, the principal cause that always brought ruin on so many enterprises of discovery. The offence rekindled in the Guaranis all their pride

\*"Oyo decir quel dicho martin se avia caydo de la horca o quebrado la sogra e que avia demandado misericordia e que lo mando otra vez ahorcar el dicho capitan general." vi witness.

† "Yten si saben que hernando calderon teniente del dicho sebastian caboto mando acotar a uno y cortalle las orejas por ladron." Pregunta xxvii de la dicha Probança.

and bravery, and they wanted revenge. As they made no distinction among the whites, but involved Cabot's men in the same accusation and the same hatred with Garcia's, they swore their extermination. Word being sent around as to the day and hour, they assembled one morning at daylight in great numbers, and assaulted, as it would appear, at the same moment, the forts of San Espiritu and San Salvador, near which the ships were at anchor. They conducted the attack so secretly that the Spaniards, living in perfect tranquillity were entirely crushed by the furious storm that burst suddenly over them.

As usual, we are wholly in the dark as to the details of the event. We are only told that the Guaranis' fury enabled them to gain the forts and reduce them to heaps of ashes : that some of the Spaniards were left there dead, and the rest, finding themselves without the long-expected succor, diminished in number, in strength, and in means; in the midst of a hostile and savage population, and without any hope for the future, decided to embark and to leave.\* But even their departure gives us a glance of a frightful accumulation of evils and of sorrow. We shall soon hear him relate that he left at the La Plata one of his ships and a part of his men, and one of the accusations against him on his return was precisely this abandoning of them. But how did it happen and why?—The charge naturally recalls the idea of blame, but nowhere in the acts of the Process, which I have, although very long and full, is there the slightest allusion to this abandonment, except incidentally the simple mention by a witness that he was one of those left at the Plata.† It is true that the part of the

---

\*“Mantuvo Sebastian Gaboto dos annos el amistad de los Yndios Guaranis, y aviendose quebrado por algunas ocasiones que dieron los soldados que fueron con Diego Garcia, en que Sebastian Gaboto no tuvo culpa, los Yndios, segun su costumbre hizieron secretos llamamientos de gentes, y dando al alba sobre la fortaleza de Caboto, la quemaron, y lo mesmo hizieron de la poblacion que avian hecho en el puerto que llaman de S. Salvador, adonde estavan los navios, matando algunos Castellanos: los quales viendose sin socorro, y conociendo la ferozidad de los Yndios, tuvieron por bien desamparar la tierra y bolverse a Castilla.” Herrera, Dec. iv, lib. viii, cap. 12.

†“Dixo que. . . viniendo este testigo con una nao e cierta gente quel dicho



acts which I have refers to other charges and not to this one. But seeing that his enemies are intent as blood-hounds in hunting every thing in his conduct, it does not seem to me that if they could lay hold of any thing here they would have lost the opportunity. Hence their silence is to me a proof that whatever cause or motive forced Cabot to abandon a part of his men, in determining to do so he was in no wise wanting in his duty and fidelity as a good captain. I am therefore of the opinion that this charge preferred as one of the grounds for his arrest, was not followed up when in the course of the process the circumstances were better understood. To explain the fact of the abandonment, it occurs to me that part of the men or one of the ships may have been so disabled by the sudden attack of the Guaranis as to be unfit to undertake with the rest the labors and fatigue of a long voyage. And as I find that at the port of San Vincente these men were registered as left at Cape Santa Maria, I believe that Cabot brought all his men down the river, out of danger from the Guaranis, and left them in safety near Cape Santa Maria. The time that would be consumed in this transportation explains the delay in Cabot's departure, which was decided on in the council of officers on the 6th of October 1529, and we shall find Cabot on his way to Port San Vincente only on the 22nd of March, 1530, six months after the affair of the Guaranis.

At the bottom of Sebastian Cabot's proofs are two memorials showing that at the port of San Salvador he took council with certain officers of his fleet as to what should be done. A break in the text prevents our reading the whole thought of Cabot ; but from the context and what is said in the memorial following it seems clear that it speaks of a council held after the destruction of the two forts, in which it was discussed whether as matters were, it was advisable to adhere to their former intention, or to yield to the force of events and return to Spain. This council was held October 6, 1529 : hence there is no doubt but

---

sebastian caboto avia dexado perdida en el Rio de solis la dicha nao aporito al puerto de los Patos . . ."—vi witness to xxii Int. of the proofs of Vasquez.

the catastrophe must have happened in the beginning of that month or late in the preceding September. Cabot presented this memorial in his defence.\* The other memorial, which was concisely drawn up to show His Majesty how, by whose fault, and why, the fort of San Espiritu was lost, was prepared by Cabot October 12, 1529, six days after the council of officers, who foresaw the storm that would be raised against him, and prepared for it the best he was able.†

Charlevoix inserts in his History that when Cabot departed from the Plata he left there a force of 120 men under command of Nuño de Lara ; and relates a series of strange adventures growing out of a violent passion which a savage chief conceived for the wife of one of the principal officers of the garrison. Where he obtained his information, he does not tell us, and if asked, could probably have only indicated his own fancy. Here as elsewhere, Charlevoix labors to produce a romance, not a history. ‡

Before bringing Cabot back to Spain we must return to the three rebels we left at the Island of Patos. By means of the Portuguese on the coast of Brazil, they made it known in Spain that they had been abandoned, and how much they had suffered, and asked to be allowed to appear before the supreme council of the Indies to defend themselves and show that they had been unjustly dealt with. On this petition Charles V ordered Sebastian Cabot to take up these men, and either com-

\* “ Ay ciertos pareçeres que sebastian caboto tomo en el puerto de San Salvador de algunos ofiçiales del armada sobre lo que avien de hazer syguiendo el viaje . . . presentola sebastian caboto para su disculpa porque todos concluyen que no se deve hazer tomose a seys dias de octubre de mill e quinientos y veynte y nueve años.”

[Note the words in the Spanish : *todos concluyen que no se debe hazer*, “they were all of opinion that it should not be done :” i. e. continue the voyage. *Tr.*]

† “ Ay otra ynformacion que hizo sebastian caboto sumariamente para que constase a su magestad como y a cuya culpa y porque causa se perdio la fortaleza de santi spiritus (I think something is wanting here ; or else we should read : ‘and the one he had made at the port of San Salvador’) que tenia hecha en el puerto de San Salvador presentola sebastian caboto tomose la dicha ynformacion a doze del mes de otubre de mill e quinientos y veynte y nueve años. ”

‡ Charlevoix, *Histoire du Paraguay*, lib. i, p. 29.

ing himself, or sending a vessel, have them brought to Spain that they might be heard.\*

The delay in sending out succor, prevented Cabot from receiving the Emperor's orders, so that it was of his own accord that, passing by the Isle of Patos on his return, he stopped to pick up the three unfortunate men. But great changes had occurred among them in the meantime. We are in the usual darkness as to the course of the events, and only know their result, but this is enough for our purpose. Bitter hatred had grown up between the Captain, Francis de Rojas, on one side, and Martin Mendez and Michael de Rodas on the other; and was further inflamed by some of the Christians that had remained in the Bay of Saint Catharine from Loaysa's expedition, and especially one Michael, a Genoese, who sided with Mendez and Rodas.† One day that Rojas caught the Genoese in an Indian's cottage, he rushed upon him and stabbed him to death;‡ whether he killed him out of brutal malice, or the Genoese had previously attempted the life of Rojas and the latter wished to secure himself against a repetition of the attempt by relieving himself of too dangerous an enemy.§ The fact is that after this killing, Mendez and Rodas became very suspicious and fearful of Rojas, and seizing a canoe with an Indian they fled in it to seek safety in the Bay of San Vincente where there were a number of Portuguese. But in the crossing the canoe capsized and the three men were drowned.¶ Soon after,

---

\* "Francisco de Rojas, Martin Mendez y Miguel de Rodas, por via de Portugueses que estavan en la costa del Brasil avian echo saber al Rey el destierro en que se hallavan, padeciendo mucho trabajo y necesidad, suplicando, que se les diesse licencia para yrse a presentar en el supremo Consejo de las Indias, adonde mostrarian quan sin causa avian sido puestos en aquel peligro con tanta afrenta suya; y el Rey mandó a Sebastian Gaboto, que viniendo o embiando qualquier navio o qualquier capitan que viesse en estos Reynos, los traxessen para que fuesseen oidos de justicia."—Herrera, Dec. iv, lib. iii, cap. i.

† "oyo decir. . . quel dicho francisco de Rojas e martin mendez e miguel de Rodas avian tenido ciertas diferencias sobre que los rebolvian y andavan mal metiendo el dicho miguel ginoves y otros cristianos questavan alli."—vi testigo a la xxv Pregunta de la Probança de Caboto.

‡ This is said by the 10th witness of the same interrogatory.

§ The 6th and 9th witnesses say so from hearsay.

¶ "Yten si saben quel dicho francisco de Rojas mató a miguel ginoves a puña-

it is not known when, Rojas also passed over to the same bay.

At Patos Cabot joined Diego Garcia who seems to have arrived a little before him, also doubtless overcome by the ruin brought on by the licentiousness of his men.\* What work he did in exploring the Plata after separating from Cabot we know not, but it certainly amounted to nothing; for he was a man so full of himself and his deeds that he could not have failed to mention it. But instead of that he ends his narrative by saying that he went as far as Cabot, discovered as far as Cabot discovered: and this is all his claim. As to what happened afterwards he is entirely silent.† From Patos they went together to port San Vincente, and there on Tuesday, March 22, 1530, Diego Garcia in the name of Sebastian Cabot notified captain Francis de Rojas, under pain of life and loss of all his property, to appear within six days on board of the ship Santa Maria del Espinar, at anchor in the harbor of San Vincente, which was at that time the flagship of Cabot's fleet, to be carried by Cabot to Spain and brought before His Majesty and the royal council of the Indies to give an account of his conduct while Captain of the ship Trinidad. I know not why this notice was given through Diego Garcia, and not directly by Cabot himself.‡ And in

---

ladas e despues de muerto procuró de matar a los dichos martin mendez e a miguel de Rodas e a hesta causa se hujeron del e se yvan al puerto de S. vincente donde estavan muchos portugueses e se abogaron en el camino." xxvi Interrogatory of Cabot's proofs.

All the witnesses confirm the killing of the Genoese, and the drowning of Mendez and Rodas, but none mentions the attempts which Rojas also made on the life of both the officers, his enemies: indeed the ix relates that he had heard that when Rojas learnt of their flight he said he was very sorry for it.

\* "a qui llego sebastian caboto muerto de hambre en este tiempo que yo estaba alli." *Relacion de Diego Garcia.*

† "hasta aqui descubrimos e descubrio sebastian gavoto . . . y esta es la verdad que llegamos hasta aqui *el e nosotros.*"

‡ "Io diego garcia capitan general por su magestad mando a vos alonso gomez varela escrivano de mi harnada que luego visto este mi mandamiento vayays a casa de gonzalo da costa portugues y notifiqueys un mandamiento de parte del señor sebastian gavoto capitan general por su magestad al capitan francisco de Rojas en su persona . . . fecho en el puerto de san vincente martes veynte y dos dias del mes de março de mill e quinientos e treinta años . . ."

order that Rojas should not refuse to go with him, under the pretext that he could not trust him, Cabot pledged his word and faith that he would present him unharmed before His Majesty and the Council of the Indies, and offered to give him any safe-conduct he wanted for security.\* But Rojas refused to recognize any authority of Cabot over him after deposing and abandoning him on an island, said that Cabot only wanted to lay hands on him to vent his spite upon him for not having died as it was expected he would, and protested that he was ready to appear before his Majesty with any one else who was not under Cabot's power. So far the conduct of Rojas can be understood and explained by the natural course of passion, but hearken to the rest of his answer. He said he was informed that they had left at Cape Santa Maria 70 or 80 Christians, and among them a captain and other officers; therefore in the name of His Majesty's service he demanded that Cabot should give him two carpenters, one calker, five or six sailors, his chief pilot, and tools, iron, powder, and whatever else was required to fit out a ship, which he said he with one Gonzalez, a Portuguese, had built, and which Gonzalez allowed him to use in any way and for any purpose he pleased; and he would proceed with it to Cape Santa Maria to take up those that were left there. But as the ship was not yet decked or calked, he needed what he asked for.†

---

“Io sebastian gavoto capitan general de esta harmada por su magestad que al presente esta surta en este puerto de san vicente mando a vos francisco de Rojas capitan que fuystes en esta armada de la nao trinidad de parte de su magestad que vengays aqui dentro desta nao santa maria de lespinar que agora es capitana en esta armada para que yo os liebe en españa para presentaros ante de su magestad e de su muy alto concejo delas yndias para que deys quenta y Razon de ciertas cabsas que contra vos fueron puestas. . .”— v. App. xl.

\* “e porque no dudeiss en la dicha vuestra venida yo os prometo y doy mi fee y palabra de parte de su magestad de daros qualquier seguro que vos quierdes pedir y demandar para la seguridad de vuestra persona hasta presentaros ante de su magestad ó de su Real Consejo d' las Yndias.” Ib.

† “he sydo ynformado como quedaron en el cabo de santa maria hasta setenta o ochenta cristianos entre los quales ay capitan y oficiales de su magestad . . . pido y Requiero. . . para aver de Redemir a questa gente dos carpinteros y un

As to the persons said to have been left at Cape Santa Maria, Rojas undoubtedly alludes to those Cabot had been obliged to leave at the mouth of La Plata, as we have related. That Rojas exaggerates in putting the number at seventy or eighty seems to me evident, when we consider the number dead at Santa Catalina, San Lazaro, and San Salvador, those that perished in the long navigation of La Plata, those killed with the lieutenant Rifos, and the others lost when the two forts were burnt. To these must be added those previously sent to Spain with the two officers Calderon and Barloque, and those who were now returning with Cabot ; and it is easily seen that there could not be still seventy or eighty remaining out of the two hundred who were all he had on starting.\*

To this first service Rojas offered to add another which would repair in the interest of Spain a very serious blunder, or rather crime, committed by Cabot. We must dwell awhile on this point.

When, accompanying Diego Garcia on his voyage to La Plata, we reached the Isle of Patos, we said that when he came to speak of that place, he began with fresh fury to abuse the name of Cabot, but merely mentioning the matter then, we reserved for another place this new impudence. Here is the place to discuss it. Rojas said, then, to Cabot : "*They have told me that at the Isle of Patos you took four Indians, which has put the whole country in a state of fear and agitation : now, as this concerns the service of His Majesty, I offer to carry back those four poor savages to their island, to quiet that port and have peace with its inhabitants.*" † We will presently tell what

calafate y cinco o seys marineros y el piloto Enrique patimer pues no le abeys menester por ser vos piloto mayor y asy mismo pido y Requiero señor sebastian gaboto me deys hierro para que yo haja clavaron y otras cosas de Resgate que para el dicho viaje hemos menester y quatro bercos con sus opareios e cantidad de polvora. . . . el qual dicho nabio le falta de hazer la cubierta y calafatear pido y Requiero el dicho señor sebastian gavoto me de lo que dicho . . . ." See App. xl.

\* See App. xli.

†—"me an dicho que en la ysla de la baja de los patos tomastes quatro yndios por lo qual la tierra toda queda alborotada y atemorizada y porque

concerns Diego Garcia in that deed ; but first there is this to be remarked on the score of Francis de Rojas, that immediately after speaking of these four slaves taken by Cabot at Patos, he mentions that the Emperor had permitted the captains and officers of this expedition to take two slaves each ; and as he in his character as captain of one of the ships had availed himself of this authorization, he requested Cabot to take his two slaves on board, carry them to Spain, and consign them to his heirs. If he refused, he protested that he would exact damages from Cabot's person and property. \* I do not know of any such authorization of the Emperor as related by Rojas, of which there is no hint or mention anywhere, but which is in open contradiction with the public orders expressly given and repeated by the Emperor to respect the freedom of the Indians. But as there are only too many proofs that while the public orders said one thing, they tolerated privately another, I am willing to suppose that authorization to have been granted. But this does not diminish the impudence of Rojas, who whilst offering to repair the wrong done by Cabot in taking slaves for himself, at the same time protests against any damage he may receive from his own not being placed in safety.

Let us come now to Diego Garcia. Narrating his arrival at the Isle of Patos after leaving the Bay of San Vincente to proceed to the Plata, he says: "Proceeding on our way we came to a river called the River of los Patos . . . they are a good race there and do very good work for the Christians. . . . here they gave us many victuals. . . for they were good Indians, and here arrived Sebastian Cabot dead with hunger *while I was there* ; and the Indians gave him food and all that he needed for him-

---

cumple al servicio de su magestad . . . me prefiero de poner los dichos yndios entregandomelos vos en su tierra y dicho puerto y hacer paxe con todos ellos . . ."

\* "por quanto su magestad hizo merced a los capitanes e oficiales dela dicha armada que pudiesen llevar y llevasen cada dos esclavos per lo qual yo francisco de Rojas capitan que fuy de una nao dela dicha armada pido y Requiero a vuestra merced el dicho sebastian gaboto que tenga por bien de me llevar los dichos dos esclavos los quales tengo aqui aparejados e que los den e entreguen a mis herederos o a quien en mi poder obiese, donde no que protesto delos cobrar de vuestra persona y bienes do quier que se pudiesen aver."

self and his men for their voyage, and when he wanted to go where he was going, he took four sons of the principal persons there and carried them to Spain, and three of them he has at Seville, which injured that port which was the largest and the best people there were in those parts, because he took the sons of the principal persons of the island.”\*

How is Garcia's story to be understood? that Cabot committed this crime in going or returning from his expedition? I think there can be no doubt, and all will say it was in going. In fact Garcia speaks of his arrival at the Isle of Patos in *going*, adding that Cabot arrived at the island *whilst he was there*, which must logically and naturally mean that was on his way out. Add that Garcia in his narrative speaks of his voyage to the furthest point he reached, and *has not a single word* on what he did after his arrival there or on his return. His story must then beyond all question refer to the time when he was sailing on the way to the Plata; and so it is understood also by Herrera, who makes it the basis of a charge against Cabot,† so also Biddle who with all the sharpness of his genius labors to show the moral impossibility of Cabot's committing this infamy on his way to the Moluccas.‡

But Garcia, putting this event at the time of his going out, lies impudently. I pass over the arguments of its improbability brought by Biddle, for his lying can be more easily and effectually proved by the documents, or rather from Garcia's own story. He says that he left the Bay of San Vincente Jan-

\* ‘e andando en el camino allegamos a un rio que se llama el Rio de los patos... que ay una buena generacion que hace muy buena obra á los cristianos. e allí nos dieron mucha victualla . . . porque heran buenos yndios e aquí llevo sebastian caboto muerto de hambre *en este tiempo* que yo estaba allí e los yndios le dieron de comer e todo lo que avia menester a el e a su gente para su viaje y quando se quiso ir u' se iba tomo quatro hijos de los principales de allí e los trayo en españa e los tres dellos los tiene en sevilla el qual danifico aquel puerto que hera el mayor e mas buena gente que en aquella parte avia por causa de tomar los hijos de los principales dela ysla.”

† “llego a la isla de Patos, con mucha hambre, y fue bien recibido de los yndios, que le dieron mucha victualla con que bastecio los navios, aunque se lo pagó mal, porque tomó quatro hijos de los hombres mas principales.” Dec. iii, lib. x, cap. i.

‡ See Memoir, bk. i, p. 228 and sq.



uary 15, 1527.\* Then he could not have been at Patos before the end of that month, or the early part of February. Cabot, on the other hand, left Pernambuco September 29th, 1526, and sailed direct to the Bay of Saint Catharine, that is to say, to Patos : where he must have arrived in October 1526, or, if much delayed on the voyage by foul weather, in November at the latest : and he remained at the Bay of Saint Catharine till the 15th of February 1527.† How then could Garcia say that Cabot arrived at Patos *whilst he was there*, since Cabot was already in the Bay of Saint Catharine months before Garcia sailed from Saint Vincent ? But it is not only false that Cabot on his outward voyage arrived at Patos whilst Garcia was there, but they did not even meet there. If they had met, both sailing under the same flag, is it to be supposed that they had no more communication with each other than to avoid each other like the plague ? No: and therefore they would have known of each other's voyage, that is, that they were both bound for the Plata ; for Cabot came to the determination to stop at that river after a council held with his officers in the Bay of Saint Catharine, and this determination was public and known to everybody.‡ If it had been so, would not Garcia have spoken of it in his narrative, and complained of Cabot's invasion of his rights ? But he has not a word of it. Indeed it is clear from his narrative that it was a surprise to him to find Cabot at the Plata, and it was a surprise to Cabot and his men to see Garcia come there. Without my going into the proof in detail, let the reader remember the meeting of Garcia and Grajeda when, neither knowing of the other, they were on the point of coming to blows : let him remember Cabot's apprehensions when he heard that other white men were ascending the Plata, supposing them to be Portuguese.§

---

\* “. . . alli (St. Vincent) estuvimos hasta quinze de enero del año syguiente de xxvii . . . .”—and again, “de aqui partimos mediados del mes de enero.”

† “Al poco tiempo de haber salido de este puerto(Pernambuco)29 de setiembre sofreron etc. etc.”—“salieron deste puerto que llamaron de St. Catalina el 15 de Febrero de 1527.”—Ramirez, v. App. xxxvii.

‡ See what was related in ch. xviii.

§ “ El desgraciado esito de esta espedicion (the death of Lieutenant de Ri-

But without this, there is the word of Rojas, authenticated by a notary, which makes Diego Garcia's falsehood as clear as the light of day. He was not only present at Patos when Cabot came and when he left ; but was deposed at the very moment of his departure. No one would be more likely to know if Cabot made slaves of those four young men, and if the island was in a ferment on account of the atrocious offence; and no one, considering his hatred of Cabot, would be more likely to remember it and make it known. At Port Saint Vincent Rojas sends this message to Cabot : "*They have told me that at the Isle of Patos you took four Indians :*" it must therefore have been after his departure and consequently when Cabot stopped again in the Bay of Saint Catharine on his return.

It is clear and evident that Garcia lied when he said the capture was made when going. Was it made on the return ? Yes. We have no reason for denying it, and the evidence of the fact which Garcia gives when he says, "and three of them he has at Seville," removes all doubt, for it was a matter so easy to verify that it would have been absurd to doubt his positive assertion.

But, the reader may say, why make so much complaint about those four slaves, whether Sebastian Cabot took them first or last ? In those times, it was only too often that whole ship-loads of slaves were brought to Europe from the New World, and the deed of Cabot in comparison is a trifle not worth making account of. And what interest had Garcia to displace the fact, and what effect would the displacement have on Sebastian Cabot ? In itself the matter is of no importance ; but as we have repeatedly said, in the absence of the necessary light to show us our way, we must make use of every gleam we catch here and there to find our path in the darkness which envelopes it. In this accusation by Garcia we get a glimpse of the dark fabric of falsehood and calumny against Cabot on his return voyage to Spain. The matter of the four slaves is very small, but the strength of great ropes is

---

fos) y el saber que andaba una armada portuguesa en el rio Solis fueron motivos para que el general determinase volverse rio abajo hasta el Parana." Ramirez, App. xxxvii.

composed of fine, weak threads. Garcia changed the time when the act was done, because if it was on his return, it bore no weight against Cabot, but if on the outward voyage, it might furnish a weapon against him, and it was most useful to Garcia to seize and use it.

It is necessary for the reader to remember the base bargain which Garcia had made at the port of Saint Vincent with the Portuguese bachelor, selling him his largest ship, and all his wishes to give it a color of necessity, but without success, as is told by Herrera, who calls Garcia's reasons mere pretexts, although he was most favorable to him and inclined to sustain him. When Garcia made that sale he had hopes for the future and did not doubt that he would be able to pass it off as a good bargain. But when Cabot returned from his expedition weary and discouraged, with his wings clipped, Garcia could be in no better condition, for his expedition also had entirely failed of its purpose. This is convincingly proved by his silence in his narrative, notwithstanding the loquacity of his vain-glorious tongue. The abandoning of the Plata was wholly the fault of his men, and every one knows that the fault of an army falls entirely on the Captain in command. Garcia therefore had cause for alarm on his return to Spain. What was he to do to turn attention from himself upon another? That which too often occurs in daily life, the man with the least scruple to put his hands on another's property is the first to cry, Stop thief, and the strictest professor of morals is often the one who most needs to practise them. Garcia, in his intercourse with Cabot's men, saw what was fermenting, he foresaw, as was easy to do, what a burst of anger, recrimination, and revenge his arrival would produce in Spain, and to divert the eyes of others from himself he joined the choir of accusers. The fact of the four slaves, however insignificant of itself, acquired a certain weight in face of the laws of Spain, and Cabot's office of chief-pilot, that is to say, the highest authority in the marine of all Spain. The council of the Indies had given positive orders to all sailing for the Indies to use no violence towards the natives; and Stephen Gomez, who disregarded these orders

and came back with a cargo of Indian slaves, found the whole nation excited to indignation against him.\* These orders were given to Cabot in particular, as they were to all others.† Now what judgment ought to be passed on Cabot, if he, who held the highest grade in the Spanish Marine, had shamelessly trampled on the orders of the government which, though issued to all Spaniards in general, yet had special reference to men of the sea? And if such contempt would have made a bad impression in any case, what must it do when he returned defeated in his undertaking, and the noble band of young men who had followed him with trust in his promises were nearly all left dead in a distant land? What must have been the impression on seeing him return to Spain, not with the promised treasures of Tarshish and Ophir, but with four boys torn from their mothers' arms, children of a people friendly to Spain, cordial, hospitable, and that had been of service to the Spanish ships? The weapon seized by Garcia might, then, wound, and that seriously; and he feel secure in his blow, for once the fact was true, no one who heard of it would care whether it happened earlier or later. Whereas, if the fact happened later, Cabot was free from all blame. Of this there can be no doubt. Captain Rojas brought against Cabot a serious charge, collecting every detail that could injure him, but boldly distorts the facts. If it had been true that in so seriously offending those islanders, Cabot had injured and endangered the Spanish vessels, why did Rojas, who in the suit against Cabot, brought forward the minutest spots in the expedition,—why did he not take up the complaints of the Indians and make them known to all Spain; especially as he had offered to return the four youths to their homes, and thus restore the peace and security of the island? The reason is plain. At Saint Vincent it sufficed that the fact was at bottom true, to cast it in Cabot's

---

\* Peter Martyr d' Anghiera, Dec. viii, cap. 10.

† “Diose a Gaboto . . . la instruccion como la del Comendador Loaysa.” Herrera, Dec. iii, lib. ix, cap. 3.—and Loaysa's instructions were: “que procurassen de aver lenguas de todas las tierras que descubriessen, y las tratassen bien.” —Id., Dec. iii, lib. vii, cap. 6.

face: but for the trial it was necessary to show that it was wrong, and as he could not do this, he went no further. In truth, why should Cabot have so grievously injured those poor islanders? Not for the purpose of exhibiting some of them as specimens in Europe: for Patos was only a step from the coast of Brazil, where the Portuguese were continually going and coming with their ships, and the poor inhabitants of that island could present no novelty to interest Europeans. Not with a view to gain, for that were ridiculous to suppose; still less from mere caprice or evil disposition. If, then, it was not from interest or malice, there must be some other way to explain it, and one which entirely exonerates Cabot. We may easily divine what it was from the letter, which we shall soon record, of a Portuguese who was equally removed from partiality for Cabot and Garcia. From him we shall learn that Cabot returned to Spain with only twenty men, of all that had sailed with him. With the service so reduced it is easy to understand that the return voyage was difficult and dangerous. Taking this into consideration, and also the fact that after his return to Spain no one from any quarter brought up the charge that he had taken those four young men at Patos, I hold that he took them under constraint of the need of hands for the wants of the ship, choosing them, not as Garcia calumniously pretends, from the sons of the principal persons on the island, but from the strongest and most fit for the work required.

---

## CHAPTER XXI.

### *Arrival in Spain.*

IN the thick darkness which obscures every thing, there is no danger of running into romance in supposing that Cabot on his return to Spain was anxious as to the reception he should meet. For all that he felt himself free from fault, the fact remained that he was a general returning from battle, defeated,

and his army annihilated. He could not but know the deep hate for him brooded over by some of his officers who had been accomplices of the three rebels, and who were afterwards kept under obedience only by fear. They were Spaniards, he a foreigner; they would have with them the whole choir of their relatives and friends to howl and bustle, disguising and falsifying things, inventing charges and calumnies: he had only the truth for his justification in showing the misfortunes that had pursued him. His fancy must have dreaded above all the company of merchants, whose anger he had already aroused, and whose vengeance would now be bitterly excited. Still ignorant of the reception given to the two officers he had sent to Spain, he must have worried greatly over that long silence of twenty-two months, concerning the disposition of the Emperor and the government in his regard.\* These doubts and anxieties are not founded on any document which records them, but on human nature, and consequently are true. Neither Herrera nor the other historians have a word on Cabot's arrival in Spain; the only document which mentions it is a letter from Dr. Affonso Simão to the King of Portugal. This is dated August 2, 1530, and was written the same week that Cabot arrived from La Plata. His return was consequently in the latter part of July 1530, and as his departure was in the beginning of April, 1526, we know that the expedition lasted four years and four months. The portion of Simão's letter referring to Cabot is as follows:† "This week there arrived here a pilot and captain who was sent to discover land. His name is Gaboto, he is the chief pilot of these Kingdoms, and is the same person that sent the ship which touched at Lisbon two years ago, and brought news of land discovered on the River Pereuai which they said abounded in gold and silver. I find him very wretched and poor, for they say he brought no gold or silver, nor any thing of profit to those that fitted out the vessels, and of 200 men that

---

\* The two officers presented themselves to the Emperor at Toledo at the end of October 1528, and Cabot returned to Spain in the latter part of July 1530.

† The Appendix gives the letter in full. See App. xli.

he took with him he brings back less than 20 ; for they say all the rest were left there dead, some from fatigue and hunger, others killed in war; for they say the arrow-wounds killed many of them, and the wooden fort they built was destroyed ; so that they are very ill-satisfied and the pilot is a prisoner; and they say they will send to court to see what they order done with him. What I could learn and what is said here publicly, though in a low voice, is that in the land they say they discovered they left no guard but their dead and deserters. But notwithstanding this, these men tell me they saw that the land possessed much silver and gold, and the reason why they brought none is, as they say, because the captain would not allow them to bargain for it, and also because the Moors deceived them and rebelled against them. Your Highness will believe what you think best of this, but it is certain that the land is abandoned. The river, they say, is very long and deep, and very wide at its mouth. If Your Highness shall find it for your interest to send there now, you could do so, for these people fly from a place where they see no money."

To add comments on this letter would only lessen the feeling of deep sadness it produces in the mind of the reader. But to understand how it was possible for the voyage to be made with the number of men so greatly reduced, it must be remembered that Cabot had left part of his men at Cape Santa Maria on the Plata, and naturally left one ship with them. Indeed, in the Proofs of Catharine Vasquez, to the 22nd interrogatory one of the witnesses says expressly that he came back from La Plata on one of the ships left there by Cabot.\* Another ship was sent to Spain with the two officers ; the flag-ship was sunk in the Bay of Saint Catharine : so that of the four ships with which he set out only one remained for Cabot on his return. This explains the possibility of doing with so small a number of men. But to these should be

---

\* " Dixo que .... viniendo este testigo con una nao e çierta gente quel dicho sebastian caboto avia dexado perdida en el rio de solis la dicha nao aportó al puerto de los patos ques çerca della dicha jsla de santa catalina." vi witness.

added the four young men taken at the Isle of Patos : in regard to whom, as the evidence now shows, the reader may confirm his consciousness, or rather certainty, that they were taken by Cabot and put aboard his ship, not for gain nor from malice, but from the absolute need he had of helping the few hands he had left.

As soon as he arrived in Spain, his enemies fell upon him with the fury and unanimity of a lot of city dogs on a lean country dog trembling with fear and hunger. So great was the burst of accusations and rumors that the Council of the Indies decided to have him arrested at once. In the fury of this attack, this snapping and biting, some of his own officers were præminent for their hatred and rage ; so much so, that one witness testifies that it was said and believed among the members of the expedition that it was they who had caused his arrest.\* A regular trial was opened at his charge on the accusations preferred against him.

Of this trial I have been able to obtain, as I have said elsewhere, the complaint presented by Catharine Vasquez, mother of Martin Mendez ; that of Francis de Rojas, and the answer or defence made by Cabot. Rojas presented his complaint November 2 of that same year, only three months after Cabot's return ; so that he must have followed him closely to the Spanish coast. These documents are too scanty to reconstruct the pro-

---

\* "Oyo decir este testigo en sevilla a muchas personas y marineros de la dicha armada quel dicho alonso bueno e santa cruz e gasmirez e juan de junco avian hecho prender al dicho capitan sebastian caboto per enemistad que con el tenian."—I witness to the xxxi Interrogatory of Sebastian Cabot's proofs.

The XXX Interrogatory of Cabot's proofs mentions Juan de Junco, treasurer of the ship Santa Maria, whose hatred, according to the 10th witness, was principally due to Cabot's just severity in restraining his tyranny over his subalterns ; the XXXI shows Alonzo Bueno, by the testimony of all the witnesses, often reproved by Cabot, even publicly, as a blasphemer, and for keeping in his quarters a gaming-table, and for selling articles to the sailors for more than they were worth ; the XXXII names Alonzo de Santa Cruz, but the witnesses only know that he had the name of being one of the conspirators against Cabot, and had said every thing bad of him since their return ; the XXXIII gives the name of Gasmirez Coremberg, a German, whom Cabot had reprimanded and punished with great severity for public slander of the Emperor.



ceedings in their entirety, but they are sufficient to show with what fury every kind of accusation was hunted out and piled up against Cabot. In the course of this narrative we have had repeated occasion to take up some of them : but to what has already been said, it will be useful to add a few things, not so much for the purpose of exposing the hate of his accusers and their activity in hunting up charges, as to show that they did not scruple to cast in his face the most inconsistent and bare-faced calumnies.

We have seen that Michael Rodas and Martin Mendez were lost on the passage from the Isle of Patos to the mainland while fleeing from the dagger of Captain de Rojas ; yet Mendez's mother claims that Cabot was guilty of his death, because if he had not placed her son on that island, he would have had no need to flee from Rojas, and so would not have perished.\* At the Bay of Saint Catharine, among many others that died, there was also a brother of Lieutenant Martin Mendez, named Michael. His mother claims that Cabot was guilty of his death also, saying that her son died of a broken heart because his brother was deposed and abandoned.† The witnesses produced by Vasquez herself in support of her charge, agree in testifying that he was taken sick and died of the same disease as many others. Only one testifies that he had heard it said that his death was caused by his brother's misfortune.‡ It is worthy of remark also, that this witness always confirms the accusation in almost the very words of the interrogatory, as though repeating a lesson. Take as a sample the X interrogatory, where it is asked if Cabot *arrested* Martin Mendez *without just cause*. All the witnesses depose affirmatively as to the arrest, but answer that they did not know whether the cause was just or not; those who want to be favorable to Vasquez say *they have not seen or heard* Martin Mendez *do or say any*

---

\* xxii Interrogatory.

† xxx Interrogatory.

‡ "cayo malo y murio de la dicha dolencia pero que si cayo malo de pensamiento de la prision de su hermano martin mendez o no que este testigo no lo sabe mas de lo aver oydo decir por muy cierto a la mas de la dicha armada por cosa cierta." I witness.

thing which in their opinion deserved arrest.\* But this witness that I speak of affirms frankly that *he saw that he was arrested without just cause*. On the other hand, the witnesses produced by Cabot for the defence, not only affirm unanimously that Michael Mendez was taken with the same malady as all the others, that he was ill many days, and that Cabot treated him with every care during his illness, and one witness had visited him frequently by Cabot's orders : but they also add that he died *before his brother was arrested and deposed*.† Elsewhere the same Vasquez (and she, poor soul, is to be pitied for having in the agony of her mother's grief taken up every story that was told her), in the XXXI and XXXII interrogatory accuses Cabot of having tried to poison her son Ferdinand.‡ No

\*III—"Sabe quel dicho sebastian caboto mando prender....pero que la causa por que lo mando prender no lo sabe" = VIII—"Dixo que oio que sacaron. . . al dicho martin mendez. . . e que lo demas no lo sabe." = X—" Dixo que . . . vio como al dicho martin mendez lo traxeron. . . que no sabe la causa por que."

—And the others :

VI—"Vio como el dicho sebastian caboto mando sacar . . . al dicho martin mendez e . . . e que d'esta prision e mal tratamiento . . . no vio hazer al dicho martin mendez cosa en desservicio de su magestad donde lo mereciese." = VII—"Vio como el dicho Sebastian Caboto mando sacar. . .al dicho martin mendez e . . . no vio ni oyo quel dicho martin mendez . . . oviese fecho cosa que no deviese por donde deviese estar preso."

The first witness, on the other hand, says boldly :

—" Vio que sin causa justa que tuviese el dicho sebastian caboto mando prender y tener preso al dicho martin mendez."

†—" Sabe quel dicho hernan mendez estovo muchos dias doliente y enfermo come estovieron otros muchos de la dicha armada....e que vio este testigo quel dicho capitán caboto trataba muy bien al dicho hernan mendez, e que sabe e vio quel dicho hernan mendez murio de la enfermedad que tenia porquestovo mucho tiempo enfermo en la cama y este testigo lo vio en la cama malo y le vio enterrar."—The iii witness to the first of the annexed Interrogatories. The other six witnesses repeat and confirm the same thing. The vi adds—"murio de la dicha enfermedad como murieron otros e murio antes *quel martin mendez su hermano quedase alli desterrado*, e questo que lo sabe porque fu asy publico entro todos los de la dicha armada:"— and the ix—" queste testigo por mandado del dicho capitán caboto vesito muchas vezes al dicho hernan mendez—."

‡—"Yten si saben vieron etcetera questando enfermo e mal dispuesto el dicho hernan mendez el dicho sebastian caboto mando y hizo que en una purga que se le dava para su salud se le echasen otras cosas muy dañosas pestilenciales de cuja causa el dicho hernan mendez murio y espiro luego como se le dio la dicha purga y en acabandola de tomar se puso en todo su cuerpo de co-

witness answers this interrogatory. Nor does any witness answer the XXV, in which Vasquez says that "when Cabot was returning to Spain he was asked by many to touch at the Island of Saint Catharine to take up the three deposed officers, and that he refused saying he believed they were dead or eaten by Indians : from which," observes Vasquez, "it must be presumed that he left them for the purpose of killing them, and that they might die there."\* This infamous accusation, if not answered by any witnesses on the trial, is answered in Cabot's defence in history by Diego Garcia's calumny when he charges him with taking from Patos four young Indians when he passed there on his outward voyage (and we have seen full evidence that the fact occurred on his return); and by the notice given to Captain de Rojas at the harbor of Saint Vincent to come on board of his ship under promise of being presented safe and sound before the Emperor and the Council of the Indies.

There is another circumstance that ought to be mentioned as a significant mark of the surroundings in which the charges against Sebastian Cabot were developed. Captain de Rojas, in his *interrogatories*, hardly mentions the grounds on which he was going to explain his charges, before he puts this first question to his witnesses: "Do they know that he is an hidalgo's son of known worth, and Sebastian Cabot a foreigner and nobody knows who he is." †

lor muy negra y tal que notoriamente paresçia que le avian echado en la dicha purga cosas para que muriese."

—" . . . . . Ay ningun testigo que sepa esta Pregunta." —Pregunta xxxi.

Pregunta xxxii is all spoilt, but its sense comes out clearly: "...saben vieron etcetera e dello ha ... publica vuz, e fama entre ...ute de la dicha armada que por ... e yndustria y consejo del ... stian caboto se dio la dicha pur . . . o hermand mendez e se echa . . . lla e rexalgar e otras cosas que luego causaron su muerta etc." — To this also there is no witness.

\* "Yten si saben etcetera que al tiempo que agora bolvia el dicho sebastian caboto los que venian en el armada le requirieron que tocasen en la dicha ysla de santa catalina . . . . y el dicho sebastian caboto no lo quiso hazer diziendo que ya creya que heran muertos o comidos de yndios por donde es de creer que los dexo allí con proposito de los matar e para que se muriesen."

† "Yten si saben . . . . quel dicho capitan Francisco de Rojas es hijo dalgo de valor conocido y el dicho sabastian gaboto es etrangero y no se sabe quien es . . . ." II Int.—App. xxxv.

We who know how things went on that unfortunate expedition, even when laying some of the blame on Cabot, now on beholding him return so torn and crushed, are more than ever inclined to sympathize with him. But the Spaniards knew little or nothing of what had occurred. Very little of the report brought by the two officers, although communicated to the Merchants' Company, can have reached the knowledge of the public ; and if there then was great disappointment at not having secured the fancied treasures of Tarshish and Ophir, there was the consolation of having found a land abounding in silver-mines. And besides, the two years that had passed since then, must have greatly weakened that sad impression ; so that Spain must have been, and was, quiet enough in regard to that expedition. But now, on its return, no silver, no commerce, no possession of the River, and of 200 persons that had embarked only a score come back, and they all ragged, lean, exhausted in body no less than in mind. The blow must have been the severer that it was the less expected. The howl of protest and complaint against Cabot was the very natural result of such spectacle. A battle that turns out badly may be imputed to adverse circumstances, the overpowering number of the enemy, to a thousand different causes ; but the destruction of an entire army, the total loss of arms and baggage can be imputed only to the inefficiency or treason of the general. And Cabot's position was made a thousand times worse by the fact that voices were raised among his own officers to accuse and condemn him. What a chorus of imprecations was there ! What cries for vengeance ! Even the Exchequer turned upon him, and, all it could do, charged him with not having followed the instructions given him. Cabot, in the midst of the furious tempest, alone, a foreigner, crushed by sufferings of the mind, with every appearance of being to blame, could only look for acquittal from so many accusations to time and the stilling of passions. Is it surprising that, with all the clamor against him, the Council of the Indies at once ordered the arrest of the wretched captain ?

In a report which the Council of the Indies sent to Charles

V, we find the heads of the charges on which the order of arrest was based. "He was arrested," says the report, "at the request of relatives of persons of whose death he is accused, as also of having abandoned others on the land, and at the request of the Exchequer which charges him with neglecting to follow the instructions he had received."\* And as the complaints were made immediately on his touching the soil of Spain, the arrest followed without delay. In fact, Simão, in his letter of August 2, says: "*This week a pilot arrived . . . named Cabot . . . the pilot is kept a prisoner.*"†

At the end of the Proofs of Vasquez and of Cabot there is mention of other "Informaciones," but unfortunately we have only this mere mention.‡

After this it again grows dark around us, and we lose sight of every thing. We only know that in May, 1531, Cabot was at liberty on bail, § and that in February of the

\* "Manda V. M. que le hagamos saber la cabsa de la prision de Sebastian Caboto. El fue preso á pedimiento de algunos parientes de algunas personas, que dicen que es culpado en sus muertes, y por otros que desterró, y tambien á pedimiento del fiscal, por no haber guardado las instrucciones que levó.—" Navarrete, Colecion, T. V. p. 333.

† "Esta somana chegon aqui hũ piloto . . . o quaval se chama gabote . . . o piloto está presso . . ." See App. xli.

‡ At the end of Vasquez's Proofs we read: "Demas desta provança contenida en esta relacion ay ciertas ynformaciones hechasyn parte de las quales se haze mas larga minçion en la Relacion questa sacada de la provança que caboto hizo en esta causa."

" . . . . . esta bien sacada en lo sustancial=Hay una rubrica."

And at the end of Cabot's:—"De mas de la provança hecha en plenario juyzio por sebastian cabote e por el fiscal e por catalina vasquez, ay una ynformacion que se hizo ante los oficiales de la casa de la contratacion de sivilla esta tomada syn parte en juyzio . . . rio presentole catalina vasquez fue reçebida y hecha en dos dias del mes de Agosto de mill e quinientos y treinta años"

"Ay otra ynformacion hecha de ofiçio por los ofiçiales de la casa de la contratacion de Sevilla para saber que se hizo en el viaje de la dicha armada etc."

"Ay otra ynformaçion sumaria hecha sin parte a pedimiento de sebastian caboto ante la justicia hordinaria de la çibdad de sevilla sobre lo hecho y achaeçido en el viaje de tarsis etcetera que hizo el diçe sebastian caboto tomose a syete dias del mes de Agosto de mill e quinientos y treynta años."

§ This is mentioned in a report of the Council of the Indies to the Emperor Charles V. dated May 16, 1531.

following year, the Council of the Indies sentenced him to two years' exile at Oran for excesses committed in the course of his voyage.\* But as we have a letter of his from Seville dated June 25, 1533, by which it appears that he was in full freedom, we must conclude that the sentence was reviewed, or the Emperor must have intervened to shorten the punishment. This letter of Cabot's is directed to Juan de Samano the Emperor's secretary. Leaving for another place what can be better said elsewhere, we shall only say of it here what concerns the present period. Severe family afflictions were added to those of the expedition and prosecution. Writing to Samano, Cabot excuses himself for delay in discharging a certain commission from Samano, on account of the death of his daughter, and his wife's illness, and begs him to write to the Council of the Indies urging the payment of a third part of his salary in advance, so that he may discharge the debts which detain him at Seville.†

This is the last mention that can be found of any child of Cabot's ; and from his manner of expressing himself, it would seem that he was speaking of an only daughter. There can be no doubt but that the poor girl and her mother were victims of the suffering caused by his afflictions. The mother was taken ill, the daughter, more tender and affectionate, sealed with her life the share she took in her father's sorrows. Nor could his own strong fibre resist all these blows ; but he also fell sick.‡

---

The notice referred to in the Memorial which the Council of the Indies sent to the Emperor Charles V. under date of May 16, 1531. "Manda V. M. que le hagamos saber la causa de la prision de Sebastian Caboto. El fue preso. . . . y dada la corte por carcel con fianzas."—Navarrete, Colecc. T. V., p. 333.

\* Navarrete, *Biblioteca Maritima*. T. ii, p. 699. I take this citation from HARRISSE, not having been able to get Navarrete's text.

† "Señor suplico a vuestra merced me aga merced de escribir á estos Señores oficiales de la casa de contratacion que me socorran con un tercio de my salario adelantado para que me pueda desempechar de aqui . . ." See App. xlii.

‡ "Suplico a vuestra merced me perdone por no averla acabado mas presto yten verdad sino fuera por la muerte de mi hija y por la dolencia de my muger y mya días ha que vuestra merced la hizera recebido . . ." *Ib.*

A break in the first sentence of the letter shows the weight of grief under which his heart was groaning. It runs thus: "On the feast of the glorious St. John I received a letter from the Adelantado of the Canaries, from which it seems to me that he still has a desire to undertake an expedition to the Parana River," at this name he adds, "*which cost me so dear.*"\* But if the evils he endured were irreparable, it must still have been a great comfort to him to see the government and private individuals turning to him again, after making him undergo such great humiliation, recognizing the superiority of his genius and knowledge over those of all others. For that Adelantado applied to him for advice concerning his intended expedition, and Samano had made a request of him for a map; and Cabot answers him that he has finished it already and has two more prepared, one for the Emperor and the other for the members of the Council of the Indies. †

Before proceeding further, justice requires us to pause here to take our last farewell of Catharine Medrano, Sebastian Cabot's brave wife. Who she was, of what nation or country, and when married to Cabot, is all alike unknown. But her name and surname indicate a Spaniard, at least by descent. The first time her name appears is in a document of the date of October 25, 1525, by which Cabot obtained that a life annuity of 25,000 maravedis payable to him should be transferred to her for her life, in case of his death during the expedition he was then preparing. ‡ It appears again indirectly in the suit brought against her husband, and this brief appearance shows

---

\* "recebi una carta del adelantado de canaria por la qual me parece que todavia tiene gana de tomar la empresa del rio de parana que tanto me questa." *Ib.*

† "Señor la carta que vuestra merced me envió a mandar que yriese ya la tengo acabada . . . . . con otras dos que tengo fecho para su magestad . . . . ."

‡ Cedula de Toledo 25 octubre 1525,

Por quanto Caboto ha renunciado en Catalina Medrano su muger los 25,000 de su ayuda de costa, suplicando que como el los tenia por su vida, los goce ella por la suya della: "por que si dios fuese servido que el muriese en el viaje e armada que agora hace por nuestro mandato i en nuestro servicio al descubrimiento de las islas de Tarsis e Ofir e al Catayo oriental, tenga su muger eso para mantenerse." Asi se manda.

M. S. di Muñoz : *Indias*, 1524-1525-1526-77—Est. 23 gr. fol. 165.

her to have been a woman most attached to the glory and interest of her husband, an active, resolute, and powerful assistant in his work, a feared and fearful enemy to his enemies. It is they that drag her name into public now and then, and certainly not for eulogistic purposes. But under the exaggeration of passion and enmity there is clearly defined a strong woman's character, worthy of the man to whom she was united. We have seen that Vasquez in the fifth interrogatory of her proofs not only accuses Medrano equally with her husband of enmity against her (Vasquez's) son, but charges Catharine with employing persons to kill him, and ends by accusing Cabot of being ruled by his wife's opinion and only doing as she wishes.\* Although none of the witnesses confirms the charge of the attempted murder, as to her busying herself with her husband's affairs, and his acquiescence in her counsel and proposals, all but one, who says he knows nothing about it, agree in testifying affirmatively, according to their judgment of what they had often seen at his house.†

As the passion and bitter enmity that had been aroused against Cabot became calmed, reason gradually resumed her rights and public opinion rendered a juster judgment on the bad result of his expedition. A proof of it is that Gomara, who like all the other Spanish historians makes room in his narrative for the charges against him without a word in his defence or justification, when speaking of the unfortunate termination of the expedition expresses himself in these words: "Not so much, as some say, through his fault as the fault of the men he had with him."‡ These words, in their

---

\* "Yten si saben que . . . el dicho sebastian caboto y la dicha catalina de medrano su muger . . . le tomaron grand odio y enemistad al dicho martin mendez . . . e aun la dicha catalina de medrano mandava que lo matasen e asi lo dixo e rogo a ciertas personas e si saben quel dicho sebastian caboto se rize y gobierna por el parescer de la dicha catalina de medrano y no haze mas de lo quella quiere."

† For the sake of brevity I cite only the words of the seventh witness:—"este testigo vio algunas veces en san luear de barrameda que la dicha ana de medrano hazia e dezia ante dicho sebastian caboto todo lo que queria e por bien tenia sin quel dicho sebastian caboto le fuese a la mano y ella mandava y hazia lo que queria libremente."

‡ "No tanto, a lo que algunos dicen, por su culpa, como por la de su gente."  
—Cap. lxxxix.



briefness, seeing by whom they were said, and in what state of animosity towards Cabot, may almost be regarded as a full justification in the judgment of the Spanish people. As to the government, it suffices to say that it restored him completely to his rank of chief Pilot, and not only continued to have constant recourse to his work, but when he wanted to leave Spain for England, it made great efforts to prevent him and to force him to remain.

But can History, at whose tribunal men must answer not only for their intentions, their actions, and the honesty of their purposes, but also for involuntary errors, and for insufficient strength for the weight of the load voluntarily assumed, which according to the success or failure of every thing condemns the deliberations of prudence or applauds the audacity of presumption ; can history declare Sebastian Cabot free from all blame in the pit he fell into and ruined his undertaking ? In the absence of sufficient data on which to base a decision, an unconditioned answer is not possible. But from what we know it would not be a rash judgment to incline to the negative. His position was certainly a fearful one in face of the rebellion of his own officers, but the very fact that he was able to inflict on them a most severe chastisement without any one rising in their defence, shows us that his authority was still feared and respected, notwithstanding the great disorder among the ships. The revolt of the crews on those early expeditions, whether from fear or any other cause, was often repeated ; and it is no little glory for their leaders to have held them to the bit and compelled them, though restive, to submit to the fresh labors and dangers of the voyage. Who does not remember the revolt on the ships against Christopher Columbus ? But he suppressed it, and a few days after his men would have rid themselves of him by murder, they were kneeling about him begging his pardon, and applauding his firmness and genius. Did not Magellan's men also rebel against him ? And it was a very different revolt from that against Cabot. He was not like Cabot on a way already tried, but on one entirely new ; the cold was intense, the scarcity of food fearful, the sea constantly in storm, the sail-

ors wan with fright, and the captains not less than their men. But he was deaf to their entreaties, their remonstrances, and their threats ; when he perceived that they were about to proceed to open violence, he fell like lightning on the chiefs and by the severity of the example maintained his authority, and he won. Not by this do I mean to approve, still less to applaud, the extreme measures he had recourse to ; I only mark the comparison. The firmness which Cabot showed subsequently on the voyage after he had deposed Rojas and the other two, he should have exercised from the first moment that the officers manifested an inclination to disregard his authority. It was a great mistake to put aside Martin Mendez and give his own enemies occasion for their accusations : a most serious mistake mortally to offend a proud and arrogant nature like Rojas, and then set him at liberty. The loss of the flag-ship was not his fault, and it was this loss that decided the failure of the expedition. If Cabot's authority had been resolute and firm throughout the voyage, it is not at all likely that Rodas would have guarantied with his head the safety of the path to him unknown. Though fever destroyed his men in the Bay of Saint Catharine, and left plentiful seed for more deaths, do we hazard any thing in supposing that the bad humor creeping through the fleet made them prolong unnecessarily their stay in that place to complete the work, thus leaving a greater chance for sickness ? On the other hand, he seems to me great in all his conduct after he had decided at the Bay of Saint Catherine to remain on the Plata and devote all his energy to the exploration of that river. The struggle he had to endure was such as to overcome and crush a less firm and resolute mind ; and his energy which death could not subdue with the fear of all perishing together, nor desperate hunger in unknown and deserted places, nor the loss of all hope of aid or succor, this energy is truly admirable and deserves to be counted among the most splendid instances of indomitable constancy. But although Cabot was a real hero after the battle had begun, he does not seem to me to show equal prudence and energy in leading and governing his forces prior to the battle.

But in judging without having full knowledge of the case, I run a risk of offending no less against Sebastian Cabot's memory than against history. It is best then to resume the course of our narration.

But before wholly leaving the Plata, it is our duty to defend Cabot against another accusation weighing on his head. By many writers it is said and believed that the river, first called from the name of its discoverer the River of Solis, \* received its new name of Rio de la Plata, which means River of Silver, from Cabot, that he was deceived by some specimens of that metal which he saw in possession of the natives, and was thereby led to believe that he had arrived in regions very rich in silver. Not to multiply quotations I will merely give the words of Lardner in his *Cyclopaedia*: "Cabot in the meantime, contrived to send home to the Emperor an account of his proceedings, and as he had found among the savages of the interior some ornaments of gold and silver, which he easily obtained in exchange for various trinkets, *he took advantage* of this slender circumstance to represent the country as abounding in those metals; and in conformity with his description, *he gave the river the name of La Plata.*"† This charge, repeated by many, is without foundation of any kind. Biddle remarks that according to Gomara and Hakluyt it was the discoverer De Solis himself who gave that name of La Plata to the river, having fallen into the error which others have tried to impute to Cabot. ‡ According to Herrera, however, the name was given by the Spaniards to the river on account of some pieces of silver which Diego Garcia brought from there, because it was the

---

\* "el río, que entonees llámaran de Solis, y aora de la Plata."—Herrera, Dec. ii, lib. x, cap. i, and in another place: "aviendole preguntado muchas cosas de Rio de Solis, *que dizen* de la Plata." Dec. iv, lib. x, cap. v.

† D. Lardner's, *Cyclopaedia*, vol. ii, p. 89.

‡ "Topo con un grandissimo río que los Naturales llaman Paraguara, que quiere decir Rio como Mar o Aqua grande: vide en el muestra de Plata, *i nombrolo de ella.*"—Gomara, cap. xxxix—"The first Spaniard that entered this river and inhabited the same, was called Solis, who passed up a hundred leagues into it, and called it by the name of *Rio de la Plata, that is to say, The River of Silver.*"—Hakluyt, vol. iii, p. 788.

first silver brought to Castile from the Indies.\* But all these are contradicted by Francisco de Rojas, the companion and enemy of Sebastian Cabot, and his authority as of a witness present on the spot must prevail over all others. In his interrogatories, where he shows that Cabot altered the purpose and end of the expedition through having lent too credulous an ear to the deceitful words of the Portuguese at Pernambuco, who in their King's interest wished to divert him from going to the Moluccas, he says that "they told him that on this coast there was a river which *the said Portuguese call La Plata and we Juan De Solis*, that there was much silver there etc." † Cabot then is guiltless of any wrong to the memory of De Solis so far as regards the name of the river he discovered. That name, after all, most likely had an altogether popular origin. At the first specimens of silver obtained from that river, the quantity of the metal that was expected to be found there must have been exaggerated, as usually happens; and just as they said "Spice Islands, Sugar Island, Tobacco Island" from the special products of those islands, and as they named from brazil wood, the vast region of that name in South America; in like manner they came to call the great estuary discovered by Juan De Solis the River of Silver.

After these few indications of the great trouble that afflicted Sebastian Cabot on his return to Spain, the darkness deepens around him. We are told that he was restored to his position as Master of the pilots, as he was not only above all by the authority of his rank, but had no equal in knowledge of matters pertaining to navigation and cosmography. It was his great reputation as surpassing all others in his knowledge of these branches, that made Ramusio's Anonymous eager to know and converse with him personally: and Ramusio himself opened an epistolary correspondence with him for his

---

\*"Tambien Diego Garcia hubo alguna cantidad de Plata de los Indios, desde donde se llamo este Rio de la Plata, porque fue la primera que se traxo á Castilla de las Indias."—Dec. iv, lib. i, cap. i.

† "le dijeron como en aquella costa avia un Rio que los dichos portugueses llaman de la plata e nosotros de Juan de Solis que en el avia mucha plata etc."—No. 7.—See App. xxxv.

great collection of navigations and voyages. In the discourse held with Anonymous, Cabot mentioned various other voyages which he said he had made since his return from La Plata, but what they were and in what direction we are completely ignorant.\* Nuño De Guzman doubtless alluded to one of these voyages when he informed Charles V that a fleet commanded by Sebastian Cabot had passed the coast of Astatlan ; but uncertainty as to the date of his letter leaves it impossible to fix the time of this navigation.† The date affixed to his Planisphere of 1544 tells us that he was in Seville that year.‡ The following year, 1545, we find him employed together with Pedro Mexio, Alfonso Chaves, and Diego Gutierrez to examine Pedro de Medina's *Arte del Navegar*.§ This is the last date known of his residence in Spain.

---

## CHAPTER XXII.

### *Return to England.*

IN 1548 we find Sebastian Cabot recently returned to England. Nothing is told us of the reason of this new change, but we can infer it with certainty from what happened afterwards. The circumstances of his life and of the times had withdrawn and for many years withheld him from his natural field of study and action ; but although wholly occupied with matters concerning southern seas and lands, he had never wholly diverted his thoughts from the fogs and frosts of the north, where his mind was first opened to the enthusiasm of discovery, and his heart had first palpitated with the delights and sorrows that accompany it. In Spain he felt he was reap-

---

\* " Feci poi molte altre navigationi le quali pretermetto . . . "—App. xix.

† " Coleccion de Documentos de Indias, t. xiii—p. 409—" V. HARRISSE, *Jean et Sébastien Cabot*, p. 125.

‡ " Sebastian Caboto capitán y piloto mayor de la S. cc. m. del Imperator don Carlos . . . hizo esta figura . . . anno de J. C. de M. D. xliiii."

§ *American Exposition Catalogue*, B. 52.

ing where others had reaped before, whilst in the northern seas the glory was all his own : he had first pointed out and opened to others the way thither. How often, after long hours of study and labor on the seas and navigations of the south must his wearied mind have flown to those of the north, resting from its fatigue by stopping to meditate on the path the ship might find in that direction ! The only state that could lend him aid for the undertaking was England : and the stormy reign of Henry VIII turned all minds to other thoughts than of navigation and discovery. The disorders of that government must have come to Cabot's ears and sounded worse than they actually were, as Spain was directly injured by that King's madness ; for his repudiated wife was a Spaniard and aunt to Charles V, and there was more living and general zeal for the Catholic Religion in Spain than in any other country. It is then easy to imagine what must have been said at the court and throughout the Kingdom of Spain concerning so many wives married and divorced, so many learned and holy men given into the hangman's hands, and the scandals of every nature which at that time afflicted England.

But in 1547 Henry VIII died, and the new reign of Edward VI seemed from its commencement to be the dawn of a new era for the English Marine. The English had never given up the intention of pushing to the north-west by some way that would give them a passage to the eastern regions of Cathay, and they had made several attempts. Thus in 1527 two ships sailed with supplies of every thing needed ; but the expedition was unable to get beyond  $53^{\circ}$  N. L. : one ship was lost and the other returned without achieving any important result. In 1536, another expedition sailed, but this was more unfortunate than the former, and left no trace of itself beyond the memory of the famine suffered and the horrors that followed it. \* To give a strong impulse to the new expeditions that were thought of, the bad result of such expeditions having destroyed the courage of English sailors to put their skill again to the proof, a man was needed who would be able to re-

---

\* Hakluyt, iii, 129—Purchas, iii, 809.

store courage and by confidence in his own ability inspire confidence in the heart of others. This man for England could only be Sebastian Cabot.

From a royal ordinance of October 9, 1547, it seems that steps to secure Cabot's return to England were taken in the first year of King Edward's reign, and that an agreement was had. By that the King orders the payment of a certain "amount for bringing Cabot to England." \* The mistake in transcribing the name throws no doubt on Sebastian Cabot's being the pilot that was asked for and expected. But his departure from Spain must have undergone unlooked-for delay, for a new decree of King Edward gives us to understand that Sebastian was not in England till towards the end of 1548. This decree is of January 6, 1549, and by it the King, after setting forth the services theretofore rendered by Sebastian Cabot to England, and those then anticipated, establishes in his favor, for the term of his natural life, an annuity of one hundred and sixty-six pounds sterling, thirteen shillings, and four-pence, and orders the payment to date back from the feast of St. Michael, Archangel, of the previous year, that is, from September 29, 1548. † The day from which the pension began to run, indicates, as it seems to me, the date of Sebastian's arrival in England. As to the amount of the pension granted him, it should be observed that it would be very mean if taken at the present value of money, but in Hakluyt's opinion, and he wrote soon after the fact, it had a very generous appearance in those days. ‡

---

\* "October 9th, 1547.

· "Mr. Peckham had warrant for 100 li for the transporting of one Shabot a Pilot to come out of Hispain to serve and inhabit in England." Extract from the minutes of the Privy Council of Edward VI.

† "Et ulterius de uberiori gratia nostra ac de advisamento et consensu prædictis damus et per præsentis concedimus præfato Sebastiano Cabotæ, tot et tantas denariorum summas ad quot et quantas dicta annuitas sive annalis reditus . . . . . a festo Sancti Michaelis Archangeli ultimo præterito huc usque se extendit et attingit habendas et recipiendas]. . . . ." - V. App. xlv.

‡ In the Dedication of the first volume of his enlarged work to Lord Charles Howard, High Admiral of England. *Ib.* "King Edward the sixth . . . advanced the worthy and excellent Sebastian Caboto to be grand Pilot of *England*,

What negotiations and agreements passed between the English government and Cabot we know not. It is generally said, on Hakluyt's authority, that Sebastian was appointed Grand Pilot of England; \* but Biddle labors to show by many arguments that this office was not instituted till afterwards. † But as his doubt concerns the form not the substance of the matter, for he rather believes that the authority given to Cabot was greater than that afterwards conferred upon those who obtained the high position of grand Pilot, it suffices simply to mention a question which may be of interest for the general history of the English marine, but is of no material importance for the special history of Sebastian Cabot.

Under whatever title, then, he was restored to the English service, there is no question but what he held a very high rank in it. And what authority his counsel and judgment at once acquired is shown by the instance of James Alday, who had presented a certain plan of his for a voyage to the east, and obtained the necessary approval of the king; but Sebastian Cabot giving an adverse opinion, the license was withdrawn, as Alday himself mournfully relates ‡ Purchas, from an inscription which he found on a portrait of Sebastian Cabot in the royal palace of Whitehall, supposed that he had been knighted, and on this presumption in the course of his work gives him the title of Sir. The inscription read: *Effigies Sebastiani Caboti angli, filii Joannis Caboti militis aurati*. § True, *militis aurati* might be referred to the father as well as to the son, but to decide between them, it is far more likely that the honor was conferred on the son, as Purchas interpreted it, and that he obtained it just at this time when he returned to the service of England with the fame of the services rendered to Spain. But Biddle denies that the honor was conferred on

---

allowing him a most bountifull pension of 166 li. VI s. VIII d. by the yeere during his life."

\* See preceding note.

† *Memoir*, bk. i, ch. 15, p. 176, and Appendix, p. 311.

‡ "...the very trueth is that I was from the same voyage lested by the Prince's letters, which my master, sebastian Gabota had obtained for that purpose to my great grieffe." — Hakluyt, vol. i, part. ii, p. 463.

§ Purchas, vol. iv, p. 1812.



him, and maintains by many examples of the expression that was usual in those times, that it would have been *equitis aurati* and not *militis*.\* But whether he was knighted or not, Sebastian Cabot had now risen to such greatness, that he could have gained or lost nothing by it. It would not do, however, to omit all mention of it in his history.

The pressing insistence of Spain to get Sebastian Cabot back shows clearly that his departure was unexpected, and that he only discovered himself when he felt safe on English soil. And it is easy to understand that this fact must have produced a very painful impression in Spain ; for the first thought to arise in the mind of every one would be that the entrance of the Grand Pilot into the service of England was connected with some maritime expedition that was contemplated, and it was for Spain's best interest to retain control as long as she could of the new routes of commerce. And an enterprise led by Cabot for the account of another Power was fraught with all the more danger from his being privy to all the maritime and commercial secrets of Spain. No one, then, will blame her for being suspicious of this sudden defection of her Grand Pilot and fearing every thing. But let us hasten to say at once that among all the charges so freely brought against Cabot by Spanish historians, there was never the slightest allusion to his having given any reason to believe that he was wanting in the delicacy due to the office he had held.

As soon as Spain knew that the Grand Pilot had left, she made a strong appeal to the English government to order his immediate return. The appeal was made through Sir Thomas Cheyne and Sir Philip Hoby, who were on a mission for England to Charles V at Brussels. Through them the Emperor on the 25th of November, 1549, asked England to send Sebastian Cabot, because he “. . . is a v (erie) necessary man for the emperour whose servaunt he is (and) hath a pencion of him . . .” † That Cabot on entering the service of England gave up his emoluments in Spain is obvious and natural.

\* Biddle, bk. i, p. 181.

† See App. xlviii.

But from the Emperor's words it is seen that Spain had not accepted his resignation, but regarded him as still in her service and pay. This is more clearly shown by the fact that the chair of cosmography in the Casa de Contratacion at Seville being vacated by his departure, no successor was appointed, but the pilot Alonzo de Chavas was employed to fill it during his absence in England. \* It is quite clear that the Emperor had understood that the quitting of his service was entirely the work of England, and therefore in requesting directly from her the return of his servant and stipendiary, he sought to force her to send him back herself. But crafty as the Spanish astuteness was in pushing forward and compromising England, it was met by equal skill on her part in drawing back and sheltering herself. The answer to the imperial request was sent to Sir Philip Hoby who remained as English Ambassador in Flanders. It was dated at Greenwich April 21, 1550, and ran thus: "And as for Sebastian Cabot, answere was first made to the said Ambassador that he was not deteined heere by us, but that he of himself refused to go either into Spayne, or to the Emperor, and that he being of that mind and the King's subjecte, no reason nor equitie wolde that he shude be forced or compelled to go against his will. Upon the which answere the said Ambassador said, that if this were Cabot's answere, then he required that the said Cabot, in the presence of some one whom we coud appoint, might speke with the said Ambassador, and declare unto him this to be his mind and answere. Whereunto we condescended, and at the last sent the said Cabot with Richard Shelley to the Ambassador, that he was not minded to go neither into Spayne nor to the Emperor. Nevertheless having knowledge of certein things verie necessarie for the Emperor's knowledge, he was well contented for the good will he bere the Emperor to write his minde unto him, or declare the same here to anie such as shude be appointed to here

---

\* "Se le mando regentar la Catedra de Cosmografia, que sebastian caboto ausente en la Inglaterra, habia enseñado en la Casa de Contratacion de Sevilla."—Navarrete, *Bibl. Marit*, lib. ii, p. 16.

him. Whereunto the said Ambassador asked the said Cabot, in case the king's Majestie or we shude command him to go to the Emperor, wheter then he wold not do it ; whereunto Cabot mad answeere, as Shelley reportethe, that if the King's Highnes or we did command him so to do, then he knew weli noughe what had to do. But it semets that the Ambassador tooke his answeere of Cabot to sound as though Cabot had answered, that being comanded by the King's Highnes or us, that then he wolde be contented to go to the Emperor, wherein we rekon the said Ambassador to be deceived, so that he was fullie determined not to there at all." The Letter is to be found among the Harley MSS. \*

That there was an agreement with Cabot how he should act, so as to succeed in their plan without giving the Emperor any grounds for a justifiable complaint against England, is evident from the concluding words of the ministers to the English representative, where they confidently give the true meaning to the ambiguous words of Cabot, "then he knew well enough what he had to do." But this did not cause Spain to give up all thought of getting him back, and we find the Emperor on September 9, 1553, making another attempt, writing for the purpose to Mary Tudor, who had succeeded her brother Edward on the throne of England. But the tone of this letter is quite different from that of the one of November 25, 1549. This time the emperor does not insist as master, but asks the Queen of England as a favor to give Sebastian Cabot, formerly Pilot of the Spanish realms, now *removed to and residing in England with the consent and approval of the King of Spain*, permission to come to him as he has need to communicate with him concerning some matters affecting the safety of the navigation of the Spanish realms. † The previous letter of 1549 shows whether the Emperor spoke truthfully or not, when he asserted that Cabot had removed to England *with the consent and approval of the King of Spain*; but by this euphemism the Emperor defended his self-love which had been hurt by Cabot's flight and his refusal to return. ‡ But this attempt

---

\* No. 523, Art. 2. —Biddle, p. 175. † App. xlviii. ‡ HARRISSE, p. 363, n.

was no more successful than the other, and Cabot did not stir from England. An invincible rancor against him was felt in Spain, and from the point of view of patriotic sentiment, they were not to blame. The Spanish historians are a clear and constant evidence of this ill-feeling, for about this time and a little later, they speak of him and of the share he had in the voyages and discoveries of Spain, in terms through which transpires, as we have elsewhere observed, that animosity which usually hides or veils the undeniable merit of our enemies, while on the contrary exaggerating their defects, throwing into shadow the attenuating circumstances and justifications.

In the record of privy expenses of King Edward there are found entered under the year 1550, two hundred pounds sterling in favor of Sebastian Cabot.\*

We know not why or for what purpose this amount was paid him; perhaps it was with a general view to binding him more firmly to the interests of England.

The next year, 1551, we find Cabot treating with Venice for his services. Why was this? As the documents we possess do not inform us, we can only look to the general circumstances of the time for some answer to this question. First, let us see how matters were proceeding, and then try to obtain the answer desired from the general circumstances of those times.

James Soranzo, Venetian ambassador to England, under date of August 17, 1551, communicated to that Republic certain proposals made to him by Sebastian Cabot for making an expedition in the name and under the flag of St. Mark. Soranzo's dispatch cannot be found, but we have the reply made by the Ten, dated the 12th of the following September, and with the aid of this we may be able to restore the course of things with tolerable correctness. Cabot, then, made known to Soranzo "his plan of navigation" and "gave him detailed

---

\* "An acquittance to the Treasurer and Barons of Thexcheker for the payment of diverse somes of monie by the counsailes warrant as followeth, from the feast of Easter an<sup>o</sup> 4 Ed. VI. untill michalmas following f<sup>o</sup>. 66, etc. *To Sebastian Cabote icili* by way of the K. M. rewarde.—" M. S. Reg. 18 G. XXIV,—cited by J. G. Nichols, *Literary Remains of King Edward VI. T. I, CXXXIX.* London, 1857.

information concerning himself and his circumstances." The first difficulty to get over was to find a way for Cabot to go to Venice and explain his views in person, without exciting the suspicion of England. The means devised was this. Cabot was to say that he had some old debts due to him at Venice, and certain property which he wished to recover : but as the affair would be very difficult to transact at such great distance, he should request the English government to interpose its good offices with the Republic of Venice to give him special aid to expedite the affair. It was so done. The English government, in compliance with his request, wrote to its ambassador at Venice, who was asked to appear before the Council of Ten and make the recommendation. One of the secretaries of the council was John Baptist Ramusio, the famous compiler of *Voyages and Navigations*, a personal friend, through epistolary correspondence, of Sebastian Cabot. The recommendation was put in his hands, he being designated, it would seem, by Cabot himself, as one in whom he had full confidence, and who would take an interest in the matter. \* Cabot certainly designated the good Ramusio because he knew how zealous he was for all that concerned discovery, and he could safely count on his support. The Council of Ten, warned by Soranzo, answered the English ambassador that they were very glad to learn in what esteem and confidence a subject of the Republic was held in England, and that they would be eager to satisfy the wishes of Cabot and the English ministers. But at the same time they began to hold up their hands, observing that the question of these credits and property ran back more than half a century ; that all who could have told any thing about them were dead, and no written record of them remained. At any rate, they would at once order Ramusio to commence the necessary searches with all diligence. †

---

\* "Delivered to one of their secretaries Baptista Ramusio, whom Cabot put in trust, such evidences as came to his hands." App. 1.

† "They have commanded Ramusio to ensearch with diligence any and all Knowledge possible that may stand to the said Sebastian's profit and obtaining of right." From the English Ambassador's dispatch communicating to his government the answer he had received from the council of Ten. *Ib.*

The eagerness with which the Council of Ten conducted the affair proves their desire of bringing it to an end. The same day that the English ambassador presented the recommendation for Cabot they replied to the ambassador Soranzo. They first praised him for his diligence, and charged him to tell Cabot that "his offer was most welcome." Then referring to the excuse devised for bringing Cabot to Venice, they wrote: "And as to the question asked of you by their Lordships, about the credits he pretends and the recovery of property, you will tell them that we wish to do all we can to gratify his Majesty and their Lordships, but Cabot not being known to any one here, it will be necessary for him to come himself to prove his identity and his reasons, the matters of which he speaks being very old, and we have given the same answer to His Excellency, the ambassador of his Majesty." And after urging the ambassador to exert himself to have the permission given to Cabot to proceed to Venice as soon as possible, they conclude by saying "you will continue in the meantime to endeavor to learn from him in more detail the plan of that navigation, giving particular information of the whole to the chiefs of the Council of Ten." \* On the same day, September 12, the English ambassador likewise wrote to his government, informing it of the recommendation made, and the answer received. †

These two letters contain all the information we have in the matter. Why did it fall through? and by whose fault? We are entirely in the dark, but, if I am not mistaken, it is easy to see through this darkness, and discover what happened.

Sebastian Cabot's return to England had been settled and agreed on, as we saw, as early as the Autumn of 1547, and we find him in the following year in the service of England. That he went thither with a plan fully prepared and agreed on for what he was expected to do, is a thing too evident to need proof. The correspondence with Venice was not till 1551, and then he had been three years in England. During

---

\* App. xlix.

† App. l.

that time, what steps had been taken to put his plan in execution? None whatever. He was just where he had been on his return to England. Why was this? It was owing to the sad circumstances in which England was then placed. Did the future show on the horizon any way to greater hope? The future was darker than the present: and if the present offered nothing, less still was to be expected from the future. King Edward was a minor, and among the persons who stood nearest to him and governed in his name, there was fierce and unrelenting rivalry for power. On March 20, 1549, Thomas Seymour, the King's uncle and grand admiral of England, was dragged to the scaffold and beheaded; and it was his brother, the Duke of Somerset, the head of the Regency with the title of Protector, who sent him to execution out of fear of his ambition. Three years later, January 22, 1552, the Duke Protector himself mounted the scaffold through the efforts and craft of the Earl of Warwick, who coveted his position as the first in the Kingdom after the King. In the midst of this strife of fraud and blood, what progress could be made in the peaceful mission for which Sebastian Cabot had been invited? Sebastian's proposals to Venice were made just at the time that the Duke of Somerset fell from his greatness and met his end at the hands of the executioner. At that time, I believe, Cabot, hopeless of his future in England, turned to Venice to see if in that quarter, however distant from the field of his operations, a way could be found to carry out the great designs he was revolving in his mind. But when he perceived that Somerset's fall did not destroy the confidence they had in him, and that his plan might still hope for a successful execution in England; then, I think, he let the matter drop at Venice, and pressed it no further; just as he had acted in Spain, where we saw him insist for a moment on his offer to Venice, and then cease to prosecute it. We are therefore forced to suppose that he only recurred to Venice when in the necessity of his circumstances no other course seemed open.

Looking at the matter in this aspect (which I hold to be undoubtedly the true one), all the invective and accusation of

treachery which HARRISSE heaps on him, as though he wanted to sell underhand to Venice the secrets he had learned in England, falls to the ground. No: Cabot was not a fickle man changing his opinions from day to day, still less greedy of gain and wealth, ready to sell himself for the best offer ; but on the contrary, a man of genius, his whole mind enamored of a lofty ideal which he sought to actualize, and not having the means himself to carry it out, he chooses what seems to him the best way to gain his end, and when he finds this way closed or blocked, he rushes to some other road that offers to reach the goal he is striving for.

---

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### *Project of Navigation to the North-East.*

CABOT was now nearly an octogenarian, but his bodily fibre was unusually robust and his mind as strong and clear as in his prime. And surely the stout old man must have felt himself restored to youth when he found himself again free and untrammelled in the field of his greatest glory, and could open his mind without reserve to the bold enthusiasts of his earlier days. But returning to the glorious fields of his former victories to fight more battles there, the plan of warfare which he brought with him was quite different from that on which he had performed his first campaign. The cause of this change must be sought for in the more extended and certain knowledge on the conformation and size of our globe that had since been acquired. When the two Cabots in 1497, in search of a way of communication with Asia, sailed to the north-west, they believed that in this direction there was nothing interposed between Europe and Asia except a few islands, and that the two continents faced one another. But now the discoveries of Balboa, Pizarro, Cortez, Cartier, and the voyage of Magellan had shown that there was a great continent instead, and beyond that continent an immense ex-



pance of ocean before reaching the land of spices. The goal of their navigation was become too distant, and the great distance rendered vain the results hoped for from putting England in direct communication with the eastern countries of Asia by way of the northern seas of the west. This consideration turned his thoughts to ascertaining if it was not possible to open that way of communication by the east, sailing along the northern lands of Europe and Asia.

To appreciate the value of the question which Sebastian Cabot proposed to his learning and skill, we must remember the state of Geography in those days in all that related to the northern portion of Europe. In this we are wonderfully assisted by the chart which Cabot himself composed in 1544, and which as the latest in date comprises the studies of all the others which preceded it, and presents the most complete picture of geographical knowledge at the time of which our narrative is now treating. "If we compare," says a learned writer, "the Map of the World of Martin Behaim and the Planisphere of Sebastian Cabot, we shall see at a glance what wonderful progress geographical science had made in the short space of time that separates 1492 from 1544. The general outline of the two great continents no longer provokes a smile. Africa and India, Cathay, Japan, America as far as Magellan's Strait, are known : but as soon as we cast our eyes on the northern part of our hemisphere, as soon as we want to go in that direction beyond the 53rd degree of latitude, we stop in astonishment. How explain that the cosmography of the sixteenth century could collect such exact notions of the portions of the globe most recently discovered, while still reduced to tracing the shores of the Baltic, the coasts of Norway, on the faith of Ptolemy's eight books and twenty-six tables? Because beyond the 53rd degree the domain of the Hanseatic League commences. The port of Sluys on the coast of Flanders, that of Antwerp at the mouth of the Scheldt, marked throughout the middle ages the extreme limit which the merchant squadron of Venice bound themselves never to cross. Other nations at times ventured to infringe on

the zone which the Hanse towns had reserved for themselves ; they never entered it without a combat, and it was in vain that the Dutch in the year 1437 hoisted a broom at their mast-heads to show the world that they came to sweep tyrants from the sea”\*

The mention here made of the Hanseatic League may not be sufficiently clear to all readers, and as it must come directly into our narrative further on, it is best to tell here briefly what it was and what it aimed at. About 1241, the cities of Lubeck, Bremen, and Hamburg were led by their community of interests to form a league together to exclude and keep away from their sphere of commercial action all those, particularly Danes and Norwegians, who wanted to thrust themselves into it and divide with them the profits. Many others afterwards joined these three cities, so that the league acquired such strength that the most powerful monarchs were obliged to come to terms with them. This is the league that was called Hanseatic from the German term, *Hanse*, Association. All the territory that emptied into the Baltic was subjected to the commercial power of this league : and so, not only from Germany, but from the most inland and distant regions of Russia, all the wares and the products of either agriculture or manufacture that wanted to come into commerce had to apply to the league. Three great factories, besides many smaller, at Novgorod, Bergen, and London, collected for it from the most distant places and transported from one point to another its merchandize and exchanges, and in this way it had spread over all the northern regions like a net into which it attracted or forced every thing that could be made an article of commerce. Whoever wanted to sell had to apply to it, and whoever would buy, purchase from it. With this close net in the northern parts was connected the Venetian net for other parts : and the place of connection was first Bruges and afterwards Antwerp. The caravan of ships and merchants which sailed from Venice in the beginning of

---

\* *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 15 Juin 1876, *Les Marins au xvi Siècle*, par M. le Vice-Amiral E. Jurien de La Gravière, p.767.

Spring, and extended to all the lands and harbors of the Mediterranean, the Black Sea, the Red Sea, and the shores of the Atlantic, went to deposit in one or the other of these cities the merchandise and exchanges which the rest of the world sent to the regions of the north, and found there, ready to ship, the merchandise and exchanges which the regions of the north sent to their brother peoples. But as the Hanseatic League took care not to infringe on the seas and lands reserved for Venice, Venice with equal delicacy and scruple avoided even entering within the domain of the league. This agreement was so well observed on both sides that there never was any cause of discord or complaint between them. In this way all means of acquiring geographical knowledge of the seas, which the jealousy of the Hanseatic League reserved for itself exclusively, was cut off ; and it would tell nothing, because it was its interest to keep all those places in obscurity and mystery. It is therefore no wonder that in the middle of the sixteenth century, when for more than fifty years the outline of Africa had been known, the southern part of Asia visited, nearly all the boundaries of the New Continent explored, and for many years the whole globe had been gone around ; it was not yet known whether Europe was bounded at the north by sea, or its northern lands continuing to extend beyond the Pole, went on to join the northern lands of America. We have already seen that just in the middle of that century, in 1550, Ramusio printed these words: "Why cannot the princes . . . . cause . . . discovery towards the north where the land of Labrador is, and see whether it joins Norway or there is sea between ?"\* It was then a real problem which Cabot proposed to study and solve. We know not when he first turned his mind to it, but it was certainly in the early part of his residence in Spain, and probably immediately after America was recognized as a continent and that beyond it was an immense ocean before reaching Asia. It is certain that on his return to England he was strong for giving the English navigations the new direction.†

\* Ramusio, *Delle Navigazioni et Viaggi*, vol. i, p. 115.

† "Si aveva messo in fantasia Sebastiano Caboto . . . . e molti anni col

In the second volume of Ramusio, edition of 1606 by Giunti at Venice, on page 211, there is a description of a voyage in this new direction under the title, "navigazione di Sebastiano Cabote." It is evidently not Ramusio's work, because wanting in his first edition, and in some particulars at variance with the ideas put forth by him in other places.\* It is an addition inserted in the second edition of his great collection, when he had been sleeping for some time in his peaceful grave. This account is a mere log-book of the vessel as it proceeded on its course. The voyage of which it speaks is there said to have taken place in 1556, and this date is of itself enough to exclude all possibility of its having belonged to Sebastian Cabot, for he was then close on to 85 years of age, and a man of that age, however robust, cannot set out on a long, new voyage, full of unknown difficulties and dangers, like that in search of a passage through the frozen seas of the extreme north. It is easy to recognize that this account refers to one of the many attempts which the English made in those days to find a passage by the north-east. The collector himself says as much in his preface to the account: "*Of the many navigations since that our men have made in Moscovy, only this one is described here.*"† Inquiring to which of those voyages the description might relate, it is found to correspond beyond doubt to the voyage made to those seas by Stephen Burrough, who was one of the most expert seamen that England could boast of in those days, and who held the position of Grand Pilot in that country.

But the mistake of the anonymous collector tends all the more to the glory of Sebastian Cabot, and has for us the value

---

*pensiero discorso haveva, poter essere che qualche passo fosse nel mare settentrionale, per il quale o di verso levante o di verso ponente con breve navigazione e facile da queste nostre parti nel grande Oceano Indico passare si potesse . . .*" Ramusio, Ediz. 1606, vol. ii, p. 212. V. App. li. — also Eden "who (Sebastian Caboto) long before had this secret in is miude. Decad. fol. 256.

\* Ramusio always calls Sebastian Cabot a *Venetian*. This other anonymous writer begins his narrative thus: "Sebastian Cabot, an *Englishman*."

† "*De molte navigazioni poi che i nostri huomini hanno in Moscovia fatte, questa sola in questo luogo si describe.*"

of an historical document, for in this error he is, as it were, the echo of the general opinion then entertained in relation to these new voyages which the English were making to the north-east ; namely, that they were all the fruit of Sebastian Cabot's studies and activity ; and the intrepid navigators who advanced amid the terrors of those new lands, were only carrying out the work conceived and calculated by him. Indeed, Burrough was pilot on the first voyage which Sebastian Cabot promoted to those parts, and rising afterwards to the honor of commanding an expedition himself, he merely continued, like all the rest, the work commenced by Cabot. Besides this, the description of this voyage enters directly, as a document, into the story of Sebastian Cabot by the preface which the anonymous collector prefixes to it, in which he hints at some of the arguments on which Cabot based the possibility of that passage. It is true he unites the undertakings of father and son in a single one, the old voyages by the west and the new by the east ; but as those arguments have little or nothing to do with the western voyages, and the anonymous collector himself draws the conclusions from them only in regard to the eastern voyages, we must presume that they are intended to refer to the latter only, and that it was from want of order and precision that John Cabot and the western voyages were also related. \* But unfortunately the mention is so miserably brief that it hardly amounts to any thing, whereas both the man who imagined the possibility of that passage and studied it out, and the greatness of the deed in relation to those times make us suppose a long and varied study before its possibility was firmly rooted in Cabot's mind. The anonymous collector himself hints at this long labor, when he tells us that Sebastian Cabot had *discussed* that subject *with his thoughts for many years*. But then, when he comes to specify that long discussion that Sebastian Cabot had made, he says in general

---

\* " These are the principal arguments, trusting in which, Sebastian Cabot persuaded the men of these countries that they could pass by the northern sea by the side of the east."—See App. li.

terms "he was induced to imagine this thing partly by the testimony of some ancient authors, and partly by the experience of many moderns," and then for the testimony of the ancients he mentions two facts, one in the days of the Romans and the other in the middle ages: and for the experience of the moderns he merely gives a brief hint as to what was known, or supposed to be known, of the conformation of the lands and seas of the extreme east.

The ancient fact is taken from Pliny's Natural History where it is related on the authority of Cornelius Nepos. Here are Pliny's words: "The same Nepos, concerning a northern circuit, relates that Q. Metellus Celer, colleague of L. Afranius in the consulship, but at this time proconsul of Gaul, received as a present from the King of the Suevi some Indians who, while sailing from India for purposes of commerce, had been driven on the German coast."\* Pomponius Mela likewise refers the same story to Cornelius Nepos: "For some time it was doubtful what was beyond the Caspian Gulf: whether it was an ocean or a land intolerable from cold and endlessly extended. But besides the authority of physicists and of Homer who said that the whole earth was surrounded by water, we have Cornelius Nepos of higher authority because more recent, who gives Metellus Celer as a proof of the fact," and then gives the same account as Pliny.† To understand how the Romans could so easily credit the story of this shipwreck, we should bear in mind that for them the Caspian Sea was only a gulf of the Northern Ocean, of which the Baltic was likewise a part, so that from the Cimbric Chersonese (modern Jutland) it was, according to them, directly navigable to the northern mouth of the Caspian.‡ That

---

\* "Idem Nepos de septentrionali circuito tradit Q. Metello Celeri, L. Afranii in consulatu collegae, sed tum Galliae proconsuli, Indos a rege Suevorum dono datos, qui ex India commercii causa navigantes tempestatibus essent in Germaniam abrepti."—Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. ii, cap. 67.

† "Ultra Caspium sinum quidnam esset, ambiguum aliquandiu fuit; idemne Oceanus an Tellus infesta frigoribus, sine ambitu ac sine fine projecta. Sed præter physicos Homerumque, qui universum orbem mari circumfusum esse dixerunt, Cornelius Nepos, ut recentior, ita auctoritate certior; testem autem rei Metellum Celerem . . ." Pompon. Mela, De Situ Orbis, iii, 5, 8.

‡ See the geographical charts according to the system of Eratosthenes, Hip-

from the Caspian it was possible to sail uninterruptedly to the Indies, was regarded as certain on Strabo's authority. "The mouth of the Caspian or Hircanian sea is much farther north: it is about six thousand stadia distant from the middle of the Caspian and from the Armenian and Median mountains, and seems to be the most northern point of the whole coast and possible to sail around as far as India, as Patrocles, the governor of these places, says." \* And in another place he says: "They do not admit that it is possible that some sailed around from India to the Hyrcanian, but Patrocles found it so. †

As to Cornelius Nepos's account, there being no reason for denying the shipwreck of strangers on the German coast, it has been asked what people these supposed Indians belonged to. Some have thought they were Esquimaux from Labrador or Greenland, driven on our shores by north-west gales." ‡

During the middle ages geography made no progress in the knowledge of these regions. And as the Arab writers of the tenth century had told of a ship sailing from Siraph harbor in the Persian Gulf, carried by the force of the currents into the Caspian Sea, whence passing through a channel it reached

parchus, and Strabo, annexed to the French translation of Strabo, Paris, *Imprimerie Impériale*, 1805.

\* "... Ἔσται δε... τὰ τοῦ στόματος τῆς Κασπίας θαλάσσης εἶτε Ἑρκανίας πάμπλου τι ἀρκτικώτερα ὅπερ τοῦ μυχῆν τῆς Κασπίας καὶ τῶν Ἀρμενικῶν καὶ Μηδικῶν ὄρων διέχει περι ἑξακισχιλίου σταδίου, καὶ δοκεῖ τῆς ἀντῆς παραλίᾳς μέχρι τῆς Ἰνδικῆς ἀρκτικώτερον εἶναι θημεῖον, καὶ περίπλου ἔχειν ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰνδικῆς δυνατὸν, ᾧς φησὶν ὁ τῶν τόπων γηγὴ δάμενος τουτων Πατροκλῆς." Strab. Geogr. lib. ii, p. 74, sub finem.

† "Οὐχ ὁμολογοῦσι δὲ ὅτι περιέπλευσάν τινες ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰνδικῆς ἐπὶ τὴν Ἑρκανίαν, ὅτι δε δυνατὸν, Πατροκλῆς εἴρηκε—Id. ib. lib. xi, p. 518, sub finem.

‡ "Si ya no fuesen de Tierra del Labrador, y los tuviesen por Indianos, engañados en el color."—Gomara, *Historia de las Indias*, fol. 7. — And Cornelius Wyffliet, in his additions to Ptolemy's Geography published in 1597: — "Indos quondam tempestatibus in Suevorum et Germaniæ litora eiectos et L. Metello Celeri dono datos, non ex ultimis Orientis et Occidentis partibus, uti quibusdam visum est, sed ex hac Laboratoris et Estotilandie aut vicinis terris venisse constanter teneo, mecumque sentiet quicumque climatis rationem expenderit." Others instead have held that they were merely Wends, a Slavonian people dwelling on the southern shores of the Baltic.— See Vivien de St. Martin, *Histoire de la Géographie*, p. 176.

the coast of Syria ;\* so amongst our own writers Æneas Sylvius Piccolomini, in the same century in which America was discovered, and the most southerly point of Africa was passed, relates from Otto of Freisingen that, “an Indian ship with Indian merchants was taken on the coast of Germany which evidently had been driven there from the east ; which could not possibly have happened if, as many suppose, the northern sea was frozen and unnavigable.† The fact reported by Piccolomini is the second given by the anonymous Collector, and almost literally translated.

After ‘all this, it cannot be wondered at that Sebastian Cabot, who had sailed over and visited so many seas and lands, should also accept these stories of vessels from the eastern seas of Asia driven by storms into our northern seas.

But to these arguments deduced from the testimony of writers, he added others drawn from his own profound knowledge of every science that has any affinity to the nautical. Here one should be glad to know the basis of his study and reasoning : but our desires are even less gratified than in the historical arguments. For in the latter, treating of a matter of fact, a mere allusion is sufficient to direct us in imagining very nearly the process that Sebastian Cabot’s mind must have gone through in its work ; but in the reasoning based on his extensive and profound learning in nautical, geographical, and cosmographical studies, we are forced to stop at the simple mention of it made by Ramusio’s new anonymous. The reasoning reported is entirely based on error, but the blame of that belongs to the age, not the man. Here is the little that the anonymous writer gives us : “The other argument was that beyond the Indian Sea, the Gulf of the Ganges, the Golden Chersonese or Malacca, and the Province of Sina, ‡ and

\* Humboldt, *Récherches Critiques* i, p. 480.

† “Nos apud Othonem legimus sub Imperatoribus Theutonicis Indicam navim et negociatores Indicos in germanico litore fuisse deprehensos, quos ventis agitato in gratia ab orientali plaga venisse constabat ; quod accidere minime potuisset, si, ut plerisque visum est, septentrionale pelagus innavigabile concretumque esset.”—*Asia Europæque Descriptio. De Mundo in universo*, cap. ii.

‡ Southern China, mentioned by Ptolemy under the name of Sinæ.



beyond the navigation of moderns,\* he knew for certain that this Indian Sea was situated in length (longitude) nearly in  $180^{\circ}$  † and in breadth (latitude) in the 25th degree, a little beyond the meridian of Tartary, and the extensive empire of Cathay (that which is sought after by navigators as the end and reward of their labors); and considering how and how much this great sea of the Indies was constantly expanding under that meridian and bending northwards, not lightly or without reason . . . he judged it likely that if our northern sea extended on the east or west towards the south . . . it would not be a long navigation from  $70^{\circ}$ , or  $60^{\circ}$  latitude to  $30^{\circ}$  in which they place Cathay, an incredible distance from Moscovy. . . Trusting in which arguments, he persuaded the men of these countries that they could pass by the northern sea by the side of the East . . . easily and in a certain time to East India, or at least reach the Kingdom of Cathay.”‡

Vice-admiral Jurien de la Gravière in the article mentioned further back has made an observation which should be here copied, for it may throw not a little light on our present subject. Not a mere man of the sea, he was one of the most learned of this century in geographical science, and therefore his words should have great weight.

Speaking of the navigation of the North and Baltic seas in the time of Sebastian Cabot, he writes: “The Germans, Danes, Flemings, the fishermen from the north of Scotland, are the only sailors who have yet visited those shores. Sebastian Cabot would have gained little by consulting them. These people have not ceased to deserve the contemptuous remark of Prince Henry: ‘they know nothing of the use of marine charts or the compass.’ One bright point, however, never ceased to shine through the thickness of the ancient darkness. Where you would go to-day to look for Hammerfest, Cape North, Varanger Fiord, you will see marked on the planisphere of 1544 at the bottom of a large gulf the Danish

---

\* The Spanish and Portuguese, who in the first half of the XVI Century visited the great archipelago of the East Indies.

† From the meridian of Ferro.

‡ See App. 1.

fortress of Varduus. \* Neither Martin Behaim, extending his savage Laponia to the North Pole, nor John de la Cosa, nor the unknown cosmographer of Henry II, mentioned this extreme station. † Sebastian Cabot points it out to the navigator as the bourn to double in order to enter the Sea of Tartary, and wonderful to say, wants very little of putting it in its right place. . . . " ‡ The northern coast of Finmark which extends a great distance on the same parallel, has really the right to occupy the 70th degree of latitude as Sebastian Cabot understands. It is there that Europe ends, and for a serious cosmographer it is there also that the world should terminate. §

This almost exactness on a point so distant that it is only found on Sebastian Cabot's chart, attests, in my opinion, the patient investigation he kept making, so far as possible with the uncertain information current among northern mariners, on the condition and situation of places in those distant regions. These long and patient investigations are in perfect keeping with the study he was for years maturing on the possibility of navigating and crossing those seas.

\* Vardoëhuus, on the Island of Vardoë, in the Diocese of Tromsø, a city of 200 inhabitants, situated in 70° 22' N. L. and 28° 47' E. Longitude.

† The famous chart known under the name of Henry II, and which would seem to have been composed between August 1541 and June 1544, and consequently the last in the series prior to the planisphere composed by Sebastian Cabot—See HARRISSE, *Jean et Sébastien Cabot*, p. 210 and s.

‡ "70° 33' N. L. instead of 70° 22'.—40° of longitude east from the meridian of Paris instead of 28° 47'."

§ "Les Allemands, les Danois, les Flamands, les pêcheurs du Nord de l'Ecosse, sont les seuls marins qui aient encore fréquenté ces parages. Sébastien Cabot gagnerait peu à les consulter. Ces gens-là n'ont pas cessé de mériter la dédaigneuse exclamation du prince Henri: 'ils n'entendent rien à l'emploi des cartes marines et de la boussole.' Un point lumineux ne laisse pas cependant de briller à travers l'épaisseur des antiques ténèbres. Là où vous iriez aujourd'hui chercher Hammerfest, le cap Nord, le fiord de Varanger, vous verrez indiquée sur le planisphère de 1544, au fond d'un large golfe, la forteresse danoise de 'Varduus!' Ni Martin Behaim étendant jusqu'au pôle sa Laponie sauvage, ni Juan de la Cosa, ni le cosmographe inconnu d'Henri II, n'ont fait mention de cette station extrême. Sébastien Cabot la montre au navigateur comme la borne à doubler pour entrer dans la mer de Tartarie, et, chose merveilleuse, il s'en faut de bien peu qu'il ne l'ait mise à sa place."

## CHAPTER XXIV.

*Expedition to the North-East.*

IN the preceding chapter we had to stop to speak of the Hanseatic League, on account of the obstacle it was to the extension of geographical knowledge of the northern portion of our hemisphere ; now we return to it to tell its relations with England, for it is from that country that the work forwarded by Sebastian Cabot sets out. The Hanseatic League established itself in London in the year 1256, and the company which was formed there of German merchants took the name of Steelyard. Its coming seemed at first a blessing to the commerce of England, which was languishing in the most squalid misery, and to encourage those merchants in their action Government was never tired of conferring privileges on their association. The activity and energy of the merchants answered these hopes only too well. For, aided by the many privileges they had acquired, and many more which they were able to appropriate to themselves by custom and the acquiescence of the government and people, supported by their immense wealth, their connections, the warehouses which they had opened in the most populous centres of England, and by their correspondence with the most commercial marts of Europe ; they had reached such point that they not only drew to themselves the entire commerce of England, but they permitted no exports or imports through any other hands than their own, defrauding individuals and the government to an enormous extent, for they fixed the bulletin of prices of every thing bought by the English, and compelled all foreign goods coming into England and which should have paid a good toll to the government, to pass under their flag, which either exempted them from all customs or reduced the duties to

an insignificant rate.\* As a proof of the enormous preponderance acquired by the German company in English commerce, I will only give this, that in the year 1551, it of itself alone exported from England 44,000 pieces of cloth, and all the English merchants together only sent out 1,100.†

Seeing the great injury it did the country in every respect, Edward III and Richard II made great efforts to stimulate their subjects to navigation. But all their efforts were idle. The Steelyard Company by craft or arrogance, as suited the case, gained the favor of Henry VI and imposed its will on Edward IV. Henry VII was often compelled to oppose it, and he notified the Diet at Antwerp in 1491, through his representatives that thenceforth the German merchants would be treated in England on the same footing as the English merchants in the Hanseatic cities. But this amounted to nothing, for English manufactures and commerce were in no position to do without the Hanse towns. And so England continued for sixty years longer to bear the yoke imposed on her by foreign commerce. The credit of breaking that yoke and placing England on the road that brought her to the rank of the richest nation in the world and the Queen of the Seas, belongs to Sebastian Cabot. On his return to England he made himself the centre of the national merchants, restored their drooping courage, and raised their hopes of the future. His reputation and authority gave special force to his words, so that, clinging close to him, and guided by his suggestions and advice, the English merchants presented to the Privy Council of King Edward an appeal against the intolerable abuses and frauds of the Steelyard Company. This company at once appreciated the danger that threatened them, and with alarm and energy equal to the danger, they rose to oppose it. They

---

\* Hakluyt, vol. i, p. 144 and s. —Anderson's *History of Commerce*, vol. ii, p. 90. —Mc Pherson's *Annals of Commerce*, vol. ii, p. 109. — "There is a law of this reign," says Hume (12 Henry VII), "containing a preamble by which it appears that the company of merchant adventurers in London, had, by their own authority, debarred all the other merchants of the Kingdom, from trading to the great Marts in the Low countries, unless each trader previously paid them the sum of near seventy pounds." *History of England*, ch. xxvi.

† Jurien de la Gravière in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 15 Juin, 1876, p. 764.

not only put in motion all the influence of their money, their connections, and adherents, but caused the cities of Hamburg and Lubeck to interfere officially.

But the government sustained the protest of the merchants of the nation, and restrained the Steelyard within the privileges it had actually obtained.\* This was a deadly blow to the company; for a company of national merchants was at once formed around Cabot, and guided by his good sense, and incited by his energy, was the origin and beginning of that marvellous activity and diligence in commerce and navigation which the English have since displayed throughout the world.

Strype records a present of £200 to Sebastian Cabot from King Edward in the month of March of this year.† Biddle, reasoning from the circumstances of the time, concluded that this present was in token of the royal satisfaction at the part he had taken in organizing the company of national merchants. But as the book of that King's privy expenses mentions another present, also of £200, the year before, which we related further back, a doubt remains that Strype may have mistaken the year of the present.

As soon as the company was formed, Cabot and the merchants began holding many and frequent meetings to consult on their action; ‡ and then it was that he disclosed the secret which according to the anonymous of Ramusio's second edition, he had jealously guarded even when he was in Spain, and which Eden affirms he had long thought and studied over. § This was, as we have already said, the proj-

\* The reply to the Steelyard was dated March 25, 1551. In the diary of the young King Edward published by Burnet in his *History of the Reformation*, vol. ii, the progress of the dispute with the Steelyard is found registered from day to day. "25 March, 1551. The Answer for the Ambassador of the Stiliard was committed to the Lord Chancellor, &c."

† "To sebastian Caboto, the great seaman, 200 pounds, by way of the King's majesty's reward, dated in March, 1551."—Strype's *Historical Memorials*, vol. ii, p. 495.

‡ ". . . they (the merchants) began first of all to deal and consult diligently with him (Caboto)."

§ Hakluyt, i. p. 270. *Voyage of Richard Chancellor*.

§ "and whereas I have before made mention howe Moscovie was in our time

ect of opening a passage to Asia by the north-east of Europe. But this secret must be understood of the project of that navigation as *studied out and calculated* with all the aid that study and science can give to a man of genius and experience like Cabot ; for as to the simple idea of the possibility of sailing to the north-east to reach Asia, we have seen that in the days of the Romans and the Greeks, and in those very years when Cabot was studying this problem scientifically, others in various places were turning their mind to it by way of induction, foretelling that some one would attempt that passage. One of these was Ramusio's Anonymous who had the long conversation with Sebastian Cabot in Spain, to which our story has had frequent occasion to refer. In the same discourse at Fracastoro's Villa, where he relates this conversation, he gives another in which the thought of this navigation is clearly hinted at. \* And further on, referring to some plans that had been laid for attracting the trade of Cathay to Russia, but which had fallen through, he goes on to say : "that if it had been proposed to sail from the shores of this our northern sea right along the coast to Cathay the plan might easily have been carried out. And . . . that as to the said seas, it cannot be doubted that they are navigable for six months of the year, the days being very long and warm, owing to the continual reverberation of the solar rays." And much more directly, in fact absolutely proposing it, Robert Thorne speaks of it in a letter which he wrote in 1527 to Henry VIII

---

discovered by Richard Chancellor in his voyage toward Cathay, by the direction and information of M. Sebastian Cabota, *who long before had this secret in his mind.*"—Eden's Decad. fol. 256.— And the second Anonymous of Ramusio:—"Sebastiano Cabota. . . il quale. . . (come esso dir soleva) sin quando in Spagna habitava haveva nella mente tenuto per marinari questo secreto occulto . . ."—Ramusio, II. Ediz. Venezia, 1606, vol. ii, p. 212.

\* Here are his words : "In my young days finding myself in Germany in the City of Augsburg, there came there an ambassador from the Duke of Moscovy . . . speaking with him one day of these Indians cast by fortune on the shores of Germany, and of the *voyage that might be made to discover* by the northern seas the lands of Spices, I observed that he was much surprised at first as at something which he never could have dreamt of, but after reflecting, it fell into his fancy and greatly pleased him." Ramusio, vol. i, p. 412.

of England, to urge the searching for a northern passage to the east of Asia, for which undertaking he proposed, as we have seen, one of these three ways : by the north-west, or directly across the pole, or by the north-east. Of the last he wrote : "If they will go toward the Orient, they shall enjoy the regions of all the Tartarians, that extend toward the mid-day, and from thence they may go and proceed to the land of the Chinas, and from thence to the land of Cathaio Orientall, which is of all the maine land most oriental that can be reckoned from our habitation. And if from thence they doe continue their navigation, following the coasts that returne toward the Occident, they shall fall in with Malaca, and so with all the Indies which we call Orientall, and following the way, may returne hither by the Cape of Buona Speranza, and thus they shall compasse the whole worlde."\*

But their suppositions and proposals were built in the air, whereas the project of Sebastian Cabot was accompanied by all the necessary demonstrations to show that it could be carried out ; and herein we must believe consisted the secret he had nursed as far back as when he was in Spain.

The English merchants were exceedingly pleased with Cabot's plan, both because it greatly shortened the voyage to the treasures of the extreme east, from the very long distances sailed by the Spaniards and Portuguese, and because the position of the new way secured almost the entire benefit to England. Approving, therefore, his studies and calculations, they agreed to send to sea three ships to carry out his plan. † A public subscription was opened, and although the shares were only put at twenty-five pounds sterling, the necessary amount was subscribed for in a very short time.‡ Every

\* Hakluyt i, p. 237.

† ". . . . . after much speech and conference together, it was at last concluded that three shippes should bee prepared and furnished out, for the search and discoverie of the Northern part of the world to open a way and passage to our men for travaile to new and unknown kingdomes." Hakluyt. i, 270. Narrative of Richard Chancellor.

‡ "by this companie it was thought expedient, that a certaine summe of money should publiquely bee collected to serve for the furnishing of so many shippes. And lest any private man should bee too much oppressed and

shareholder was a member of the new company, which took the name of Merchant Adventurers of England for the Discovery of Regions, Dominions, Islands, and places unknown ; but it was commonly known by the shorter form of The Company of Merchants of Cathay and Russia.\* We have already said that Russia in those days had little more relations with the rest of Europe than with far-away Cathay, and the little she sent us of her products, or received of ours, was wholly in the gripe of the Hanseatic League. The shareholders elected for directors of the company a board composed of "grave and prudent persuns," and this board appointed Sebastian Cabot governor of the company.†

In fitting out this expedition the precaution was taken for the first time in England to cover the ships' bottoms with a thin leaf of lead, to protect them from the worms which often bored through the hardest oak.‡ It was a precaution the Spaniards had used for some time, and Biddle, observing that they first put it in practice in 1514, two years after Sebastian Cabot went over to King Ferdinand's service, and considering his rapid progress in his career, is inclined to believe it was first proposed by him.§

But Cabot was not exempt from annoyance and opposition even among the English. It would indeed have been strange if ignorance and malice could see a new fact of great importance in preparation and keep silent and not attempt in some way to attack and bite it. Cabot himself, in §32 of his instructions for this voyage, which we shall see further on, alludes to the difficulties he encountered from. . . . "suspicion in some heads that this voyage could not succede for the extremitie of the North pole, lacke of passage, and such like, which have

charged, a course was taken, that every man willing to be of the societie, should disburse the portion of twentie and five pounds apiece ; so that in a short time by this means the summe of sixe thousand pounds being gathered, the three shippes were bought." Hakluyt, *ib. ib.*

\* "Chiamasi la lor compagnia la compagna dei Mercanti del Cathais, over della Russia." Ramusio, Preface already cited.

† "Sebastian Cabot . . . governor of the Marcantes of Cathay " . . . Eden, fol. 249.

‡ Hakluyt i, 270.

§ *Memoir* i, p. 188.



caused wavering minds, and doubtful heads, not only to withdraw themselves from the adventure of this voyage, but also dissuaded others from the same. . . .”\* It is probably at the time when he was getting this expedition ready that the conversation occurred in which Sebastian Cabot explained to King Edward the declination of the magnetic needle; from which he was given the glory of being the first to observe that strange phenomenon. The matter is related by Livy Sanudo, in the First Book of his Geography, published in 1588, in these words: “I had been for many years a friend of a gentleman named Guido Gianneti di Fano, a man worthy of esteem and affection for his erudition and virtuous habits, and from him I first heard with wonder that the needle of the compass for navigation rubbed with a loadstone does not always indicate the meridian of the observer, but a place some degrees distant from that meridian; which place however distant is still shown by the needle, now at that meridian, and now a little, and again a good deal away from it: and that Sebastian Cabot, a Venetian, a most excellent Pilot taught by experience and by the observations which he had made when sailing to the Indies, was the discoverer of this secret: which he afterwards disclosed to the young serene King of England, with whom Gianneti (as I have heard from others), was present and greatly honored: and he showed at the same time what this distance was, and that it did not appear the same at every place.” † But the fact is, that before Cabot, Christopher Columbus had observed this phenomenon, on the 13th of September 1492, as he wrote in his journal of his first voyage of discovery: ‡ and again he speaks of it in the narrative of his third voyage as a phenomenon observed on his previous voyages. Consequently there can be no question as to the priority of his observation, and they are in error who gave the credit to Sebastian Cabot. But though he observed the phe-

---

\* V. App. lviii.

† *Geografia di M. Livio Sanudo*, in Vinegia, appresso Damiano Zenaro. MDLXXXVIII, p. 2.

‡ See also, Fernando Colombo, cap. xi—lxiii.—Herrera, Dec. i, lib. i, cap. 10—Tarducci, *Life of Columbus*, i, p. 131.

nomenon subsequently to Christopher Columbus, he had a much larger field for observation and study, especially as he could behold it in the two opposite climes of the north and the south. Whatever explanation of it Cabot gave to King Edward, for Gianneti, who had never heard of the phenomenon, it was a great wonder, and as he was ignorant of the previous observation by Christopher Columbus, he looked on it as something altogether new.

Did Cabot know the fact about Christopher Columbus? It seems very hard to believe he was unaware of it, considering that Columbus was not the only one to remark that new and strange phenomenon, but his companions saw it likewise and were extremely terrified at it; which occasioned his wonderful promptness in finding a consistent theory to explain it and calm their minds.\* If the fact was remembered in the Spanish marine, no one would be more likely to know it than Cabot, as Pilot-Major, and also as Instructor of cosmography in the Casa de Contratacion at Seville. How could Cabot represent himself as the first observer of this phenomenon, I say not, to Edward VI King of England far from the place and time of its discovery, but to the Venetian ambassador Contarini, with whom he was making an agreement to sail for the account of Venice?† Contarini not only resided in Spain, and therefore in a position to know of Christopher Columbus's discovery, and consequently to contradict Cabot on the spot in his pretentious boast; but he was a man to take more interest than any one else in such phenomenon, if the historian Peter Martyr D'Anghiera applied to him for advice and explanation in the difficulties he met with in cosmography.‡ And yet the mat-

---

\* Journal of C. Columbus, Sept. 17, 1492.—Fernando Colombo, *Historie*, cap. xix.—Tarducci, *Life of Columbus*, i, 131—132.

† See ch. xiii.

‡ A Spanish ship arriving at one of the Moluccas found that it was Thursday whereas the Spaniard's calculation showed that it ought to be Wednesday; and they were all sure that there was no error in their calculation.—From this they came to suspect that the course of time from our shores to those regions must have caused the difference. Peter Martyr, having to relate this matter in his *Decades*, did not know what to think about it, and to put himself at ease he had recourse to the great learning of Contarini: "Quando ad Gor-

ter was altogether new to Contarini, as appears from his letter to the Council of Ten, of December 31, 1532, in which he says: "Discoursing with me on many questions of geography, amongst other things he told me that he had observed by means of the compass how to know the distance between two places from the east to the west, which was very beautiful and *never before observed by others*, as your serenity may ascertain from him when he arrives."\* Nor could Peter Martyr D' Anghiera have known of it, as he does not mention it in his *Decades* on matters of the Ocean. Hence we are driven to the conclusion that the memory of the discovery made by Columbus was entirely lost in the outcries of joy on his first return, and the complaints and calamities which came after: and it only remained recorded in his *Journal*, from which it was only brought out to the knowledge of the public after Sebastian Cabot's death.

Cabot prepared an explanation of this phenomenon to send with two charts to the Emperor and the Council of the Indies. He promised himself a great deal from his work, as he clearly gives us to understand in his letter to John de Samano. Here are his words: "I intended to bring it [the chart which Samano had asked for] myself with two others I have made for his Majesty. I believe His Majesty and the gentlemen of the council will be satisfied with it, for they will see how one can sail in a circuit by means of its courses, as is done by a card, and the reason why the needle northeasts and northwests (varies to the east or west) and why it was to do it, and must northeast or northwest so many points before it comes to point to the north, and in what meridian, and with this His Majesty will have a sure rule for taking the longitude."† But

---

gonas navis hæe regressa fuit, diem fuisse Mercurii arbitrabantur, Jovis esse repererunt.—Unde diem unum in eo discursu aiunt sibi ablatum, ea trium annorum intercapedine. . . . Agitatus ea cura conveni Gasparem Contarinum, oratorem apud cæsarem pro sua illustri Republica Veneta, omni litterarum genere non mediocriter eruditum." Dec. v, cap. 7. — It is needless to say that I relate this anecdote merely as a proof of Contarini's learning and of the estimation in which he was held on questions of cosmography.

\* See App. xxvi.

† "pense de llevarla yo mismo con otras dos que tengo fecho para su ma-

only enough of this writing of his is left to make us hope that the rest may some time be brought to light. Richard Eden relates that Sebastian Cabot on his death-bed, claimed to possess by divine revelation a new and infallible way of determining longitude, but which he could disclose to no mortal.\* This new and infallible method was that of finding the longitude by means of the arc of variation made by the magnetic needle, which was supposed to be parallel to the meridian. † We know not when Cabot first made use of this method ; still he was certainly anticipated by Columbus, who determined astronomically a line without declination, on September 13, 1492 : ‡ and on his second voyage in 1496, uncertain of his position, he ascertained it by observations of the declinations. §

In the beginning of May, 1553, the ships were ready to sail. Sir Hugh Willoughby was appointed to the command of the expedition, and had with him as chief pilot Richard Chancellor, and as masters William Gefferson, Stephen Burrough, and Cornelius Durfoorth. ||

Each of the three ships took along for its service a boat and a small-boat. The flag-ship was named *Bona Speranza*, of 120 tons; the *Edward Bonaventure* was of 160, and the *Bona*

gestad creo que su magestad y los señores del Consejo quedaran satisfechos della porque veran como se puede navegar por redondo por sus derotas como se ace por una carta y la causa porque nordestear y noruestea la guya y como es forçoso que lo haga y que tantas quartas a de nordestear y noruestear antes que torna a bolverse acia el norte yten que meridiano y con esto terra su magestad la regla cierta para tomar la longitud." V. App. xlii.

\* In the letter of dedication of his translation of John Taisnerus's work, already cited.

† A. Humboldt, *Cosmos*, iv, 50.

‡ See his Journal.

§ Fernando Colombo, cap. 63.—Humboldt, *Ib.*

|| The following note will show the meaning of the term master:—"Dans ces sortes de campagnes, il faut bien distinguer le commandement militaire du commandement maritime. L' officier que le souverain a pourvu d'une commission est 'le capitaine'; celui que la compagnie investit du soin de preparer et de manoeuvrer le navire s'appelle 'le master' ou 'le maître' . . . Le maître et le pilote ont peu de chose à faire quand l'escadre a pour chef un Christophe Colomb ou un Magellan. Leur tâche garde plus d'importance si ce chef s'appelle sir Thomas Pert, Cortés, Albuquerque ou Vasco de Gama" — Vice-Amiral Jurien de la Gravière in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 15 Juin 1876, p. 772.

Confidentia, of 90. Even the ship's names show the strong confidence all had in the success of the enterprise. The first carried a crew of 46 men, the second of 48, and the third of 28. The flag-ship was commanded by Sir Hugh Willoughby in person, with William Gefferson for Master; Richard Chancellor commanded the second with Stephen Burrough as master. The Good Confidence had Cornelius Durfoorth both as commander and master.\*

As Christopher Columbus had done on his first voyage, Willoughby took letters from King Edward VI for the Kings or Princes he should meet on his way, written in Latin, Greek, and many other languages, and dated the 14th of February of the year of the creation of the world 5515. Although the expedition was commanded by a General, its purpose was purely and simply mercantile, and Edward's letter to the Princes and chiefs of places and tribes that should be met with on the way to Cathay, only contemplated entering into treaties of amity with those peoples for the interest and profit of both parties.† Sebastian Cabot delivered to Willoughby his instructions for the voyage, consisting of thirty-three paragraphs, which form a document of value not only on account of his great sense and experience, but also of his goodness of heart. He resembles a father about to start his young son on his first journey in the world, with no experience of men or affairs : he would seem to want to point out each step of the way, advise and warn him of every thing, and never tire of repeating his counsels and admonitions. They are dated on the eve of sailing, May 9, 1553.‡ Their excessive length makes it impossible to give them in full ; whoever desires to know them will find them in the Appendix. But special mention must be made of the minute and wise rules concerning the internal discipline of the ships, the relations of the sailors to each other, of inferiors to the commander, and his to them. The poor old man in writing these admonitions may perhaps have felt the wound, which never had healed, of what he had to suffer in his expedition to the Moluccas, open afresh.

---

\* Hakluyt, ch. i, p. 238.

† *Id. ib.* p. 236.

‡ See App. lvi.

The orders he gave on the observations to be set down as soon as they discover new lands, in the judgment of Vice-Admiral Jurien de la Gravière, give a new direction which has always since been followed by maritime expeditions. Before that time, with boldness of resolution, and unconquered freedom, advancing in face of the perils of the unknown, they were under the dominion of fancy, which with the attraction of poetical imagery clothed and embellished the contests and fears of the cruel work of those heroes: henceforth it is the calculating coldness of the mathematician which watches, observes, notes, connects together facts and accidents, examines and compares them ; and from the past with imperturbable calm draws a rule and guide for the future. In this way the "log-book" was first instituted on this memorable occasion.\*

“§ 7. Item, that the marchants,” say the Instructions, “and other skilful persons in writing, shal daily write, describe, and put in memorie the navigation of every day and night, with the points, and observations of the lands, tides, elements, altitude of the sunne, course of the moon and starres, and the same so noted by the order of the Master and pilot of every ship to be put in writing, the captaine generall assembling the masters together once every weeke (if winde and weather shal serve) to conferre all the observations and notes of the said ships, to the intent it may appeare wherein the notes do agree, and wherein they dissent, and upon good debatement, deliberation and conclusion determined, to put the same into a common leger, to remain of record for the company ; the like order to be kept in proportioning of the Cardes, Astrolabes, and other instruments prepared for the voyage, at the charge of the companie.”

“§ 27. Item the names of the people of every island, are to be taken in writing, with the commodities and incommodities of the same, their natures, qualities and dispositions, the site of the same, and what things they are most desirous of,

---

\* “Ainsi fut institué pour la première fois, dans cette occasion mémorable, le journal de Botd.” *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1. c. p. 774.

and what commodities they wil most willingly depart with, and what mettals they have in hils, mountaines, streames, or rivers, in or under the earth."

The conduct he points out to be observed towards the new peoples they went on discovering shows the long study he must have made on his voyages, of the character of the populations when first beholding our men with their ships and armour. "For as much," he says § 23, "as our people, and shippes may appear unto them strange and wonderous, and theirs also to ours: it is to be considered, how they may be used, learning much of their natures and dispositions, by some one such person, as you may first either allure, or take to be brought aboard your ships, and there to learn as you may, without violence or force, and no woman to be tempted, or intreated to incontinencie, or dishonestie."

"§ 26. Item every nation and region to be considered advisedly, and not to provoke them by any disdain, laughing, contempt, or such like, but to use them with prudent circumspection, with al gentlenes and curtesie, and not to tary long in one place, untill you shall have attained the most worthy place <sup>v</sup> t may be found, in such sort, as you may returne <sup>w</sup> t victuals sufficient prosperously."

Some may perhaps regard as superfluous the care and directions he gives for keeping alive in seamen the sentiment of religion, and the practice of those exercises which grow out of it and by reciprocal action maintain and strengthen it. But I am of a different opinion, and I do not appeal in support of my opinion to the different way of feeling and thinking in the XVI century in contrast with the unbelief or indifference of the XIX century. No, I believe that at all times and in every place whatever may be the authority, it ought to desire and take pains to keep alive this flame in the heart of the people; for when it is living and rightly directed, it is the soundest and safest guide in all cases and in all the circumstances of human life. Cabot, then, devoted his attention likewise to this and reminded his mariners to act "for duetie and conscience sake towards God, under whose mercifull hand navigants above **all**

other creatures naturally bee most nigh and vicine ;” \* then in his Instructions he prescribes, § 12 : “that no blaspheming of God, or detestable swearing be used in any ship, nor communication of ribaldrie, filthy tales, or ungodly talke to be suffred in the company of any ship, neither dicing, carding, tabling, nor other divelish games to be frequented, whereby ensueth not onely povertie to the players, but also strife, variance, brawling, fighting, and oftentimes murther to the utter destruction of the parties and provoking of God’s most iust wrath, and sworde of vengeance. These and all such like pestilences, and occasions of vices, and sinnes to bee eschewed, and the offenders once monished, and not reforming, to bee punished at the discretion of the captaine and master, as appertaineth.

“§ 13. Item, that morning and evening prayer with other common services appointed by the King’s Majestie, and lawes of this Realme to be read and saide in every ship daily by the minister in the Admirall, and the marchant or some other person learned in other ships, and the Bible or paraphrases to be read devoutly and Christianly to God’s honour, and for his grace to be obtained and had by humble and heartie praier of the Navigants accordingly.”

On the 20th of May, 1553, the squadron of the expedition at ebb of the tide set sail from Ratcliffe, and slowly moved down the river, partly towed by the two boats which each ship took with her on the voyage.† The court was then at Greenwich, hardly a mile from Deptford where the vessels stopped to wait and take advantage of the ebb-tide the next morning.‡ As soon as the squadron was spied from Greenwich, the King’s Privy Council, which was in session, adjourned and the whole court was in motion ; not only the windows were filled with courtiers, Knights, and Ladies, but the walks of the towers likewise, whilst the more youthful raced to the

---

\* § 33.

† Ratcliffe is a place on the left bank of the Thames about two miles and a half above Greenwich.

‡ Deptford is on the right bank of the Thames a mile and a half below Ratcliffe.



river bank to give a nearer salute to the brothers who were leaving on the great voyage. As to the common people, they all left their houses ; no one not absolutely prevented would miss the spectacle and the salute. On the other hand, as soon as the ships were in view of the Royal Residence, the seamen all dressed for parade were in a twinkling on the deck or climbing the masts, and while from one side the artillery was discharged, mariners and merchants with all their might gave a last salute to their King and country ; from the banks of the river and the balconies and towers of the Royal Palace there was a continual burst of hurrahs and clapping of hands in encouragement and fervent auguries of good fortune on their voyage.\*

Alas ! a sad note disturbs the harmony of so many voices, and augurs ill for the fate awaiting the expedition. Edward VI, at whose name the ships made every hill and plain echo their shouts, was not with the rejoicing people ; he lay in his room, slowly wasting away, and died soon after. Fortunate in dying in his bed, comforted by the last words of his friends and relatives, whilst the most of those who saluted him soon followed him into the dominions of Death by the most cruel and fearful end imaginable.†

It is outside of our plan to follow the course of the expedition, but, as the work of Sebastian Cabot, it would leave a void in our narrative if we omitted it altogether. We accordingly give a few brief notices or rather mere mention of its course and end.

The fleet on June 23 lost sight of England and entered the wide sea driven on its northerly course by a fair wind ; but then the wind changed, and changed again, and continued to vary for many days, rendering the voyage very fatiguing by

\* Hakluyt, vol. i, p. 272.—From Richard Chancellor's narrative.

† Chancellor's narrative drawn up in Latin by Clement Adams, who had it from Chancellor's own mouth, puts the departure from Ratcliffe on May 20, whereas Willoughby's journal says it was the 10th of the month. But the variance is merely apparent, they both give substantially the same day, for Willoughby follows the old Calendar approved in 325 by the Nicene Council; Clement Adams regulates the date according to the Calendar as reformed under Pope Gregory XIII.

reason of the continual changes of the ships which became necessary in consequence. July 14 they discovered land to the east. The place showed some thirty huts, but not a living soul; perhaps the inhabitants had fled in fright on beholding the ships. Continuing on, they discovered a number of small islands, and on the 27th, they stopped at one of them and remained three days there, but they were unable to learn how far they were from the mainland. They were now at  $68^{\circ}$  of latitude. Departing on the 20th, they took to coasting along these islands till August 2, when they reached the shore to ascertain what place they had come to : they were now at  $70^{\circ}$ . A boat put out from the shore at sight of them and came to the ships, from which they learned that the place was a small island named Seynam, poor, with no other products than a little dried fish and fish-oil. As they wanted to reach Finmark,\* they asked for a pilot to guide them thither. They were told they could have one, but must wait for him till the next day. Then, being assured that the island had a good harbor, they started to enter it. But both sides of the entrance were very high, and the vessels had hardly reached the opening when so violent a wind suddenly sprang up that, to avoid being dashed on the rocks, they had to go about quickly and take to the open sea. But the wind was so fierce that to make their condition less desperate they had to take in all sails and trust their fortune to the control of the waves. The following night the fury of the wind increased, accompanied with so dense a fog that the ships lost all sight of each other. At midnight the *Bona Speranza* lost her boat, a serious loss in the sort of navigation she had to make. Daylight dispelled the fog, and when the ships looked for one another in the morning, the *Bona Speranza* and *Confidentia* were found safe, but the *Edward Bonaventure* had disappeared. This separation occurred in the neighborhood of Cape North.

The voyage after this was one continual struggle against storms : the ships were driven furiously to one side or the

---

\* Finmark, *i. e.* Marshes or Borders of the Finns, the most northerly province of Norway : its most northern point is Cape North.

other, often obliged to go over the same course a second time, in constant fear for the present and dread of the future. What became of the *Bona Spernaza* is not known ; all trace of her was lost. The *Confidentia* was able to gain a harbor on the 18th of September, and as the season was growing severer, and snows and frosts heralded the approach of Winter's horrors, they determined to stay there and wait for the favorable season. They sent out bands of explorers in every direction to ascertain whether the land was inhabited, but after much wandering around and penetrating as far as four days' journey into the interior, they all returned saying they had not been successful.

There in that harbor in the Spring of the following year they were all found dead. We know not what they suffered, and perhaps our imagination is impotent to conceive of all the horrors they endured. The details of their course were found recorded in the Journal of the voyage written in his own hand by Sir Hugh Willoughby. It begins in this way : " The voyage intended for the discoverie of Catay, and divers other regions, dominions, Islands, and places unknown, set forth by the right worshipful master Sebastian Cabota . . . . . " \*

The Journal ends with the 18th of September, the day when they took refuge in the harbor ; but it is likely that the greater part of them were still alive in the following January, for under date of that month was found the Will of Gabriel Willoughby, a relative of Sir Hugh, and subscribed by Sir Hugh himself. †

Why did Sir Hugh write nothing more in his Journal after the 18th of September ? We are unable to answer. All we can conjecture with tolerable safety is that they all perished from cold : this was inferred from the appearance of their bodies.

This was the first notable step in the long journey that was to be made before the undertaking set on foot by the genius of Sebastian Cabot in 1553 was brought to a close in 1879, after

---

\* Hakluyt, i, p. 258.

† Hakluyt, i, 260 & s.

326 years of attempts and enormous labors ; before a ship leaving our shores triumphed over the dangers and terrors of the frozen seas and succeeded in reaching the seas of China.\*

King Edward expired a few days after Sir Hugh sailed.† He was succeeded on the throne by his sister Mary, daughter of Henry VIII and Katharine of Aragon. In the second year of Mary's reign, 1555, Richard Chancellor, commander of the *Edward Bonaventure*, returned. After several days of vain attempts to join his companions, he decided on continuing the voyage alone, undaunted by the excessive misfortunes endured; and so was the first European to reach Archangel in the White Sea.‡ Leaving his ship there, he went by land to Moscow to have an interview with the Tsar of Moscovy or Russia, and open direct relations of commerce between those countries and England,—a journey of fearful length considering the times, the country, and the people through which Chancellor had to pass. After an absence of two years, the intrepid explorer returned, and his arrival with favorable letters from Ivan Basilivich, Emperor of all the Russias, excited indescribable rejoicing not less in the commercial body than at court.§ Then was comprehended the great advantages England might gain through the company of merchant adventurers for her trade with Russia and China; and to assure and strengthen the company's continuance and activity, the government by charter of February 6, 1555, granted it the right of a corporation. The Act of Incorporation, recognizing that it was wholly the result of Sebastian Cabot's zeal and ability, not only confirmed his appointment by the company as governor, but conferred on him that office for life.|| The merchants on their part

---

\* The expedition of the *Vega*, a Scottish ship, directed by Nordenskiöld.

† He died July 6, 1553.

‡ [Of course, the author means the first European to reach there by way of the Atlantic and Arctic Oceans.—Translator.]

§ Hakluyt, i, p. 270 and s.

|| “ And in consideration that one Sebastian Cabota hath been the chiefest setter forth of this journey or voyage, therefore we make, ordeine and constitute him, the said Sebastian, to be the first and present Governour of the same fellowship and communitie by these presents, to have and enjoy the said office of Governour to him the said Sebastian Cabota, during his naturall life,

lost no time in fitting out another fleet of three ships, and supplying them with every thing useful, sent them on their voyage in the following May.\*

The pension granted Cabot by King Edward was renewed November 27 of this year. † Why this renewal, if that pension was, as we said, for life? Biddle, observing that in the order of renewal there was no mention made of the time that had elapsed since Edward's death, suspects that the pension had been withdrawn.‡ If that was the case, and I believe it was, it was doubtless owing to the rejoicing excited by Chancellor's return that the government felt forced to renew this pension for the services of the aged Cabot.

Chancellor, soon after his return, sailed again for Archangel bearing the reply of the English Monarch to the letter of the Russian Emperor. The next year, 1556, Stephen Burrough, master of Sir Hugh Willoughby's vessel on the late voyage, sailed with a small vessel to make further explorations of the passage sought for by the north-east seas. § He left a narrative of his voyage, and at its commencement there is a passage concerning Sebastian Cabot which shows with what loving anxiety and joyful ardor the venerable old man followed the first steps of the undertaking he had thought out and set on its way. Burrough's vessel was at Gravesend, and it was now the 27th of April, the eve of sailing. But it is best to give the account in his own words :

"The 27 April being Munday, the right worshipful Sebastian Cabota came aboard our Pinnesse at Gravesende, accompanied with divers Gentlemen and Gentlewomen, who after that they had viewed our Pinnesse, and tasted of such cheere as we could make them aboard, they went on shore, giving

---

without amoving or dismissing from the same roome." Hakluyt i, p. 299. V. App. lvii.

\* John Michiel, Venetian ambassador in England, mentions it in two dispatches, May 21 and November 4, 1555 (Files of Dispatches marked "Inghilterra," in the State Records at Venice). Rawdon Brown published an English translation of them in his *Calendar*, vol. vi, part i, pp. 76 and 238; and Luigi Pasi the original Italian in his work "I Navigatori al Polo Artico."

† Rymer, *Fœdera*, vol. xv, p. 427. See App. lviii.

‡ Biddle, *Memoir*, bk. i, ch. xxxv, p. 217.

§ Hakluyt, i, 306.

to our mariners right liberal rewards ; and the good olde Gentleman Master Cabota gave to the poore most liberall almes, wishing them to pray for the good fortune, and prosperous successe of the serchtkrist our Pinnesse. And then at thes signe of the Christopher, hee and his friends banketted, and made me and them that were in the company great cheere ; and for very joy that he had to see the towardness of our intended discovery, he intered into the dance himselve, amongst the rest of the young and lusty company ; which being ended, hee and his friend departed most gently, commending us to the Governance of Almighty God.”\*

Cabot was now near his 84th year. But the sight of the ship awoke in him all the spirits and enthusiasm of his youth, and in the midst of the bold young men who were marching to the longed-for battles of the winds and storms, he felt himself young again, and joined them in the dance to celebrate the opening of the new Campaign.

---

## CHAPTER XXV.

### *Sebastian Cabot's Death.*

AFTER the sailing of Stephen Burrough, it again grows dark around Cabot, and we approach the conclusion of his life with the painful conviction of finding there ingratitude. Biddle thought the cause of this ingratitude should be looked for in the religious change which took place in England when Queen Mary ascended the throne, and in the antipathy which she, a fervent Catholic, must feel towards those who had enjoyed the protection of her schismatical father and Protestant brother. But when Cabot came back to England, the separation from the Catholic Church was complete ;—neither before nor after had he ever taken any part

---

\* Hakluyt, vol. i, p. 306.

in religious or political questions ; his activity was exercised in a technical field where Catholics and non-Catholics took an equal interest, and the advancement of the English marine was a glory to tempt equally any king, and promised equal aid and benefit to his power.

On the contrary, the following considerations seem to me most just. Every new authority that obtains the government by a party contrary to that of the antecedent authority, is naturally inclined to pursue a course different from that of its predecessor, and to seek, from the necessity of its own preservation, support and alliances among the opponents of the fallen authority. Thus in our present case we see that the Steelyard which had received so powerful a blow from the late government, succeeds under Mary's government in loosening to some extent the close network of restrictions in which Cabot's circumspection had caused it to be enclosed. It would be childish to ask whether they hated Cabot heartily, and whether the small portion of life and freedom they had regained would be employed in revenging themselves on him. But there is also another fact to Cabot's damage, and a most serious one too. Queen Mary in 1554 gave her hand to Philip of Spain, son of Charles V. True, Philip's power in no wise extended to the government of England, but he could not fail to exercise a certain influence at court and on the Queen. The year before Charles V had again requested Cabot's return.\* Is it likely that Philip had forgotten his desertion of Spain and his constant refusal to go back ? And not having forgotten, that he passed it over entirely as though it had not occurred ? It seems hard to believe ; but granting that his generosity went so far, the powerful always have about them some who want to interpret their desires with an excess of zeal : and the secret and avowed agents of Spain in England would be too great an exception to the rule if, knowing the King's feelings in regard to Cabot, they had not yielded to the temptation of interpreting and anticipating his wishes.

The splendor which shone around Cabot's head on Rich-

---

\* See his letter to Queen Mary of September 9, 1553. App. xlviii.

ard Chancellor's return dispelled the thick mist his enemies had raised around him, and the government had first to recognize his merits by appointing him governor for life of the company of national merchants, and then to recognize his claims by confirming the pension assigned him by King Edward. But the interval between the dates of the two ordinances, from February 16 to November 27, 1555, shows if the government was ready to recognize his merits it was not so willing to acknowledge his claims. And I think it would not be hazarding a rash judgment to think that this second ordinance cost Cabot and his friends many steps and much labor.

But his enemies had too much the advantage of him at his advanced age ; and when the enthusiasm excited in his favor by Chancellor's return had been suffered to die out, they returned to the attack, and found means of striking him a sure blow. All had been got from him that could be ; nothing now remained but to wait the results of the new enterprise he had promoted. And for this his work was entirely useless. Other hands, other forces were necessary to push it forward. The worn-out tool is flung aside ; it is too rarely the case that the memory of service rendered causes it to be preserved as a glorious reminder of what it had been ; still more rarely where governments are concerned. It requires strong friendships, long rooted, and Cabot had always wanted the time to cultivate such : it needs the testimony of services rendered, speaking out and present in the benefits derived from them ; and for Cabot this testimony could only speak in the future.

Moreover I cannot regard it as a mere coincidence that Philip arrived in London May 20, 1557, and one week later, on the 27th, Cabot resigned his pension.\* We are not told why, but may guess the reason from the new ordinance signed two days after his resignation. That pension was not only of use to him, but it was likewise an honor as a glorious testimony to his merit. It would be absurd to suppose that

---

\* Rymer, vol. xv, p. 466.—See App. lix.



he renounced it freely of his own accord. If he was not absolutely forced to give it up, it is fair to imagine such and so great pressure to induce him to do so that the poor old man was powerless to resist. The new ordinance of May 29, renews in Cabot's favor the same assignment, but he shared with William Worthington.\* Probably Worthington was given him as an assistant in the discharge of the duties entrusted to him, which would be perfectly proper and natural at his very advanced age. But in dealing with a man like Cabot, to withdraw for this assistance a part of his pension is something more than shameful thrift in a government, not to mention that after the pension had been assigned to him for life, to cut it in halves was pure robbery.

At this point Biddle remarks that Hakluyt in his first work published in 1582, after citing the patent granted by Henry VII and the testimony of Ramusio, mentions Cabot's charts and discourses drawn or written in his own hand, and says they were then in William Worthington's possession.† The ingenious American connects this remark with the fact that Worthington was assigned as assistant to Cabot, and given half of his pension; and noting how greatly it was for Spain's interest to lay hands on these charts, and that after this mention by Hakluyt, both charts and manuscripts were lost to sight; raises the suspicion that Worthington repaid King Philip's bounty by lending himself to the base game of causing the charts to disappear.‡ And in another place coming back to the same suspicion, he says: "The facts disclosed may, perhaps, assist to account for the disappearance. It is obvious that such documents would be secured, at any price, by the Spanish Court, at the period of Hakluyt's publication, when English enterprise was scattering dismay amongst the

---

\* "Eidem Sebastiano et dilecto servienti Willielmo Worthington."—*Ibidem*.

† The whole passage will be given when we come to treat of Cabot's charts.

‡ "It may be sufficient here to say of William Worthington, that he is joined with Sebastian Cabot in the pension given by Philip and Mary on the 29th May, 1557. The probable fate of the Maps and Discourses will be considered on reaching the painful part of Cabot's personal history which belongs to this association."

Biddle, lib. i, cap. 4, p. 41.

Spanish possessions in America. The work of Hakluyt (six years before the Armada) shewed where they were to be found. The depositary of them was the very man who had been the object of Philip's bounty during his brief influence in England. Were they not bought up? There can be now only a conjecture on the subject, yet it seems to gather strength the more it is reflected on."\*

It cannot be denied that Biddle's inductive reasoning has a certain force; but I could not be induced by a mere induction to throw the blame of such infamous action on one who held most honorable offices in his own country. It may well be that Cabot's charts were taken to Spain, for Spain had an interest in their possession; but there were a thousand ways in which a crafty policy could get hold of them without Worthington personally lending himself to the shameful measure.

And here, since the course of our narrative has brought us where we must speak again of Cabot's charts, it will not be out of place to sum up such information as has reached us concerning them, the more so as one of the many mistakes in relation to Cabot is that he left no account of his voyages. † Of his charts, besides the copy still preserved in the National Library at Paris, there are records of a copy which Nathan Kochaf saw at Oxford in 1566; that engraved by Clement Adams and seen by Hakluyt in the Royal Palace at Westminster; ‡ another which Ortelius had before him when he composed his Atlas; § one owned by the Earl of Bedford and mentioned by Willes; || the one on which, according to Eden, Cabot had made a design of his exploration of the Plata; ¶

\* Biddle, cap. xxxv, p. 221.

† "Great surprise," says Biddle, "has been expressed that Cabot should have left no account of his voyages, and this circumstance has ever been urged against him as a matter of reproach." *Memoir* i. ch. iv. and he cites these words of Hugh Murray in his *Historical Account of North America*, vol. i, p. 66. "Sebastian with all his knowledge and in the course of a long life, never committed to writing any narrative of the voyage to North America."

‡ See ch. iii.

§ See ch. xii.

|| *Ibidem*.

¶ "From the mouth of the river Cabot sailed up the same into the lande for

and three which Cabot himself mentions in his letter to John de Samana, secretary to Charles V.\* Finally, there is one which Livy Sanudo had under his eyes, "a chart for sailing," he says, "carefully made by hand, and every point described by Cabot himself."† These charts, as we have seen, were also historical proofs of Cabot's voyages, owing to the descriptive legends they bore concerning his discoveries and voyages. Having spoken of them already as occasion required in the course of our narrative, further explanations are unnecessary here. Nor is it my design to make a special inquiry concerning the merit the chart of Cabot which is still left us, may have in Cartography. Any one desiring this may consult with profit the special works which treat of Cartography in the XV Century.‡

The last traces of charts drawn by Cabot's hand disappeared September 20, 1575. On that day, John Baptist Gesio directed a memorial to the King of Spain, Philip II, to recover an ancient colored chart on parchment, made by Sebastian Cabot, which he said was the property of the state, but being found among the books of John de Ovando, deceased, formerly President of the Council of the Indies, was now put up for sale at auction with Ovando's other books.§

But of all the rich works which I believe were due to his celebrated ability in cartography || there remains

the space of three hundred and fiftie leagues, as he wryteth in his own Carde."

Eden, *Decades*, fol. 316.

\* See App. xlii.

† *Geographia distincta in xii libri*, Venezia, 1588, p. 2.

‡ HARRISSE discusses it at great length in the work we have so often cited. *Jean et Sébastien Cabot*, p. 151. D'AVEZAC also treats it at some length in the *Revue Critique d'Histoire et de Littérature*. Premier Semestre, 1870, p. 268 and seq.

§ HARRISSE, p. 151.—"Tuvolo en su poder hasta su muerte el visitador y presidente del consejo de Indias Juan de Ovando. Así consta por memorial del cosmógrafo Juan Bautista Gesio al Rey fecha de Madrid y 20 de Setiembre de 1575, en donde dice, que en la almoneda de los libros de Ovando estaba un mapa antiguo de pergamino iluminado hecho por Sebastian Gaboto, y pide se recobre, porque le aseguran pertenece á S. M." (*Biblioteca del Escorial*). M. Ymenes de la Espada, *Relaciones geográficas de Indias*, Madrid, 1881, p. xxx, nota.

|| . . . . è cosi valente et pratico delle cose pertinenti alla navigazione et alla

to us only the copy preserved in the National Library at Paris. This is a large, colored map of the world, projected on a single ellipse 1.48 in width and 1.11 in height.\* It was found in Germany and bought for the National Library in Paris in 1844. It bears no date nor place of printing, but a Spanish inscription says it was extended in 1544 by Sebastian Cabot, Captain and Pilot-Major of Charles V.†

That besides the traces and notes of his voyages left on his charts, he had also written a descriptive account of them, we have certain knowledge from these words of Hakluyt's: "This much concerning Sebastian Cabot's discoverie may suffice for a present taste, but shortly God willing, shall out in print *All his own mappes and Discourses drawne and wrtten by himselfe*, which are in the custodie of the worshipful Master William Worthington, one of her Majesty's Pensioners, who (because so worthie monuments should not be buried in perpetual oblivion) is very willing to suffer them to be overseene and published in as good order as may be to the encouragement and benefite of our countrymen."‡

After the halving of his pension, we lose sight entirely of Sebastian Cabot, except a slight glance at him on his death-bed, assisted in his last moments by the true and kind Richard Eden. In the letter of dedication which Eden prefixed to his translation of a book by John Taisnerus,§ he relates

cosmografia, ch' in Spagna al presente non v'è un suo pari. . . . il quale sapeva far carte marine di sua mano et intendeva l' arte del navigare più ch' alcun altro."

Ramusio, vol. vii, p. 414.

—" . . . Sebastian Caboto . . . . era gran Cosmografo . . . ."

Herrera, Dec. iii, lib. x, cap. i.

\* [About 4 ft. 10 in. by 3 ft. 8 in.—Tr.]

† "Sebastian Caboto capitan y piloto mayor de la Sacra Cesarea Catolica Majestad del Imperador Don Carlos quinto deste nombre y Rey Nuestro Señor, hizo esta figura extensa en plano, anno del nascimiento de Nuestro Salvador Jesu Christo de MDXLIII annos."

‡ Hakluyt, in the Dedication to Sir Philip Sydney of his work. First edition, 1592.

§ The title of the book is:—"A very necessarie and profitable book concerning Navigation compiled in Latin by Joannes Taisnerus, etc. Translated into English by Richard Eden. Imprinted at London by Richard Jugge."

that Cabot on his death-bed "with a thin voice spoke of a divine revelation made to him of a new and infallible method of finding longitude, but he could not disclose it to any mortal." It is plain that Cabot's mind was wandering but the direction it took in his delirium, proves that his thoughts were constantly and intently searching to solve a problem which even to-day vexes the mind of scientists. As to the idea itself which his mind cherished in his dream, we have mentioned it in its place further back in this present chapter.

Sebastian Cabot, so far as we can judge from the portrait which is left of him, must have been tall, majestic, lean, with strongly-marked features, and animated expression. The rich dress in which Cabot is painted and the great chain around his neck and hanging down to his breast, are probably the emblems of his office as Governor of the Company of Merchant Adventurers. The Portrait was thought to be Holbein's, but this opinion has since been controverted. I know not, and it is not of any great interest for my work, which of the two sides is more likely right. In Purchas's time it was kept in the King's Privy Gallery at Whitehall, but afterwards passed into private hands, perhaps at the time of the scattering of objects of art in the royal palaces which took place after the death of Charles I.\* About the commencement of this century it came into the possession of the Harford Family of Bristol, from whom it was purchased in 1842 by Richard Biddle, author of the *Memoirs of Sebastian Cabot*, who hung it in his house at Pittsburgh, Pa., where he resided, and where it was destroyed by a fire in 1845.†

Of the disposition and habits of Sebastian Cabot we can collect no reminiscences, nor any special fact: but Ramusio's Anonymous relates with expansive praise his courtesy in receiving him, and answering his questions and complying with his wishes:‡ and his modesty and fairness are shown in the enthusiastic words in which, so famous by his

---

\* —Purchas, iv, p. 1812.—Biddle, Memoir etc. p. 323.

† D' Avezac, *Revue Critique*, p. 268.

‡ See App. xix.

own navigations and discoveries, he speaks of Christopher Columbus, and acknowledges that he obtained from him the first spark which kindled his ardor for discovery.\* But our best proof of what he was, not only of his great prudence of mind, but also of his goodness of heart, is in the instructions given to Sir Hugh Willoughby ; of which it is needless for us to speak further after what we have not long since said of them. That he was a profoundly religious man is proved not only by the minute instructions he gives Willoughby that the men of his expedition should be regular and punctual in fulfilling their duties towards God, but even more by the delirium of his last illness, when he recognized as a divine revelation his discovery of the declination of the magnetic needle. The mind at that time freed from all motive of policy or convenience, left wholly to itself, unconscious of its thoughts, invariably goes over and repeats again the thought which during life it had often entertained with a firm conviction.

We know nothing of when or where he died, nor even the spot where he was buried. England, wholly occupied in coursing the seas over which he had directed her, had no time to remember or mark the sepulchre of the man to whose powerful initiative she owes the wealth and power which have placed her among the foremost nations of the world. What is still worse, her historical literature, so rich in quantity and quality, has not a book in which his life and work are investigated and studied profoundly and at as great length as possible, although her writers have at times proclaimed his greatness and protested the gratitude due to him from the English nation. He was but a few years dead when a poet celebrating the navigations of Sir Humphrey Gilbert to North America, sang of that region :

“ Hanc tibi jamdudum primi invenere Britanni  
Tum cum magnanimus nostra in regione *Cabotus*  
Proximus a magno ostendit sua vela Columbo.” †

---

\* *Ibidem*.

† Stephen Parmenius, called Budaeus, from the city of Buda in Hungary, where he was born.—Hakluyt, iii, 176.

In the first half of the last century Campbell wrote : — “ If this worthy man had performed nothing more, his name ought surely to have been transmitted to future times with honour, since it clearly appears, that Newfoundland\* had been a source of riches and naval power to this nation, from the time it was discovered, as well as the first of our plantations ; so that with strict justice, it may be said of *Sebastian Cabot*, that he was the *Author of our Maritime Strength* and opened the way to those improvements which have rendered us so great, so eminent, so flourishing a people.” † And Barrow wrote in the beginning of the present century : “ *Sebastian Cabot* . . . By his knowledge and experience, his zeal and penetration, he not only was the means of extending the Foreign Commerce of England, but of keeping alive that spirit of enterprise, which even in his life-time, was crowned with success, and which ultimately led to the most happy results for the nation.” ‡

After these declarations repeated in sense, if not in words, by all the English writers who have had occasion to mention him, it must seem almost incredible that so wealthy a nation never thought of setting up a memorial which would serve to commemorate, not the name of Cabot, for that needs it not, but her own recognition of, and gratitude for, his work. “ He,” says Biddle, “ gave a Continent to England : yet no one can point to the few feet of earth she has allowed him in return.” §

---

\* Newfoundland, i. e. the whole of the new land discovered by the English in the northern part of America.—See ch. iv.

† *John Campbell's Lives of the Admirals*, art. Sebastian Cabot.

‡ *John Barrow's Chronological History of Voyages into the Arctic Regions*, London, 1818.

§ *Memoir*, p. 223.





## APPENDIX.

---

### I.

*Different ways in which the name Caboto is found written.*

I believe it would be hard to find another surname so altered and distorted in writing as that of Cabot. I give a sample here to satisfy the reader's curiosity.

A. *Gaboto*—"Diose a Gaboto titulo de Capitan General." Herrera, Dec. iv, lib. viii, cap. 12.

B. *Gavoto*—"Notifiquays un mandamiento da parte de señor Sebastian Gavoto." Diego Garcia, in his order to Captain Francis de Rojas.

C. *Cabota*—"Si aveva messo in fantasia Sebastiano Cabota . . . poter essere che qualche passo fosse nel mar settentrionale." In the *Raccolta* of G. B. Ramusio, 2nd Ed. 1866. vol. ii, p. 212.

D. *Cabot*—"Sébastien Cabot nomma pour commander. . . . dans le fort du S. Esprit Nuño de Lara." Charlevoix, *Hist. du Paraguay*, liv. i.

E. *Gabot*—"Il assembla quatre mille hommes . . . . dans un marais, qui était fort près de la Tour de Gabot. Id. 16.

F. *Gabato*—"This yeare one Sebastian Gabato . . . . caused the King to man . . . a shippe." Robert Fabian according to Stow's reading. 1631. p. 480.

G. *Cabotto*—"Di Giovanni e Sebastiano Cabotto." This is the title of a chapter in Placido Zurla's work *Sui Viaggiatori Veneziani*.

H. *Gavotta*—"Henry VII . . . extended his protection to the Venetian John Gavotta or Cabot." Dr. Lardner's *Cabinet Cyclopædia*, vol. ii, p. 136.

I. *Kabot*—"John Cabot or Gabot or Kabot would be attended . . ." M. Clifton in a note cited by Biddle. *Memoir*, p. 84.

K. *Shabot*—"Mr. Peckham had warrant for 100 L. for the transporting of one Shabot a Pilot of Hispain," extract from the minutes of the Privy Council of Edward VI, King of England.

L. *Babate*—"Elle (New France) fut découverte premièrement par Sébastien Babate Anglois." A. Thevet, *Singularitez de la France Antarctique*. Paris, 1558, fo. 148.

M. *Cabotte*—"The twentieth of May, by the encouragement of one Sebastian Cabotte three great ships . . . were sette forth." Stow, *Chronicles*, London, 1580, p. 1057.

N. *Caboto*, "The great . . . encourager of which voiage was Sebastian Caboto," Holinshed, *The Chronicle of Englande, Scotlande and Irelande*, 1557. ii. p. 714.

O. *Cabote*—"desirerions communiquer aucunes affaires. . . avec le Capitaine Cabote" . . . Letter of Charles V to Mary Tudor, Queen of England. *Foreign Calendars*, 1553—58, i. p. 10.

P. *Gabote*—"One Sebastian Gabote generall p[ilot] of the emperours Indias is presently in England." Dispatch of the English Ministers, 25 Nov. 1549 (Colton M. Galba, B. xii. fo. 124).

Q. *Cabott*—"paide . . . in . . . recompense of . . . labour conducting of Sebastian Cabott. 43 L. 4 S." Note of expenses reported in I. S. Brewer's *Calendar Domestic and Foreign*, iv. part i, p. 154.

Sebastian Cabot in his letter to John of Samano secretary to Charles V, signs himself Caboto with one t: this is the form most frequently met with in the letters that passed between the Council of Ten and their ambassadors in Spain and England in reference to the same Sebastian; and it is almost the only one found in the acts of the suit prosecuted against him in Spain. I have therefore preferred it, and the more so

because the other, Cabotto with double t, is easily explained as a slip of the tongue or pen [The usual English form Cabot is substituted for the author's Caboto in this translation—Tr.].

---

## II.

*Privilegium Civilitatis de intus et extra per habitationem Annorum  
XV, Aluisii Fontana, olim de pergamo.*

Nicolaus Tronus Dux Venetiarum etc. Universis et singulis tam amicis quam fidelibus, et tam praesentibus quam futuris, presens privilegium inspecturis, salutem et sincere dilectionis affectum.

Notum vobis fieri volumus per praesentem paginam, quod cum inter cetera, que in mente nostra revolvimus, attendamus precipue nostrorum subditorum et fidelium devotorum tractare propensius comoda et utilia salubriter procurare. Cum hoc excellentie nostre decus aspiciat et fidelium devotio utilius pertractata in nostrae fidelitatis et devotionis constantia ferventius solidetur, Duximus volentes beneficia recompensare pro meritis statuendum.

Quod quicumque annis XV vel inde supra Venetiis continue habitasset, factiones et onera nostri domini ipso tempore subeundo a modo civis et venetus noster esset : et citadinatus Venetiarum privilegio et alijs beneficiis, libertatibus et immunitatibus, quibus alii Veneti et cives nostri utuntur et gaudent, perpetuo et ubilibet congaudetur. Unde cum providus vir, Aluisius Fontana, olim de Pergamo, nunc habitator Venetiarum in contrata Sancti Iuliani, sicut legitimis et manifestis probationibus per provisos nostri Communis diligenter examinatis, nobis innotuit annis XV Venetiis continuam habitationem habuerit, erga nos et ducatum nostrum, fideliter et laudabiliter sub devotionis integritate se gerens ; et subiens continue factiones et onera nostri domini, digna remuneratione prosequentes, eundem ipsum Aluisium Fontana consiliorum et ordinamentorum nostrorum, necessaria

solemnitate servata, in venetum et civem nostrum de intus et extra, recepimus atque recipimus, et venetum et civem nostrum, de intus et extra, fecimus et facimus, et pro Veneto et cive nostro in Venetiis et extra, habere et tractare, ac haberi volumus, et ubique tractari. Ita quod singulis libertatibus, beneficiis et immunitatibus, quibus alii veneti et cives nostri de intus et extra utuntur et gaudent, idem Aluisius in Venetiis et extra, libere gaudeat de cetero et utatur. Intelligendo, quod per mare, et in fontico theotonicorum, seu cum thetonicis, mercari ; seu mercari facere non possit nisi de tanto quanto fecerit imprestita nostro dominio in anno. In cuius rei fidem et evidentiam plenior, presens privilegium fieri iussimus et bulla nostra plumbea pendente muniri.

Datum in nostro ducali Palatio, Anno Domini incarnationis millesimo quadringentesimo septuagesimo secundo, mensis Augusti die undecimo indictione Quinta.

Simile privilegium factum fuit provido viro Iohanni Iacobi qui fuit de pensauo nunc habitatori Venetiarum, tempore serenissimi principis domini Nicolai Marcelli Incliti ducis Venetiarum etc. sub bulla plumbea MCCCCLXXIII mensis Octubris die XXIII Indictione VII.

Simile privilegium factum fuit provido viro Martino Figini qui fuit de Mediolano habitatori Venetiarum tempore serenissimi Principis domini Nicolai Marcello MCCCCLXXIII die quarto Iulii Indictione VII.

Simile privilegium factum fuit provido viro Antonio Gulielmi Calderaio de Columbibus qui fuit de Balabio districtus Mediolani habitatori Venetiarum tempore serenissimi Principis domini Petri Mocenigo sub bulla plumbea MCCCCLXXV mensis maii die quinto Indictione Octava.

Simile privilegium factum fuit provido viro Iohanni Bartholomei de Brixia habitatori Venetiarum tempore serenissimi Principis Domini Nicolai Marcello MCCCCLXXIII die XVII Maii Indictione VII.

Simile privilegium factum fuit probo et prudenti viro Iohanni Pietro de Turco qui fuit de Navaria habitatori Venetiarum tempore serenissimi Principis Domini Ioannis Mocenigo die XXII<sup>do</sup> Augusti 1480.

Simile privilegium factum fuit Bartholomeo Antonii Casarolo die XVIII Augusti 1481.

Simile privilegium factum fuit Bernardo Bartholomei de Pergamo die 28 Septembris 1484.

Simile privilegium factum fuit Zacharie de panti de lodi die 28 Septembris 1484.

Simile privilegium factum fuit Benedicto Lancelloti fontana die 28 Septembris 1484.

Simile privilegium factum fuit Ioanni Sebastiano et Stefano fratribus die 28 Septembris 1484.

Simile privilegium factum fuit Raphaeli quondam Antoni de ardicionibus die 12 februari 1484.

Simile privilegium factum fuit M. Stefano Nicolai Aurifici bulla aurea die 26 februarii 1484.

Simile privilegium factum fuit Ioanni Caboto sub duce suprascripto 1476.\*

Simile privilegium factum fuit Dominico Ioanni de la Cizio sub die XVIII januari 1498.

Simile privilegium factum fuit Iacobo Deblandratis sub die XXVII julii 1500.

Simile privilegium factum fuit Io : Iacobo grimasco papiensi die 17 Augusti 1501. State Archives, Venezia, *Libro Privilegi*, t. ii, p. 53.

\*[Observing that some of these records are not in their chronological order, I wrote the Author to ascertain if there was not some mistake. Signor Tarducci wrote to the superintendent of the Frari Archives at Venice, Sig. F. Stefani, requesting him to compare the copy with the original.

He received the following reply, dated January 26, 1893.

"The chronological confusion is precisely, as you have remarked, due to the bad practice, if we choose to call it so, of the clerks of the ducal chancery, of leaving blank spaces for registrations which afterwards were not entered, perhaps from oversight, and which they subsequently made use of to insert much later acts.

"Such chronological confusion is also found in other registers of our archives, but it does not detract from the authenticity of the acts therein inserted.

"F. Stefani."

Translator.]

## III.

*Inscription on Sebastian Cabot's Planisphere (1544) on the first discovery in 1494.*

1. ACCORDING to the copy preserved in the National Library at Paris.

A. *Spanish*.—N. 8. Esa tierra fue descubierta por Ioan Caboto Veneciano, y Sebastian Caboto su hijo, anno del nacimiento de nuestro Salvador Jesu || Christo de M. CCCC. XCIII, a veinte y quatro de Junio, por la manana, ala qual pusieron nombre prima tierra vista, y a una isla grãde que || esta par de la dha tierra,\* le pusieron nombre sant Ioan, por aver sido descubierta el mismo dia la gente della andan vestidos depieles de animales, usan en sus guerras arcos, y flechas, lancas, y dardos, y unas porras de palo, y hondas. Es tierra muy steril, ay en ella muchos orsos blancos, y ciervos muy grãdes como cavallos y otras muchas animales y semeiantemente ay pescado infinito, sollos, salmoes, lenguados, muy grandes de vara enlargo y otros muchas diversidades de pescados, y la mayor multitud dellos se dizen baccalaos, y asi mismo ay enla dha tierra Halcones prietos cuomo cuervos Aquillas, Perdices, Pardillas, y otras muchas aves de diversas maneras.||

B. *Latin*.—Terram hanc olim nobis clausam, aperuit Ioannes Cabotus Venetus, necno Sebastianus Cabotus eius filius anno ab orbe redem =|| pto 1494 die vero 24 Julij (sic), hora 5 sub diluculo, quã terrã primã visam appellarunt, et Insulã quandã magnã ei oppositã, Insulã divi Io | annis nominarunt, quippe quae solemnì die festo divi Ioannis aperta fuit. Huius terrae incolae pellibus animalium induuntur, arcu

---

\* He seems to mean that the island was found on a line parallel to the main land : the Latin translation says, instead, that it was opposite. But the position of the island on the map agrees better with the original Spanish expression.

in bello, sa =|| gittis, hastis spiculis clavis ligneis, et fundis utuntur, sterilis incultaq tellus fuit, leonibus, ursis albis, procerisque cervis, piscibus innume—ris lupis scilicet, salmonibus, et ingentibus soleis, unius ulnae longitudine, alrisque diversis piscium generibus abundat, horum autem maxima copia || est, quos vulgus Bacallios appellat, ad haec insunt accipitres nigri corvorum similes, aquilae, perdicesque fusco colore aliaeque diversae volucres.

The Latin version given by Chytreus is identical with that of the copy at Paris, except that the latter has *Julii* by mistake, where Chytreus has correctly *Junii*.

II. According to the transcription of Hakluyt from the copy in the King's privy Gallery at Westminster, cut by Clement Adams.

Anno Domini 1494 (so in the first edition; the others have 1497) Joannes Cabotus Venetus, et illius filius eam terram fecerunt perviam, quam nullus prius adire ausus fuerit, die 24 Junii, circiter horam quintam bene mane.

Hanc autem appellavit Terram primum visam, credo quod ex mari in eam partem primum oculos injecerat.

Namque ex adverso sita est insula, eam appellavit insulam Divi Joannis, hac opinor ratione, quod aperta fuit eo die qui est sacer Divo Joanni Baptistae: \* Cuius incolae pelles animalium exuviasque ferarum pro indumentis habent, easque tanti faciunt, quanti nos vestes pretiosissimas, Cum bellum gerunt, utuntur arcu, sagittis, hastis, spiculis, clavis ligneis et fundis. Tellus sterilis est, neque ullos fructus affert, ex quo fit, ut ursis albo colore, et cervis inusitatae apud nos magnitudinis referta sit; piscibus abundat iisque sane magnis, quales sunt lupi marini et quos salmones vulgus appellat; soleae autem reperiuntur tam longae ut ulnae mensuram excedant. Imprimis autem magna est copia eorum piscium quos vulgari sermone vocant Bacallaos. Gignuntur in ea insula accipitres ita nigri, ut corvorum similitudinem mirum in modum exprimant, perdices autem et aquilae sunt nigri coloris. Hakluyt, vol. iii, p. 27.

---

\* For what follows see what was said in chapter iv, p. 59.

## IV.

*Petition of John Cabot to Henry VII King of England for privilege of Navigation for himself and his three sons.*

*Public Record Office* ( London ), Chancery Bill signed, sub anno 11 Henr. VII. No. 51.

Memorandum quod quinto die Marcii anno regni regis Henrici Septimi undecimo ista billa deliberata fuit domino Cancellario Anglie apud Westmonasterium exequenda.

To the Kyng our sovereigne lord.

Please it your highness of your moste noble and haboundant grace to graunt unto John Cabotto citizen of Venes, Lewes, Sebastyan and Sancto his sonneys your gracious lettres patentes under your grete seale in due forme to be made according to the tenour hereafter ensuyng. And they shall during their lyves pray to God for the prosperous continuance of your moste noble and royale astate long to enduer.

Rex omnibus ad quos &c. salutem, Notum sit et manifestum &c. as in the following.

## V.

*Letters Patent of King Henry VII to John Cabot and his three sons granting the privilege prayed for, March 5, 1496.*

( *Public Record Office*, London. French. Roll. sub anno 11mo Henr. VII. membran. 23. ) Henricus dei gratia rex Anglie et Francie et dominus Hibernie omnibus ad quos presentes litere nostre pervenerint, salutem.

Notum sit et manifestum quod dedimus et concessimus, ac per presentes damus et concedimus pro nobis et heredibus nostris dilectis nobis Iohanni Caboto civi Veneciarum, ac Lodovico, Sebastiano et Santio filiis dicti Iohannis, et eorum ac



cujuslibet eorum heredibus et deputatis plenam ac liberam auctoritatem, facultatem et potestatem navigandi ad omnes partes, regiones et sinus maris orientalis, occidentalis et septentrionalis, sub banneris, vexillis et insigniis nostris, cum quinque navibus sive navigiis cujuscumque portiturae et qualitatis existant, et cum tot et tantis nautis et hominibus quot et quantos in dictis navibus secum ducere voluerint, suis et eorum propriis sumptibus et expensis ad inveniendum, discoperiendum et investigandum quascumque insulas, patrias, regiones sive provincias gentilium et infidelium (quorumcumque), in quacumque parte mundi positas que Christianis omnibus ante hec tempora fuerint incognite.

Concessimus etiam eisdem et eorum cuilibet, eorumque et cujuslibet eorum heredibus et deputatis, ac licentiam dedimus ad affigendum predictas banneras nostras et insignia in quacumque villa, oppido, castra, insula seu terra firma a se noviter inventis. Et quod prenominati Johannes et filii ejusdem, seu heredes et eorundem deputati quascumque hujusmodi villas, castra, oppida et insulas a se inventas, que subjugari, occupari et possideri possint, subjugare, occupare et possidere valeant, tamquam vassalli nostri et gubernatores, locatenentes et deputati eorundem, dominium, titulum et jurisdictionem eorundem villarum, castrorum, oppidorum, insularum ac terre firme sic inventorum, nobis acquirendo. Ita tamen ut ex omnibus fructibus, proficuis, emolumentis, commodis, lucris et obventionibus, ex hujusmodi navigatione provenientiibus, prefatus Joannes et filii, ac heredes, et eorum deputati teneantur et sint obligati nobis, pro omni viagio suo, totiens quotiens ad portum nostrum Bristollie applicuerint, ad quem omnino applicare teneantur et sint astricti, deductis omnibus sumptibus et impensis necessariis per eosdem factis, quintam partem capitalis lucri facti, sive in mercibus, sive in pecuniis persolvere.

Dantes nos et concedentes eisdem suisque heredibus et deputatis, ut ab omni solutione custumarum omnium et singulorum bonorum ac mercium quas secum reportarint ab illis locis sic noviter inventis, liberi sint et immunes. Et insuper

dedimus et concessimus eisdem ac suis heredibus et deputatis, quod terre omnes firme, insule, ville, oppida, castra, et loca quaecumque a se inventa, quotquot ab eis inveniri contigerit, non possint ab aliis quibusvis nostris subditis frequentari sen visitari absque licentia predictorum Ioannis et ejus filiorum, suorumque deputatorum, sub pena amissionis tam navium quam bonorum omnium quorumcumque ad ea loca sic inventa navigare presumentium.

Volentes et strictissime mandantes omnibus et singulis nostris subditis, tam in terra quam in mare constitutis, ut prefato Ioanni et eius filiis ac deputatis, bonam assistentiam faciant, et tam in armandis navibus seu navigiis, quam in provisione commeatus et victualium pro sua pecunia emendorum, atque aliarum rerum sibi providendarum, pro dicta navigatione sumenda suos omnes favores et auxilia impartiant. In cuius rei testimonium has litteras nostras fieri fecimus patentes: teste me ipso apud westmonasterium quinto die Martii, &c.

---

## VI.

THE following despatch is in reply to one from Dr. Puebla to their Catholic Highnesses. Puebla's dispatch cannot be found, but its contents are clearly shown by what is said by the Spanish sovereigns in their reply.

*Copia de parrafro de minuta de carta de los Reyes catolicos al Doctor Puebla fecha en Tortosa à 28 de marzo de 1496.*

Public Records of Simancas. Capitulaciones con Inglaterra: Legajo ( a mass of loose papers ) 2º, fº, 16.

Quanto a lo que desis que alla es yda *uno como colon* para poner al Rey de ynglaterra en otro negocio como el de las yndias syn perjuysio de españa ni de portogal sy asy le acude a

el como a nosotros lo de las yndias bien librado estara crehemos que esto sera echadiso del Rey de francia por poner en esto la Rey de ynglaterra para le apartar de otros negocios, mirad que procureis que en esto ny en le semejante no Resciba engaño el Rey de ynglaterra que por quantas partes pudieren trabajaran los franceses de gelo hazer, y estas cosas semejantes son cosas muy yn ciertas y tales que para agora no conviene entender en ellas y tan bien mirad que aquellas .. \* no se puede entender en esto syn perjuicio nuestro o del Rey de portogal.

Harrisse, in communicating to Desimoni this dispatch, which with the exception of one sentence, was unpublished, adds: "Je n' ai plus la première phrase: *J'ai reçu votre lettre du 21 Janvier.*" Desimoni, *Intorno a Giovanni Caboto*, Genova, 1881.

---

## VII.

*Extract from an anonymous chronicle, part of Robert Cotton's collection in the British Museum, on the voyage of John Cabot in 1497.*

*In anno 13 Henr. VII.* This yere the Kyng at the besy request and supplication of a Straunger venisian, wich by a Coeart made hym self expert in knowyng of the world caused the Kyng to manne a ship w<sup>t</sup> vytaill and other necessairies for to seche an iland wheryn the said Straunger surmysed to be grete commodities: w<sup>t</sup> which ship by the Kynges grace so Rygged went 3 or 4 moo owte of Bristowe, the said Straunger beyng Conditor of the saide Flete, wheryn diuers merchautes as well of London as Bristow aventured goodes and sleight merchaundises, which departed from the West Cuntrey in the begynnyng of Somer, but to this present moneth came nevir Knowlege of their exployt.

(Ms. Cott. Vitellius, A. xiv. f. 173, British Museum.)

---

\* M. d' Avezac fills this space with the word *partes*.

## VIII.

*Extract from the Chronicle attributed to Robert Fabyan, according to Richard Hakluyt's reading.*

A note of Sebastian's Gabotes voyages of Discoverie, taken out of an old chronicle, written by Robert Fabyan, some time Alderman of London, which is in the custody of John Stowe, citizen, a diligent searcher and preserver of antiquities.

This yere the King (by meanes of a Venetian, which  

In the 13 yere of King Henrie the VII, 1498.	made himselfe very expert and cunning in Knowledge of the circuit of the worlde, and ilands of the same as by a carde, and other demonstrations reasonable hee shewed) caused to man and victuall a shippe at Bristow to search for an ilande, which hee saide hee Knewe wel was riche, and replenished with riche commodities. Which ship thus manned and victualled at the Kinges cost, divers marchants of London ventured in her small stockes, being in her, as chiefe Patrone, the said Venetian. And in the company of the said shippe sayled also out of <table border="0" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: 30%; vertical-align: top;">           Bristow.         </td> <td style="padding: 2px; vertical-align: top;">           Bristowe, three or foure small ships, fraught with            sleight and grosse merchandizes as course cloth,            Caps, laces, points and other trifles, and so departed from  <table border="0" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: 30%; vertical-align: top;">           William Purchas            Maior of London.         </td> <td style="padding: 2px; vertical-align: top;">           Bristowe in the beginning of May : of whom            in this Maior's time returned no tidings.         </td> </tr> </table> </td> </tr> </table>	Bristow.	Bristowe, three or foure small ships, fraught with sleight and grosse merchandizes as course cloth, Caps, laces, points and other trifles, and so departed from <table border="0" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: 30%; vertical-align: top;">           William Purchas            Maior of London.         </td> <td style="padding: 2px; vertical-align: top;">           Bristowe in the beginning of May : of whom            in this Maior's time returned no tidings.         </td> </tr> </table>	William Purchas Maior of London.	Bristowe in the beginning of May : of whom in this Maior's time returned no tidings.
Bristow.	Bristowe, three or foure small ships, fraught with sleight and grosse merchandizes as course cloth, Caps, laces, points and other trifles, and so departed from <table border="0" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: 30%; vertical-align: top;">           William Purchas            Maior of London.         </td> <td style="padding: 2px; vertical-align: top;">           Bristowe in the beginning of May : of whom            in this Maior's time returned no tidings.         </td> </tr> </table>	William Purchas Maior of London.	Bristowe in the beginning of May : of whom in this Maior's time returned no tidings.		
William Purchas Maior of London.	Bristowe in the beginning of May : of whom in this Maior's time returned no tidings.				

(Hakluyt, *Divers voyages touching the discourie of America*. London, 1582, in 4<sup>to</sup>.)

## IX.

*The same extract according to John Stowe's reading.*

*In anno 14 Henr. VII.\** This yeaere one Sebastian Gabato a genoas sonne borne in Bristow professing himselfe to

---

\* The number 14 is an error ; it should be 13, as Hakluyt puts it, and also Anonymous in the Cottonian collection.

be experte in knowledge of the circuit of the worlde and Ilandes of the same, as by his Charts and other reasonable demonstrations he shewed, caused the King to man and victual a shippe at Bristow to search for an Ilande wiche he Knewe to be replenished with rich commodities : in the ship diverse merchauntes of London adventured smal stockes, and in the company of this shippe, sayled also out of Bristow three or foure smal shippes fraught with slight and grosse wares as course cloth, Caps, Laces, points and such other.

(Annals or a great Chronicle of England begun by I. Stow, continued by Edm. Howes, London, 1631. p. 480.)

Stow follows this extract with this other taken from Sir Humphrey Gilbert's Discourse *For a new Passage to Cataia*.

Sir Humphrey Gilbert Knight in his booke intituled a discoverie for a new passage to Cataia writeth thus, Sebastian Gabato, by hys personal experience and travaile hath set forth and discribed this passage in his Chartes, wiche are yet to be seene in y<sup>e</sup> queenes Maiestes privie Gallerie, at White Hall, who was sent to make this discoverie by King Henrie the seventh, and entered the same fret, affirming y<sup>t</sup> he sayled very far westward wyth a quarter of the North on the Northside of *Terra de Labrador*, the eleventh of June, until he came to the septentrional latitude of  $67\frac{1}{2}$  degrees, and finding the seas stil open, sayd, y<sup>t</sup> he might and would have gone to Cataia if the inimitie of the Maister and Mariners had not bene.

---

## X.

*Extracts from accounts of the privy purse of Henry VII.* (from the M S. of the British Museum, *Additional 7099*, printed in the *Excerpta Historica, or Illustrations of English History*, published by S. Bentley, London, 1831.)

—Fol. 41 (anno) 12 Henric VII, 1497.

“August 10. To hym that founde the new Isle, L. 10.” (p. 113.)

—Fol. 45, 12 Hen. VII, 1498.

“March 22. To Lanslot Thirkill of London upon a Prest for his shipp going towards the new Ilande, L. 20.”

—“Item delivered to Launcelot Thirkill going towards the new Ile in Prest, L. 20.”

“April 1st. Item to Thomas Bradley and Launcelot Thirkill going to the new Isle, L. 30.”

—“To John Carter going to the newe Ile in reward, 40 s.”  
(pp. 116, 117.)

## XI.

*Copia de uno capitolo scrive in una letera Sier Lorenzo Pasqualigo di Sier Filippo, di Londra adi 23 agosto, a Sier Alvisè e Francesco Pasqualigo suo fradeli Venetia, ricevuta adi 23. Settembre 1497.*

“L’e venuto sto nostro Venetiano che ando con uno navilio de Bristo a trovar ixole nove, e dice haver trovato lige 700 lontam de qui Teraferma, ze el paexe del gram cam, e che andato per la costa lige 300, e che desmontato e non a visto persona alguna, ma a portato qui al re certi lazi ch’era tesi per prender salvadexine, e uno ago da far rede e a trovato certi albori tagiati, si che per questo iudicha che ze persone. Vene in mare per dubito,\* et e stato mexi tri sul viazo e questo e certo, e al tornar aldreto a visto do ixole ma non ha voluto desender per non perder tempo che la vituaria li mancava. Sto re ne habuto grande piacer e dise che le aque e stanche e non hano corso come qui. El re li ha promesso a tempo novo navil X e armati come lui vorà ed ali dato tutti i presonieri da traditori in fuora che vadano con lui come lui a richiesto e ali dato danari fazi bona ziera fino a quel tempo e con so moier venitiana e con so fioli a Bristo. El qual se chiama Zuam Talbot,† e chiamasi el gran ammirante e vienli fato

\* It seems that he means to say : “in the belief that the country was inhabited he returned to his ship *per dubito*, i. e. *doubting* of his reception by the natives.”

† “I have no doubt that we should read Cabot, the more so as this name is altered to Cabot in the later pages of the text of Sanudo. This is further

grande honor e va vestido de seda e sti Inglexi li vano driedo a mo pazi e pur ne volese tanti quanti navrebbe con lui e etiam molti de nostri furfanti. Sto inventor de queste cose a impiantato suli terreni a trovato una gran ✚ con una bandiera de Ingeltera e una de san Marcho per essere lui Venetiano, si che el nostro confalone se stese molto in quà. ”

(Marin Sanudo. *Diarii*. vol. i, p. 806. Venezia, 1879.)

---

## XII.

*Extract from a letter of Raimondo da Soncino, Ambassador of the Duke of Milan to the Court of Henry VII. (Archivii Sforza Milano.)*

Rawdon Brown published it in English in his *Calendar &c.*, vol. iii, p 260, n. 750. The original in the State archives of Milan cannot be found : H. HARRISSE has published the text as in the original, as it appears from the copy which Rawdon Brown got from the Public Record Office. It runs thus :

*Londra, 24 Agosto, 1497.*— Item la Magesta de Re sono mesi passate havia mandato uno Veneciano el qual e molto bono marinare e a bona scientia de trovare insule nove, e ritornato a salvamento et a ritrovato due insule nove grandissime et fructiffere et etiam trovato le septe citade lontane da l' insula de Ingilterra lege 400 per lo camino de ponente : la Maesta de Re questo primo bono tempo gli vole mandare XV in XX navili.

H. HARRISSE, *Jean et Sébastien Cabot*, p. 323.

---

justified by note 74 on page 217 of vol. i of Rawdon Brown's work. On the Life and works of Marin Sanudo." L. PASINI, *I Navigatori al Polo Artico*, p.19.

## XIII.

*Second Letter of Raimondo da Soncino* (Archivio di Stato in Milano, Potenze Estere, Inghilterra, 1497, dicembre).

18 *Decembre* 1497.— Illustrissimo et excellentissimo Signor mio. Forsi che tra tante occupatione V. Ex. non li sarà molesto intendere come questa Maestà ha guadagnato una parte de Asia senza colpo de spada. In questo regno è uno popolare Venetiano chiamato messer Zoanne Caboto de gentile ingenio, peritissimo della navigatione, el qual visto che li Serenissimi Re prima del Portugallo poi de Spagna hanno occupato isole incognite, delibera fare uno simile acquisto per dicta Maestà. Ed impetrato privilegj regij, che lutile dominio de quanto el trovasse fosse suo, purchè lo diretto se reserva alla Corona, cum uno piccolo naviglio e XVIII persone se pose ala fortuna, et partitosi da Bristo porto occidentale de questo regno et passato Ibernia più occidentale, e poi **alzatosi** verso el septentrione, comencio ad navigare ale parte orientale, lassandosi (fra qualche giorni) la tramontana ad mano drita, et havendo assai errato, infine capitoe in terra ferma, dove posto la bandera regia, et tolto la possessione per questa Alteza, et preso certi segnali, se ne ritornato. Al ditto messer Zoanne, come alienigena et povero non saria creduto, se li compagni chi sono quasi tutti inglesi et da Bristo non testificassero cio che lui dice esser vero. Esso messer Zoanne ha la descriptione del mondo in una carta, et anche in una sphaera solida che lui ha fatto, et demonstra dove é capitato, et andando verso el levante ha passato assai el paese del Tanais. Et dicono che la è terra optima et temperata, et estimanno que vi nasca el brasilio et le sete, et affermanno che quello mare è coperto de pessi li quali se prendenno non solo cum la rete, ma cum le ciste, essendoli alligato uno saxo ad ciò che la cista se impozi in lagua, et questo io l'ho oldito narrare al dicto messer Ioanne.

Et ditti Inglesi suoi compagni dicono che portaranno tanti



pessi che questo regno no haverà più bisogno de Islanda, del quale paese viene una grandissima mercantia de pessi che si chiamano stockfisse. Ma messer Zoanne ha posto l' animo ad maggior cosa perche pensa, da quello loco occupato andarsene sempre a Riva Riva più verso el Levante, tanto chel sia al opposto de una Isola da lui chiamata Cipango, posta in la regione equinoctiale, dove crede che nascono tutte le speciarie del mundo et anche le gioie, et dice che altre volte esso è stato alla Meccha, dove per caravane de lontani paesi sono portate le speciarie, et domandati quelli che le portano, dove nascono ditte speciarie, respondendo che non sanno, ma che venghono cum questa mercantia da lontani paesi ad casa sua altre caravane, le quale ancora dicono che ad loro sono portate da altre remote regioni. Et fa questo argomento che se li orientali affermano ali meridionali che queste cose venghono lontano da loro, et così da mano in mano, presupposta la rotundità della terra, è necessario che li ultimi le tolliano al septentrione verso l' occidente. Et dicello per modo che non me constando più como costa, ancora io lo credo. Et che è maggior cosa questa maestà che è savia et non prodiga, ancora lei li presta qualche fede, perche da poi chel è tornato, li dà assai bona provisione come esso messer Zoanne me dice. Et a tempo novo se dice che la Maestà prefata armarà alcuni naviglij, et ultra li darà tutti li malfattori et anderano in quello paese ad fare una colonia, mediante la quale sperano de fare in Londres maggior fondaco de speciarie che sia in Alexandria, et li principali dell' impresa sono de Bristo, grandi marinari li quali hora che sanno dove andare, dicono che la non è navigatione de più che XV giorni, ne hanno mai fortuna come abandonano Ibernia. Ho ancora parlato cum uno Borgognone compagno di mess. Zoanne chi afferma tutto et vole tornarci perchè lo armirante (che già messer Zoanne così se intitula) li ha donato una Isola; et ne ha donato una altra ad un suo barbiere da castione genovese, et intrambi se reputanno conti, ne monsignor L' Armirante se estima manco de principe. Credo ancora andarano cum questo passaggio alcun poveri frati Italiani li quali tutti hanno promissione de Vescovati. Et per essere io fatto amico de L'armirante,

quando volessi andarvi, haverei uno Archivescovato, ma ho pensato chel sia più sicura cosa li beneficij quali V. Ex. me ha reservati, et perhò supplico che quando vacassero in mia absentia la me faccia dare la possessione, ordenando fra questo meglio dove bisogna, che non me siano tolti da altri, li quali per essere presenti possono essere più diligenti di me, el quale sono redutto in questo paese ad mangiare ogni pasto de x o xii vivande, et stare tre hore ad tavola per volta ogni giorno due volte per amore de' Vostra Excellentia. A la quale humilmente me recomando.

Londonie, xviii Decem. 1497.

Excellentie Vestre,

Humillimus Servus,

Raimundus.

#### XIV.

*Second Letter Patent of the King of England to John Cabot (1498, 3 February).*

( Public Record office, Chancery, signed Bill, sub anno 13 Henr. VII. no. 6 ).

Memorandum quod tertio die februarii anno regni regis Henrici Septimi XIII ista Billa deliberata fuit domino Cancellario Anglie apud Westmonasterium exequenda.

To the Kynge.

Please it your Highnesse, of your moste noble and abundant grace to graunte to John Kabotto, Veneciane your gracious lettres patentes in due forme to be made accordyng to the tenor hereafter ensuyng, and hy shall continually praye to God for the preservation of your moste noble and royale astate longe to endure.

H. R. ( Henricus Rex. ).

To all men to whom theis Presentis Shall come send Greeting Knowe ye that we of our Grace especiall, and for dyvers causis us movyng, We have geven and graunten and by theis Presentis geve and graunte to our well beloved John Kabotto,

Venician, sufficiente auctorite and power, that he, by hym his Deputie or Deputies sufficient, may take at his pleasure VI Englisshe shippes in any Porte or Portes or other place within this our Realme of England or obeinsauce to that, and if the said shippes be of the bourdeyn of CC. tonnes or under, with their appareil requisite and necessarie for the safe conduct of the said shippes, and theym convey and lede to the Lande and Iles of late founde by the seid John in oure name and by oure coumandement, payng for theym and every of theym as and if we should in or for our owen cause paye and noon otherwise.

And that the seid John by hym his Deputie or Deputies sufficiente maye take and receyve into the seid shippes and every of theym all suche maisters, maryners, pages, and our subjects, as of theyr owen free wille woll goo and passe with hym in the same shippes to the seid Lande or Iles withoute any impedymente lett or perturbatione of any of our officeis or ministress or subjectes whatsoever they be by theym to the seid subjectes or any of theym passing with the seid John in the seid shippes to the seid Lande or Iles to be doon or suffer to be doon or attempted. Yeving in commaundement to all and every our officers ministres and subjectes seyng or heryng theis our lettres patents, withoute anye ferther commaundement by us to theym or any of theym to be geven, to perfourme and socour the seid John, his Deputie and all our seid subjectes to passynge with him according to the tenor of theis our lettres patentis. Any Statute, acte or ordenaunce to the contrarye made or to be made in any wise notwithstanding.

---

XV.

*Letter of Dr. Puebla to the Catholic Kings, Ferdinand and Isabella (1498).*

“ El Rey de Inglaterra embia cinco naos armadas con otro genoves como colono a buscar la Isla de Brasil y las vicin-

idades,\* fueron proveydos por un año. Dicen que seran venidos para al el Septiembre. Vista la derrota que llevan allo que lo que buscan es lo que Vuestras Altezas poseen. El rey meha hablado algunas veces subrello espera haver muy gran interesse. Creo que no hay de aqui alla CCCC leguas.”

Extracted from Bergenroth's charts preserved in the Public Record Office at London, on the copy which he drew from the original in the archives of Simancas. It is undated but from its contents must have little preceded the following letter from Ayala.

---

## XVI.

*Letter of Prothonotary Pedro de Ayala to the Catholic Kings  
(25 July, 1498).*

“ Bien creo, vuestras altezas an oido, como el Rey de Inglaterra ha fecho armada para descubrir ciertas islas y tierra firme que le han certificado hallaron ciertos que de Bristol armaron año passado para lo mismo. Yo he visto la carta que ha fecho el inventador que es otro genoves como Colon que ha estado en Sevilla y en Lisbona procurando haver quien le ayudasse a esta invencion. Los de Bristol, ha siete año que cada año an armado dos, tres, cuatro caravelas para ir a buscar la isla de Brasil y las siete ciudades con la fantasia deste Ginoves. El Rey determino de enbiar porque el año passado le truxo certenidad que havian hallado tierra. Del armada que hizo que fueron cinco naos fueron avitallados por un año. Ha venido nueva la una en que iva un otro Fai ( sic pro Fray ?) Buil aporto en Irlanda con gran tormento rotto el navio.

“El ginoves tiro su camino. Yo, vista la derrota que llevan y la cantidad del camino hallo que es lo que han hallado o buscan lo que Vuestras Altezas poseen, porque es al cabo

---

\* Desimoni suspects that *vicinidades* in the original should be *septe citades*, *Intorno a Giovanni Caboto*, Pref. p. 15. I am of his opinion.

que a Vuestras Altezas capo por la convencion con Portugal. Sperate seran venidos para el setiembre. Hago lo saber a Vuestras Altezas. El Rey de Ynglaterra me ha hablado algunas vezes sobre ello. Spero aver muy gran interesse\* Creo no ay quatrocientos leguas. Yo le dixi, creya eran las halladas por Vuestras Altezas, y aun le dia la mia razon no lo querria. Porque creo V. A. ya tendran aviso de todo lo y asy mismo al carta o mapa mundi que este ha fecho, yo no la envio agora, que aqui la ay, y a mi ver bien falsa por dar a entender, no son de las islas dichas."

(Simancas, *Estado. Tradado con Inglaterra. Legajo 2.*)

---

## XVII.

### *Accounts of Payments to Sebastian Cabot in Spain.*

A. En 6 Marzo 1514 : se dan a Sebast. Cabot 50 ducados en cuenta del salario que se le ha de dar, con que fuese a la corte a consultar con S. A. las cosas del viaje que ha de llevar a descubrir. . . . 18750.

B. Cedula del 26 Marzo 1514. Supone recibido Capitan para las cosas de mar a Sebast. Caboto Ingles con 50,000 i se manda que por quanto estav a aderezando cosa de su casa i hacienda para venirze, le paguen enteramente el salario desde que fue recibido hasta que vino i se presentò.

---

\* It is thus in the document according to the copy which Bergenroth (Calendars. vol. i, p. 176—177. n. 210) obtained from the Simancas records, and the words would mean "I hope for a very great profit," but no sense can be made of that. Reumont (*Archivio Storico Italiano*, t. VI, Anno 1880, p. 416), to make sense, joined this sentence with the preceding, and explained it thus: "I write these details, the king having often spoken to me of them, believing that your Highnesses would feel great interest in them." But the only change needed is to put the third person *spera* for the first *spero*. In the text of my narrative I have proved that Ayala's letter traced after Puebla's, and the latter has "espera haver muy gran interesse;" that is, the King of England has several times spoken to me about it and "he hopes to derive great profit from it."

C. En 7 April se le libraron 13,637½ mrs a cumplimiento de 76,637½ de su quitacion de Capitan de S. A. desde 20 Octubre 512 hasta fin de April 514, a razon de 50,000 por año. En Londres havia recibido de D. Luis Carros Embajador 44,250. En 11 may se le libro un tercio adelantado de su salario por estar gastado de su venida de Londres, i haver enbiado a traer su muger. (Mss. of Muñoz, fol. 519.)

1515

D. En 30 Agosto a Seb. Caboto Capitan de mar 40,267½ mrs; por Cedula Real para que se le pagase el salario de 9. meses i 20 dias que se le dejaron de pagar el año que fue recibido a dicho officio con salario de 50,000, Ademas sin ½ desto año : 16,666.

E. Nombranse este año Pilotos de S. A. con sueldo Solis mayor—Seb. Cabot—Andres de S Martin—Iuan Vespuche—Iuan Serrano—Andres Garcia de Niño—Francisco Coto—Francisco de Torres —Vasco Gallego (Muñoz M.S.)

1519

Pilotos de Rei. Mayo 6.

F.—A Andres de San Martin, Francisco de Soto, Iuan Serrano, a cada 10,000 por el ½ de sus salarios—a Sebastian Gabot, Capitan e Piloto mayor, 25,000 por ½ de su salario.

—A Andres Niño, Vasco Gallego, Iuan Rodriguez de Mafra, Estevan Gomez, Iuan Vespuche, Francisco de Torres, Pilotos de S. A. los ½ de sus salarios.

[Cuenta de Dr. Sancho de Matrenzo, Tesorero de la Casa de Sevilla, 515—19. Muñoz M.S.]

---

## XVIII.

*Narrative of Peter Martyr of Anghiera, of Sebastian Cabot's voyages to the North.*

Scrutatus est eas glaciales oras Sebastianus quidam Cabotus genere Venetus, sed a parentibus in Britanniam insulam tendentibus (uti moris est Venetorum, qui commercii

causa terrarum omnium sunt hospites) transportatus pene infans. Duo is sibi navigia propria pecunia in Britannia ipsa instruxit, et primo tendens cum hominibus tercentum ad septentrionem, donec etiam Julio mense vastas repererit glaciales moles pelago natantes, et lucem fere perpetuam, tellure tamen libera gelu liquefacto. Quare coactus fuit, ut ait, vela vertere et occidentem sequi : tetenditque tamen ad meridiem, littore sese incurvante, et Herculei fretus latitudinis fere gradus aequarit : ad occidentemque profectus tantum est, ut Cubam insulam a leva longitudine graduum pene parem habuerit. Is ea littora percurrens, quae Bacallaos appellavit, eosdem se reperisse aquarum, sed lenes, delapsus ad occidentem, ait, quas Castellani, meridionales suas regiones adnavigantes, inveniunt . . . . Bacallaos Cabottus ipse terras illas appellavit eo quod in eorum pelago tantam repererit magnorum quorundam piscium, tinnos aemulantium ; sic vocatorum ab indigenis, multitudinem, ut etiam illi navigia interdum retardarent. Earum regionum homines pellibus tantum coopertos reperiebat, rationis haudquaquam exspertes. Ursorum inesse regionibus copiam ingentem refert, qui et ipsi piscibus vescantur. Inter densa namque piscium illorum agmina sese immergunt ursi, et singulos singuli complexos, unguibusque inter squamas immisis in terram raptant et comedunt. Propterea minime noxios hominibus ursos esse ait. Oricalcum in plerisque locis se vidisse apud incolas praedicat. Familiarem habeo domi Cabotum ipsum et contubernalem interdum. Vocatus namque ex Britannia a rege nostro Catholico post Henrici majoris Britanniae regis mortem, concurialis noster est : expectatque in dies ut navigia sibi parentur, quibus arcanum hoc naturae latens iam tandem detegatur.\* Martio mense anni futuri MDXVI puto ad explorandum discessurum. Quae succedent tua Sanctitas† per me intelliget modo vivere detur. Ex Cas-

\*Arcanum hoc naturae latens, that is, the strong current of the waters of the sea towards the west, as the writer clearly expressed it just before, and not the passage to the north-west, as Tiraboschi understands it.—Placido Zurlo, *Di Marco Polo*, cap. ii, p. 180.

†Tua Sanctitas, that is, the supreme Pontiff of Rome, to whom Peter Martyr dedicated his Decades.

tellanis non desunt qui Cabotum primum fuisse Baccalorum repertorem negant, tantumque ad Occidentem tetendisse minime assentiuntur.

Petri Martyris ab Angleria, *De Rebus Oceanicis et Orbe novo*, Dec. iii, lib. vi. For the first three decades I have before me the edition of Giovanni Bebelio, Basel, 1533.—For the remainder, the edition of Paris, 1587.

---

## XIX.

### *Narrative of the anonymous author in Ramusio.*

Mi par convenevole di non lassare per modo alcuno, che io non racconti un grāde, et ammirabile ragionamento, che io udì questi mesi passati insieme coll' eccellente Architetto M. Michele da S. Michele, nell' ameno et dilettevole luogo dell' eccellente Messer Hieronimo Fracastoro detto Caphi, posto nel Veronese. . . . Il qual ragionamento non mi basta l'animo di poter scrivere così particolarmente com' io udì, perchè vi saria di bisogno altro ingegno, et altra memoria che non è la mia, pur mi sforzerò sommariamente, et come per capi di recitar quel che mi potro ricordare. In questo luogo di Caphi adunque essendo andati a visitar detto eccellente messer Hieronimo, lo trovammo accompagnato con un gentil' huomo, grandissimo philosopho et mathematico, che allhora gli mostrava uno instrumento fatto sopra un moto de cieli, trovato di nuovo, il nome del quale per suoi rispetti non si dice, et avendo tra loro disputato lungamente sopra questo stesso nuovo moto, per ricrearsi alquāto l'animo fecero portare una balla grande molto particolare di tutto il mondo, sopra la quale questo gentil' huomo cominciò a parlare dicendo. . .

Non sapete a questo proposito d' andare a trovar l' Indie pel vento di maestro, quel che fece già un vostro cittadino Venetiano, ch' è così valente et practico delle cose pertinenti alla navigazione et alla cosmographia, ch' in Spagna al presente non v' è un suo pari, et la sua virtù l' ha fatto preporre



a tutti li pilotti che navigano alle Indie occidentali, che senza sua licentia non possono far quell' essercitio, et per questo lo chiamano Pilotto maggiore, et rispondendo noi, che non lo sapevamo, continuò, dicendo, che ritrovandosi già alcuni anni nella città di Sivilia, et desiderando di saper qlle navigationi de Castigliani, gli fu detto, che v' era un grā valent' huomo Venetiano che havea 'l carico di quelle, nominato 'l Signor Sebastiano Caboto, il qual sapeva far carte marine di sua mano, et intendeva l' arte del navigare più ch' alcun altro. Subito volsi essere col detto, et lo trovai una gentilissima persona et cortese, chi mi fece gran carezze, et mostrommi molte cose, et fra l' altre un Mapamondo grande colle navigationi particolari si di Portoghesi, come di Castigliani, et mi disse che sendosi partito suo padre da Venetia già molti anni, et andato a stare ĩ Inghilterra a far mercantie lo menò seco nella città di Londra, ch' egli era assai giovane, non già però che non avesse imparato et lettere d' humanità et la sphaera. Morì il padre in quel tempo che venne nova che 'l signor Don Christoforo Colombo Genovese havea scoperta la costa dell' Indie, e se ne parlava grandemente per tutta la corte del Re Henrico VII, che allhora regnava, dicendosi che era stata cosa piuttosto divina che humana l' haver trovata quella via mai più saputa d' andare in Oriente, dove nascono le Spetie. Per il che mi nacque un desiderio grande, anzi un ardor nel core di voler fare anchora io qualche cosa segnalata, et sapendo per ragione della sphaera, che s' io navigassi per via del vento di maestro, haverei minor cammino a trovar l' Indie, subito feci intendere questo mio pensiero alla Maestà del Re, il quale fu molto contento, et mi armò due caravelle di tutto ciò che era di bisogno, *et fu del 1496\** nel principio della State, et cominciai a navigare verso maestro, pensando di non trovar terra se non quella dov' è il Cataio, et di la poi voltare verso le Indie; ma in capo di alquanti giorni la discopersi che correva verso tramontana, che mi fu d' infinito dispiacere, e pur an-

---

\*The first edition of 1550, also at Venice, by the heirs of Lucantonio Giunti, says: "mi armò due caravelle di tutto ciò che era di bisogno, *et fu, salvo il vero*, del 1496." p. 402.

dando dietro la costa per vedere se io poteva trovare qualche golfo che voltasse, non vi fu mai ordine, che andato sino a gradi cinquantasei sotto il nostro polo, vedendo che quivi la costa voltava verso levante, disperato di trovarlo, me ne tornai a dietro a riconoscere ancora la detta costa dalla parte verso l' equinoziale sempre con intenzione di trovar passaggio alle Indie, e venni sino a quella che chiamano al presente la Florida, et mancandomi già la vettovaglia, presi partito di ritornarmene in Inghilterra, dove giunto trovai grandissimi tumulti di popoli sollevati et della guerra in Scotia : nè più era in consideratione alcuna il navigare in queste parti, per il che me ne venni in Spagna al Re Catholico, et alla Regina Isabella, i quali avendo inteso ciò che io aveva fatto, mi raccolsero, et mi diedero buona provisione, facendomi navigar dietro la costa del Brasil, per volerla scoprire, sopra la qual trovato un grossissimo et larghissimo fiume, detto al presente della Plata, lo volsi navigare, et andai all' insù per quello più di secento leghe trovandolo sempre bellissimo et habitato da infiniti popoli, che per maraviglia correvano a vedermi, et in quello sboccavano tanti fiumi che non si potria credere. Feci poi molte altre navigationi, le quali pretermetto, et trovandomi alla fine vecchio volsi riposare essendosi allevati tanti pratici, et valenti marinari giovani, et hora me ne sto con questo carico che voi sapete, godendo il frutto delle mie fatiche. Questo è quanto io intesi dal signor Sebastian Caboto. Ramusio, *Delle Navigazioni et Viaggi*, Primo Volume, Ediz. seconda. Giunti, 1554. p. 414—415.

---

## XX.

### *Transfer of Sebastian Cabot's pension in favor of his wife.*

Cedula de Toledo 25 Octobre. Por quanto Caboto ha renunciado en Catalina Medrano su muger los 25,000 de su ayuda de costa, suplicando que como el los tenia por su vida, los goce ella por la suya della : por que si Dios fuese servido quel muriese en el viaje e armada que

agora hace por nuestro mandado i en nuestro servicio al descubrimiento de las islas de Tarsis e Ofir e al Catayo Oriental, tenga su muger eso para mantenerse. Asi se manda.

(Muñoz MS ; Indias, 1524—1526, 77. Est. 23, gr. fol. 165).

---

## XXI.

*Extract from the history of Francisco Lopez de Gomara on Sebastian Cabot's Voyage to the North-West.*

Qui en mas noticia traxo desta tierra fue Sebastian Gaboto Veneciano. El qual armo dos navios en Inglaterra do tratava desde pequeno, a costa del Rey Enrique Septimo, que desseava contratar en la especiera como hazia el rey de Portugal. Otros disen que a su costa, y que prometio al rey Enrique de ir por el norte al Catayo y traer de alla especias en menos tiempo que Portugueses por el sur. Yva tambien por saber que tierra eran las Indias para poblar. Llevo treientos hombres y camino la buelta de Islandia sobre cabo del Labrador, hasta se poner en cinquenta y ocho grados. Aunque el dize mucho mas contando como avia por el mes de julio tanto frio y pedaços de yelo que no oso passar mas adelante, y que los dias eran grandissimos y quasi sin noche y las noches muy claras. Es cierto que a sesenta grados son los dias de diez y ocho horas. Diendo pues Gabota la frialdad y estraneza de la tierra, dio la buelta hazia poniente y rehaziendose en los Baccalaos corrio la costa hastatreynta y ochos grados y tornose de alli a Inglaterra.

Historia General de las Indias, Çaragoça. 1552. Part I, cap. *De los Bacallaos.*

## XXII.

*Extract from the Treatise of Antonio Galvão on the same Voyage.*

No anno de 1496 achandose hum Venezeano por nome Sebastiano Gaboto em Inglaterra, et ouvindo nova de tam novo descubrimento como este era: et vendo em huma poma como estas jlhas acima ditas estano quasi em hum paralelo et altura et muyto mais perto de sua terra huma a outra que de Portugal nem Castella, o amostron a el Rey dom Anrique o septimo de que elle ficou tam satisfeito que mandou logo armar dous navios, partio na primavera com trezentos companheiros, fez seu caminho a Loeste a vista do terra, et quaranta et cinco graos d'altura da parte donorte, forano por ella ate sessenta onde os diam sam de dezoyto horas, et as noytes muy claras et serenas. Avia aqui muyta frialdade et ilhas de neve que nao achavam grandes regelos, do que tambem se arreceavam. E como daqui por dianta tornasse a costa ao levante, fizeramose na outra volta ao longo descobrindo toda a baya, rio, enseada, p'ra ver se passava da outra banda, et foram assi diminuindo n' altura ate trinta et oyto graos, donde se tornaram a Inglaterra. Outros querem dized que chegasse a ponta da Florida que esta em vinte cinco graos.

*Tratado que compós o nobre e notavel capitano Antonio Galvão. Lisboa, Joham de Barriera, 1563.*

## XXIII.

*Extract from Sir Humphrey Gilbert's Discourse.*

Forthermore, Sebastian Cabota by his personall experience and travell, hath set foorth, and described this passage in his Charts whiche are yet to be seene, in the Queenes Maiesties privie Gallerie, at Whiteall, who was sent to make this discoverie by King Henrie the seaventh, and entered the

same fret : affirming, that he sailed very far westward, with a quarter of the North, on the north side of Terra de Labrador the eleventh of Iune, until he came to the septentrional latitude of  $67\frac{1}{2}$  degrees and finding the seas still open, said, that he might, and would have gone to Cataia, if the mutinie of the Maister and Mariners had not ben.

(*A discourse of a Discoverie for a new Passage to Cataia*, London, 1576, in-4, sign. Diii).

---

## XXIV.

### *Extract from the Works of André Thevet.*

Depuis un Venitien entreprint ce voiage sur l' autorité d' Henry septiesme de ce nom Roy d' Angleterre, lequel passa iusque a soixante sept degres.

From the *gran Insulaire et Pilotage d' André Thevet Angoumoisins Cosmographe du Roy.* ms. in the National Library at Paris, French portion. N. 15. 452, t. I, f. 143.

Elle fut découverte primierement par Sebastian Babate (sic) Anglois lequel persuada au Roy d'Angleterre Henry septiesme qu'il iroit aisement par la au pais de Catay vers le Nort et par ce moyen trouveroit espiceries et autres choses aussi bien que le Roy de Portugal aux Indes, joint qu'il se proposoit aller au Peru et Amerique pour peupler le pais de nouveaux habitans et dresser la une Nouvelle Angleterre, ce que n'executa ; vray est qu'il mist bien trois cens hommes en terre du coste d'Irlande au Nort ou le froid fist mourir presque toute sa compagnie encore que ce fust au moys de Juillet. Depuis Jaques Quartier [ ainsi que luy mesme m'a recité ] fist deux fois le voyage en ce pays la, c'est à savoir l'an mil cinq cens trente quatre et mil cinq cens trente cinq.

*Singularitez de la France Antarctique.* Paris, 1558, in-4, cap. LXXIV, f. 148.

## XXV.

*Letter of the Council of Ten to Gaspar Contarini, Venetian Ambassador to Spain, 27 September, 1522.*

*Oratori nostro apud Caesaream et Cattolicam Maiestatem.*

Zonze l'altro giorno de qui uno Don hierolamo di Marin de Bucignolo Rhaguseo, quale venuto alla presentia delli Capi del Consiglio nostro di Dieci Disse esser sta mandato per uno Sebastian Cabotto, che dice esser di questa città nostra, et al presente habita in Sybilia, dove par habbi provvision da quella Cesarea et Cattolica Maestà per suo pedota major in le navigation del discoprir terre nove. Et per nome di quello referi quanto per la inserta deposition sua vederete, dalla quale ancorchè ne appari non poter prestare molta fede, pure per esser de la importantia le non havremmo dovuto rifiutare la oblation ne fa epso Sebastian de poter venir de qui alla presentia nostra, per dichiarirne quanto li va per mente in la materia propostane. Unde siamo sta contenti che el ditto Hierolamo li rescivi nel modo che per le sue incluse vederete ; volemo adunque et noi detti capi del Consiglio nostro dei Dieci ne commettemo, che cun ogni diligente ma cauta forma, provriasi di intender se il predetto Sabastian fusse in quella corte aut per venirli de breve, nel qual caso faciano venirlo ad voi, et consignarli dette lettere a lui dirrective, le quali per ogni bon respecto haveriamo fatto allegar ad altre indriciate al fidelissimo servitor vostro, che pur staranno in le presenti. Ne in lui dimonstrarete saper alcuna cosa di tal materia, nisi in caso che el se scoprisse cun voi, nel qual, siamo ben contenti li dichiariate el tuto, cun veder de sottrazer quel più potersi del sentimento suo, et quando vedesse el si movesse cun bon fondamento, et sensibile, lo conforterete ad venir di qui, perche non solum siamo volenti ch' el venga sicuramente, ma lo vederemo molto volentieri. Quando autem el non fusse di li in corte, et nunc per venirle, ma si ritrovasse in Sybilia, darete ogni opera di mandarli tutte lettere per via che siate sicuro le gel capitino

in mano propria. Demostrando a quello per cui le mandaste, che vi siano sta inviate da alcun vostro particular de qui, et di ogni successo ne darete aviso ad detti Capi del Consiglio nostro di Dieci. Demum havendo nui ricevuto novamente lettere dal capitano general de 5 dell' instante di Candia cun advisi de le cose da Rhodi, vi mandiamo juxta il solito li summarij, accio li comunichiate de more a quella Cesarea et Cattolica Maestà Magnifico Gran Cancellier, Reverendo Episcopo de Valenza, et altri che vi apparerano.

( Lecta universo Collegio).

Iuliano Gradonico C. C. ✝

Andreas Mudesco C. C. ✝

Dominicus Capelo C. C. ✝

Le ultime che habbiamo da voi sono di 14 del presente alle qual non *dovrete far alcuna risposta*.\*  
(Capi del Consiglio dei X. Lettere Sottoscritte, Filza N. 5, 1522).

---

## XXVI.

*Letter of Gaspar Contarini to the Senate of Venice, 31 December, 1522. (Lettere al Senato 1521-1525. It. Cl. VII, Cod. MIX della Biblioteca Marciana di Venezia.— Carte 281-283.)*

*Serenissime Princeps et Excellentissimi Domini.*

La terza vigilia di natale cum la debita riverentia mia ricevi le lettere di Vostra Serenità date fino adi 27 septembrio per le quali quella mi significa la expositione fatali da Hieronimo Ragusei per nome di Sebastian Caboto et commettemi che essendo qui a la Corte io li debba apresentar quella lettera et facendomi lui moto alcuno, che io li debba aprir il tuto et parendo le cose proposte da lui factibile che io lo exhorti a venir a li piedi di Vostra Serenità. Hor per dar executione a

---

\* Rawdon Brown's English translation has "to which you will perhaps receive no farther reply."

prefate lettere, feci dextramente intender se costui era a la Corte et inteso chel era qui, et la stantia sua, li mandai a dir che el secretario mio li haveva da dar una lettera inviatale da un suo amico et che volendo el se transferisse allo alloggiamento mio.

Costui inteso questo rispose a quel servitor mio che el veniria et cussi la vigilia di Natale venne al hora de disnar. Io ritiratomi con lui, li detti la lettera, lui la lesse et legiendola si mosse tutto di colore. Da poij letta, stete cussi un pocheto senza dirmi altro quasi sbigotito et dubio. Alhora io li dissi quando che el volesse risponder a dicte lettere over farne intender qualche cosa che el volesse che io scrivessi a chi me P havea inviata che io era prompto a farli aver bon recapito. Lui assicurato alhora me disse. Io già parlai a lo ambassator della Illustrissima Signoria in Ingelterra \* per la affectione che io ho a la patria cum queste terre novamente trovate de le quale io ho modo di dar gran utile a quella terra, et hora di questo mi vien scripto, come dovete saper anchor vuj, ma vi prego quanto posso che la cosa sij secreta perche a me anderebbe la vita. Io alhora li dissi che io sapeva il tutto molto bene et disseli come il Raguseo era stato al Tribunal de li Exellentissimi Signori Capi et che da quel Magistrato secretissimo io havea habuto adviso del tutto et che per lui mi era sta inviata quella lettera, ma perchè havea meco a pranso alcuni gentilhuomini che non era comodo che in quel hora parlassemo insieme, ma la sera al tardo ritornando più comodamente ad longum ragionassemo insieme, et cussi partito, la sera ritornò circa ad un hora di nocte, et reclusi soli in la mia camera me disse: Signor Ambassator per dirve il tuto **io naqui a Venetia** ma sum nudrito in Ingelterra et poij veni al servitio di questi Re Catholici de Hispania, et dal Re Ferdinando fui facto Capitano cum provisione di 50 m. maravedis, poij fui facto da questo Re presente piloto major cum provisione di altri 50 m. maravedis, et per adiuto di cose mi da poij 25 m. maravedis, che sono in tutto 125 m.

---

\* Rawdon Brown remarks that he has failed to find any trace of this conversation of Sebastian Cabot with any Venetian Ambassador in England.



maravedis, possono valer circa ducati 300. Hor ritrovandomi ja tre anni, salvo il vero, in Ingelterra, quel Reverendissimo Cardinal mi volea far grandi partiti che ic navigasse cum una sua armada per discoprir paesi novi la quale era quasi in ordine, et haveano preparati per spender in essa ducati 30 m. Io li risposi che essendo al servitio di questa Maestà senza sua licentia non lo poteva servire ma che havendo bona licentia di qui io el serviria. In quelli giorni ragionando cum uno frate Stragliano Collona veneto cum il quale havea amicitia grande, mi fu dicto dal prefacto frate: Messer Sebastiano vui vi affaticati cussì grandemente per far beneficio a genti externe non vi aricordate della vostra terra, non seria possibile che etiam lei avesse qualche utilità da vuj. Allhora io mi risenti tutto nel core et li risposi che penseria sopra ciò. Et cussì ritornato a lui il giorno seguente li dissi che io haveva modo di far quella Città partecipe di questa navigatione, et dimostrarli via per la quale era per haver grande utilità, come è il vero che io l' ho ritrovata et cussì perchè servendo el Re d' Angeltera non poteva più beneficiar la patria mia, io scrissi alla Maestà Cesarea che non me desse per niente licentia che servisse il Re de Engeltera perchè li saria de l'anno grande, immo che subito me rivocasse, et cussì rivocato et ritornato essendo in sibilla contraxi grande amicitia cum questo Raguseo, il quale hora mi scrive, dicendomi lui che el dovea transferirse a Venetia, mi slargai cum lui et li commissi che questa cosa non la dovesse manifestare ad altri che ali Capi di X. et cussì mi jurò Sacramento. Io li respusi prima laudando grandemente l' affecto suo verso la patria, poij li dissi chel Raguseo era stato a li Excellentissimi Signori Capi, et che io da quel Magistrato havea habuto lettere supra questa materia et commissione che dovese essere cum lui et intender il modo che lui se havea immaginato et significarlo a Sue Excellentissime Signorie et che poij lui potria andarli in persona. Ma rispose che lui non era per manifestar il pensier suo ad altri che a li Excellentissimi Signori Capi, et chel era per transferirse a Venetia, richiesta prima licentia da Cesare cum questa excusatione di la ricuperatione di

la dote di sua madre, di la qual cosa se faria che lo episcopo di Burgos et il magnifico Cancellier me parleriano et me instauriano che io scrivesse in favor suo a la Serenità Vostra. Io li dissi che volendo venir lui a Venetia io laudava questo modo che il mi diceva di chieder licentia etc. Quanto poij chel non mi volesse manifestar il pensier suo, che io non poteva voler più di quel che lui volea, ma che ben mi pareva di dirli queste parole et cussì dissi che in ogni deliberatione bisognava considerer due cose, l' una era se quella impresa a la quale l' homo se metteria cum utilita, poij sel era possibile, et che questa impresa de la qual ragionavano io era certo che riuscendo l' havea esser utile. Ma che quanto alla possibilità io era molto dubbio, perchè mi havea pur dilectato un pocho de geographia, et considerando il sito di Venetia, io non ritrovava via alcuna a questa navigatione perchè el bisognava over navigar cum navilij facti a Venetia over farli far for di stretto, in altro loco ; facendoli a Venetia era necessario uscir for del stretto de Zibilterra per venire nel Oceano, al che havendo contrarij il Re di Portogallo et il Re di Spagna era impossibile che la cosa riuscisse. Facendo li navilij for di Venetia non se potevano far se non a la volta del mar oceano de mezzogiorno, ne altro loco era se non il mar rosso, al che ne erano infiniti contrarij perchè prima bisognava haver intelligentia cum el sig. Turcho, poij lì per la penuria de li legnami era impossibile far navilij. Poij quando ben si facessero essendo le fortezze et armate di Portogallo, non era possibile continuar quella navigatione. Poij chi volea fabricar navili qui supra l' oceano septentrionale discorendo da la Spagna a la Datia et poij più in la anchora, io non li vedeva modo, maxime essendo la Germania a la obedientia del Imperatore. La via poij di condurre merce da Venetia a quelli navilij, et da li navilij le spesie et altre cose a Venetia, io non li vedeva via alcuna, tuta volta perchè essendo lui valenthuomo in questa materia, io mi riportava a lui. Me rispose vuj avete ben discorso, et in verità ne cum navilij facti a Venetia ne etiam per la via del Mar rosso io non vedo modo alcuno. Ma ce altra via non solum possibile ma facile et di far navilij et de condur merce da Venetia al porto, et dal porto a Venetia spetie, oro et altre cose

che io so perchè io ho navigato tutti quelli paesi et so ben il tuto, immo vi dico che non vulsi tor il partido de il Re de Engelterra per beneficiar la patria, perchè se tolleva quel partido non restava poi via alcuna per Venetia. Io strinsi le spalle et benche a me la cosa pari impossibile, pur non volsi dissuaderlo chel venisse a li piedi di Vostra Celsitudine, ne anche el suasi perchè la possibilità è molto più ampla de quel che l' homo spespe fiata crede. Costui poij quì ha grande fama, et cussi alhora se partì. Il giorno poij di San Zuane la sera vene a trovarme per far riconzar alcune parole in le letere del Raguseo, delle qual dubitava che costoro non prendesseno suspecto, et cussi da uno nostro veronese mio intrinseco fu rescripta et riformata la lettera. Lui ragionando cum me de molte cose di geographia fra le altre me disse uno modo che l'havea observato per la via del bossolo di conosser la distantia fra due lochi da levante al ponente, molto bello ne mai più observato da altri, come da lui venendo Vostra Serenità potrà intender. Poij ragionando pur cum lui circa la materia principal nostra et dextramente ripetendoli io le difficoltà, me disse et io vi dico che la via et il modo è facile. Anderò a Venetia a mie spese, me udirano ne piacendoli el modo per me excogitato, io mi ritornerò pur a mie spese, et fecemi instantia che io tenesse la cosa secreta. Questa è stata la executione che io ho facto. Vostra Serenità la udirà, et cum la sapientia sua farà quel iuditio che li parerà.

Vallijoleti, Die ultimo Decembris, 1522.

---

## XXVII.

*Another letter of Gaspar Contarini to the Senate of Venice,  
7 March, 1523.*

(Carte 289 tergo. Lettere Contarini citate).

*Serenissime Princeps et Excellentissimi Domini.*

Quel Sebastian Cabot del quale vostre Excellentie me impose a parlarli circa le cose de le spiziarie et da me cussi exeguito como per mie di x. zener li significai, è stato più volte da poij

ad me sempre facendomi intender la disposition sua esser di venir exeguir quanto l'havria in animo di operar per Vostra Celsitudine in tal materia de specie. Tandem hozi venuto ad trovarmi, se ha risolto non poter per hora dimandare licentia dubitando che non lo tolesseno per suspecto che el volesse andare in Engelterra, et che però li era necessario anchor per tre mesi scorer, qual passati al tuto era per venir a li piedi di Vostra Illustrissima Signoria, pregandola che interim la vogli scriver una lettera in la forma de l' altra li fu mandata et sollicitarlo a venir de li a Venetia per expedir le cose sue a cio monstrandola, de quì li fusse più liberamente concesso licentia. Scrivo a Vostra Celsitudine quanto che lui Sebastiano mi ha dichiarito et ricercato, quella disporerà quanto li piacerà.

Vallijoleti Die 7 Martij 1523.

---

XXVIII.

*Letter of the Council of Ten to Gaspar Contarini.*

(Brown N. 669 Vol. III)

28 Aprile 1523.

*Ser Casparo Contareno*

*Oratori nostro apud Cesaream Maiestatem.*

Ricevessimo in questi giorni passati le vostre direttive a li Capi del Consiglio nostro dei Dieci, de ultimo Dicembre prossimo preterito, per le quali intendessemo tutto il colloquio havuto cum Sebastiano Cabotto ne la materia de le specie, nel che in vero cum summa prudentia, et bon modo vi sete governato, et non potemo, se non grandemente commendare il studio et diligenza vostra. Dapoi habiamo riceputo altre vostre de 7 Marzo preterito, per le qual vedemo la resolutione in ch'era rimasto esso Sebastiano, de non poter venir qui fino a tre mesi ; et che poi al tuto l'era per venir, rechiedendo chel se li faci de qui scriver una lettera in la forma

delle precedenti per le cose sue, aciò che cum quella al tempo predicto possi licitamente partirsi de li. Unde per satisfacione sua habiamo fatto far una altra lettera in nome di quello Hieronymo de Marino da Rhagusi, che qui vene ad farne la relatione di tal cose et mandovela qui inserta nel mazzo del Circumspecto Secretario vostro, si come fu facto delle precedenti, la qual consignarete al dito Caboto semotis arbitris, suadendolo che el se ne vengi qui, si come el vi ha promesso de far, perchè sempre el sarà ben veduto da noi : et cusi eseguirete dandone aviso a li capi antedicti, et se al zonzer de queste il prefacto Cabotto non se retrovasse de li in Corte, mandereteli la lettera sua dove el se ritrovera. Tutta via per mezo fido et securo si che la ge capiti in mano ; denotandovi che il dito Hieronimo Marino al presente non se ritrova qui in Venezia, ne sapemo dove el sii, ancor che le lettere de esso Hieronimo apparino date qui in Venezia. Il che dicemo per vostra instructione.

Andreas Foscarenus C. C. Xm

Jacobus Michael C. C. Xm subscrip.

Andreas Fosculus C. C. Xm subscrip.

Lecta Dominis Sapientibus utriusque manus semotis ceteris et etiam Dominis Consiliariis.

Lecta Dominis Capitibus.

---

XXIX.

*Feigned letter of Jerome the Ragusan to Sebastian Cabot.*

*Litterae scriptae nomine Hieronymi di Marino Rhaeusei ad Sebastianum Caboto in Hispaniam existentem.*

Spectabile Messer Sebastiano.—Za alcuni mesi zonto che io fui qui in Venetia vi scrissi quanto haveva operato per inquirir dove si trovano de li beni vostri, nel che io hebbi bone parolle in cadauno loco, et mi fu dato bona speranza de recuperar la dote di vostra madre, et ameda, unde non dubito

che si vui fosti venuto qui haveresti za conseguito quanto è il vostro desiderio ; et per tanto per lo amor vi porto, et per il beneficio, et utile ve sio exhortar ad non vi manchar a vui medesimo, ma transferirve qui a Venetia, dove non dubito impetrarete il tutto, et non tarderete ad venir qui, perchè la ameda vostra è molto vecchia, et mancando lei, haveresti poi grandissima fatica a inquirir et recuperar il vostro ; però ve conforto ad mettervi in camino più presto potete. Altro non vi dico per hora a vui mi offro per sempre.

Venetiis Die 28 Aprilis 1523

Vostro hieronimo de Marino  
(Capi del Consiglio de' Dieci. Lettere sottoscritte. Filza N. 6. 1523).

---

XXX.

*Letter of Gaspar Contarini to the Senate of Venice, 26 July, 1523.*

*Serenissime Princeps et excellentissimi Domini.*

Cum la posta venuta de Italia per qui, come in le comune facio mentione per via da Roma, ricevi cum la solita riverentia mia lettere sue de 23 April per le qual Vostra Serenità dandome adviso dil ricever de le mie scripteli circa la executione facta cum Sebastiano Caboto etc. , me subgionge che iterum la invia altre lettere a lui Sebastiano a nome di quel Hieronimo de Ragusi iuxta la richiesta sua et cussi ho ritrovato in le publiche esse lettere. La bona sorte volse, che essendo lui Sebastiano in Sibilìa due giorni da poij il ricevir de le lettere, ritornò de qui al qual consignato le sue lo exortai a venirsene de li. Disseme che in altro non era il pensier suo et a questo fine era venuto de qui. Da poij mi ha parlato dicendo chel procura cum questi del Consiglio Cesareo di haver licentia di conferirse de li, et che etiam parlino a me in commendatione sua. Questo è quanto ho da lui, de quanto seguirà Vostra Serenità ne sarà advisata.

Vallijoleti Die 26 Julij 1523.

(Carte 302, Lett. Contarini cit.)

## XXXI.

*Payment to Sebastian Cabot for the account of Sir Thomas Lovell, 18 February, 1524.*

Item paide the XVIII<sup>th</sup> day of feb. to John Goderik of Tory in the countie of Cornewall drap in full satysfacon and recompenses of his charge costis and labour conductyng of Sebastian Cabott master of the Pylotes in Spayne to London at the request of the testator by Indenture of covenantes.— 43s. 4d.

[Expenses of the funeral of sir Thos. Lovell, Knt. of the garter, who died at his manor of Elsynges, in Endfield, Middlesex, 25 May 1524, paid by his executors. I. S. Brewer.—Calendar Domestic and Foreign, Henry VIII. t. IV, Part. I, p. 154, N.º 366.

## XXXII.

*Dispatches of Andrew Navagero, Ambassador to the Court of Spain of July 21, 1524—28 october.— 207. Cod. Cicogna 1985.*

. . . . . Un altra armata di 28 vele pur per l' Indie ma in altra parte è in ordine in Siviglia et partirà si come dicono fra 15 o 20 di della qual è Capitano un Sebastian Cabbotto Venetiano, costui va per scoprir cose nove et ogni giorno di qua fan maggior le speranze di queste Indie, et piu li mettono l'animo et credono all' ultimo haver anco le speranze per quella banda et con viaggio molto più breve di quel che fece la nave Vittoria.—Gratie etc. etc.

In Tolledo alli 21 di Settembre 1525.—p. 221, 222.

*A bit of narrative at p. 933 Cod. Cicogna 1985.*

. . . . . delle nave spagnole ch'io intesi in Franza ch'erano arrivate all' isole di Brasil carche de speciarie che potrian esser di quelle che partiron di Siviglia con Sebastian Cabotto Venetiano.

## XXXIII.

*Extract from the Decades of Peter Martyr d' Anghiera on the proposed voyage of Sebastian Cabot to the East Indies on Spain's account (1524).*

Speramus fore ut Sebastianus Cabotus Baccalorum reperor, cui circiter Kal. Septembris supplicanti, ex nostri Senatus auctoritate permissa est ejus navigationis perquirendae potestas, brevior tempore ac felicioribus avibus sit rediturus, quam Victoria navis. . . . Quatuor navium classiculam, omnibus ad rem maritimam facientibus et commodis tormentorum vasis paratam, ab Caesareo aerario Cabotus poposcit, socios ait se reperisse Hispali, quae Sebilla dicitur, commerciorum omnium Indicorum emporio, qui sub spe magni lucri, ad classiculae commeatum et caetera necessaria, ducatorum decem millium sua sponte summam obtulerint. Ad offerendam participum sociorum obligationem circiter idus Septembris a nobis dimissus est Cabotus. . .

Est Cabotus Augusto mense proximo anni MDXXV discessurus, nec citius quidem, quia nec prius queunt ad rem tantam necessaria parari, nec per coelorum cursus debet prius illud iter inchoari : oportet quippe tunc versus aequinoctium vela dirigere quando sol aestatem nobis et dierum longitudinem ablaturus, ad Antictones penetrare incipiat . . . . Quo tempore brevissimi sunt apud populos Arctos dies, longissimos Cabotus assequetur. Commode propterea littora percurret illa donec flexuoso Magagliano freto. . . . traiecto, in dextram a tergo nostri putati continentis. . . . proras diriget, perque Capricorni zonam ad aequatorem regredietur, in quo spacio insularum numerum reperiet innumerum, sitarum in ea pelagi vastitate : benevole namque agendum est, ac sine vi aut injuria ulla tractandum, et blanditiis muneribusque allicientur. Decem namque ducatorum millia quae Cabotus a sociis est habiturus ad id negotii sunt expendenda ut commeatus ad bienium comparentur, et stipendia viris centum quinquaginta praebentur, reliqua pars in mercimoniis quae grata insulari-



bus fore cognoverint . . . . His pelustratis et prudenti diligentia pertractatis, nostri putati continentis latus australe universum abradent.

Dec. VII, cap. 6, p. 797—Parisiis, MDLXXXVII.

---

XXXIV.

*Abstract of the Probança of Catharine Vasquez in her suit against Sebastian Cabot.\**

I Interrogatory. Whether the witnesses know the parties concerned in the suit.

Answer. Yes.

II Int. Whether they know of the expedition led by Sebastian Cabot.

Ans. Yes.

Here follow the witnesses' names and surnames numbered in order. Thereafter they are spoken of by their numbers as First, Second, etc.

III Int. Whether Martin Mendez was appointed Lieutenant-General in the command of the expedition.

Ans. Yes

IV Int. Whether they know that, before his appointment, Sebastian Cabot, at his wife's suggestion, had determined to give that position to Michael Rojas.

None of the witnesses can answer.

V Int. Whether they know that, upon the appointment of Martin Mendez, Cabot, his wife, and Rifos conceived a violent enmity towards him; whether Medrano tried even to have him killed; whether Cabot was ruled by the advice and wishes of his wife.

Ans. The i witness answers the three questions in the af-

---

\* In this and the following abstracts, scrupulous attention has been paid to rendering the sense of the text as exactly as possible.

firmative. The vi affirmatively to the first : has no knowledge as to the other two.

The vii affirmatively to the first on the credit of others; is silent on the second ; the third is true in his opinion.

The ix and xi are of the affirmative opinion as to the third, silent as to the other two.

VI Int. Whether Martin Mendez, just as the expedition was about to sail, perceiving Cabot's ill-will towards him, took his things and left the ship and went to Seville to complain to the Council of the Indies.

Ans. The i witness saw Mendez go away, and heard that he went to complain to the Council of the Indies, and that the Council encouraged him to return to his post.

The ix deposes the same.

The xi saw him go, but does not know why he went.

VII Int. Whether the Council of the Indies, summoning Cabot and Rifos, severely reprov'd them, and threatened the latter if he interfered in the duties belonging to the Lieutenant-General.

Ans. The vi and ix affirm it, but on the report of others.

VIII Int. Whether Martin Mendez returned to embark upon the urging and promises of the President of the Council.

Ans. The vi witness believes it must have been so, because Mendez had been at the Moluccas before, and the merchants had manifested their confidence in him.

The ix says so from hearsay.

IX Int. Whether as soon as Cabot sailed he set Mendez wholly aside, and entrusted Rifos with all that belonged to the Lieutenant.

Ans. The five witnesses called all confirm this more or less fully.

X Int. Whether Sebastian Cabot arrested Mendez without just cause.

Ans. The i and xi confirm it fully.

The iii and viii know of the arrest, but cannot say whether there was just cause for it or not.

The vi and vii know of the arrest, but as to its justice they

confine themselves to saying that they saw him do nothing that deserved it.

XI Int. Whether Martin Mendez, when arrested insisted on a trial ; whether Cabot made any reply to his demand.

Ans. The i confirms it of his own knowledge.

The ii from hearsay.

The vi confirms it, adding on hearsay that Cabot resented the demand.

The vii, ix, and x confirm the first part ; are silent or know nothing of the second.

XII Int. Whether Mendez posted his demand for a trial on the ship's mast, so that all should know of it.

Ans. Five witnesses were called and all answer affirmatively.

XIII Int. Whether Captain Caro presented Mendez's demand to Cabot, and Cabot answered with bad words.

Ans. The i has heard say so.

The ii knows of the presenting, but not of the answer.

The vi knows of the presenting, it seems to him ; but does not well remember the fact of the answer.

XIV Int. Whether Martin Mendez made a protest before the officers both of his demand and for damages arising out of his arrest.

The i and vi confirm it fully.

The ii heard the protest spoken of, but knew not its contents.

The ix confirms it on hearsay.

The x does not remember, but it seems so to him.

XV Int. Whether the officers informed Cabot of the protest, and he replied with bad words.

Ans. The ii confirms the first part on hearsay ; varies the second saying he had heard that Cabot promised a trial when they came to the River De Solis.

The vi confirms it fully, adding that he and other officers tried to put in a word in favor of Mendez.

XVI Int. About the deposing of Mendez and Rojas at the Island of Saint Catharine, and whether the island is only peopled by Indians.

Ans. The vi saw the prisoners delivered to an Indian, and knows no more.

The ix knows by what others said that the prisoners were recommended to an Indian.

XVIII Int. Whether it is true that Mendez, when they were taking him ashore, protested that Cabot deposed him for a report he was preparing against him for the Emperor ; and whether he was deposed in order that Rifos might have the post of Lieutenant.

Ans. The i confirms Rifos's appointment ; that is all he knows.

The ii confirms the appointment of Rifos ; as to the rest, says he had heard that Mendez complained that Cabot had seized a letter which he wrote to the Emperor.

The x confirms it.

XIX Int. Whether at the Isle of Patos Mendez wrote a letter to the Emperor against Cabot, and it was seized.

No answer.

XX Int. Whether Mendez had often warned Cabot that he was not taking the course for the Moluccas, and that His Majesty would take offence.

No answer.

XXI Int. Whether on their return many urged Cabot to land at Saint Catharine to take the prisoners on board, and he refused.

No answer.

XXII Int. Whether Mendez and Rodas died on that island in consequence of their abandonment.

Ans. The i answers Yes, because they were drowned in trying to escape from the island, and they would not have tried to escape if Cabot had not left them there.

The other witnesses, the vi, vii, viii, ix, x, and xi depose to the fact of the death, but are silent on the rest.

XXIII Int. On the value of the things belonging to Martin Mendez which he had on board, and whether Cabot took possession of every thing.

Ans. The vi, vii, viii, and x know of the things brought on board, but nothing else.

The ix knows of the things brought on board, but cannot tell their value : has heard tell the third point.

The x and xi saw that there were many things brought on board, but know no more.

XXIV Int. Of Martin Mendez's emoluments.

Ans. The answer of the witnesses is given in general, what they have heard.

XXV Int. How old Mendez was when set ashore on the island.

Ans. All the witnesses answer giving their opinion from his looks.

XXVI Int. Let the witnesses declare whether, if Mendez had lived and kept his office of Lieutenant, the expedition would have continued on its voyage, and not have lost so many men.

Ans. The i, vii, and ix say yes.

The vi says he cannot, because there were other officers on the expedition with as much authority, and they were unable to prevent what happened.

The viii can only say they would have done much better if they had gone to the Moluccas.

XXVII Int. Two sums are proposed, and the witnesses are asked if they believe that if they had reached the Moluccas the Emperor would have gained the first and Martin Mendez the second.

Ans. The ii, vii, ix, x, and xi recognize that much would have been gained, but cannot say how much.

The vi speaks of the dangers of the navigation, that the result is in God's hands. But granted that they reached the Moluccas, the Emperor and Mendez would have gained much.

XXVIII Int. As to the value of the things brought aboard belonging to Martin's brother Ferdinand Mendez, and whether Cabot took possession of all.

Ans. The i confirms it.

The vi, vii, viii, ix and xi know that they were many, but cannot tell their value; they know nothing of the second part.

XXIX Int. Whether Catharine Vasquez is the mother of Martin Mendez.

Ans. Yes.

XXX Int. is spoilt. But it is understood to ask about the

death of Ferdinand Mendez, Martin's brother, whether it was caused by his brother's imprisonment.

Ans. The i cannot say of his own knowledge, but has heard it spoken of as something certain.

The ix knows of the death, but not the cause of it.

XXXI Int. Whether Cabot tried to poison Ferdinand Mendez.

No answer.

XXXII Int. On the same subject, whether at least the fleet spoke of such poisoning.

No answer.

---

### XXXV.

*Interrogatories presented by Francis de Rojas at Ocaña, November 2, 1530.*

I Int. Whether the witnesses know Captain de Rojas and Sebastian Cabot ; and know of the expedition which sailed under command of the latter towards the Moluccas.

II Int. Whether they know that Rojas is of a noble family and of known worth, and Cabot is a foreigner, an unknown person, unfit for the command of a fleet, or any other office, etc.

III Int. Whether those who fitted out the fleet discovering Cabot's incompetency, wanted to appoint Rojas to the post of Captain of the expedition, and that this was the cause of Cabot's hatred of him.

IV Int. Whether the main object of the expedition was to reach the Islands of Ophir and Tarshish, etc.

V Int. Whether when Cabot was bound to give the course of the voyage at the Canaries according to the Emperor's orders, and did not give it, Rojas persistently demanded it, and Cabot refused, adding disrespectful words about the Emperor.

VI Int. Whether Cabot at the Island of Palma seized the letters of many who were writing to the Emperor against him,

and did the same again at Pernambuco and on the Parana, and from this conceived a bitter hatred for Rojas.

VII Int. Whether in the latitude of the Cape Verde Islands he altered his course a quarter to the north-west, which took him to Cape Saint Augustine in the Province of Pernambuco ; where the Portuguese, who were there, to divert him from the voyage to the Moluccas, told him wonders about the wealth found on the Plata, trusting which tales he decided to alter the purpose of the voyage and stop at the Plata.

VIII Int. Whether Rojas opposed changing the voyage, showing that the Portuguese only wanted to keep him from going to the Moluccas.

IX Int. Whether, in consequence of Rojas's opposition, Cabot, in order to have his hands free, tried to have him killed, and the attempt failing, issued process against him, without giving him a hearing, suborning witnesses, &c.

X Int. Whether on pretext of this process he kept him some days a prisoner, and for all the insistence Rojas made, never told him the reason why he was held in arrest.

XI Int. Whether after keeping him for some days in arrest on board of Caro's vessel, he had him taken to his own ship where Rojas heard others say he had been imprisoned on false charges, and that Cabot ought to punish him if guilty or punish the others as slanderers.

XII Int. Whether in spite of the remonstrances of Rojas Cabot left Pernambuco with the intention of stopping at the Plata, and stopped at the Island of Patos to take off some Christians who were there, and get information from them concerning that river.

XIII Int. Whether at the Island of Patos, some Christians from D. Rodrigo da Acunha's ship said that Loaysa's squadron was lost in Magellan Strait, and Cabot showed satisfaction, boasting of the coming victory of his own expedition.

XIV Int. Whether at these base words of Cabot, Rojas answered regretting them, and insisted that they should continue the voyage and relieve Loaysa.

XV Int. Whether on the stranding of the flag-ship Cabot basely abandoned it at once, and after him the rest were de-

moralized, and so the ship was lost when it might have been saved.

XVI Int. Whether on the contrary Francis de Rojas came forward and used every means and saved the crew and most of the stores.

XVII Int. Of the zeal of Rojas in caring for and helping those that fell sick.

XVIII Int. Whether in consequence of this zeal of Rojas and the affection of all towards him, Cabot through envy became more hostile to him.

XIX Int. Whether out of this envy Cabot imprisoned him again, and would not tell him the reason, nor give him a trial, notwithstanding his demands and the constitution established by H. M.

XX Int. Whether, at the time of sailing from Patos, Cabot had Rojas and Mendez abandoned on that island.

XXI Int. Of the protest made by Mendez while they were abandoning him.

XXII Int. Whether the inhabitants of the island where Rojas was deserted eat human flesh, and had already killed and eaten several Christians, and Cabot left him there for that purpose and gave him as a slave to one of the principal Indians of the island.

XXIII Int. Whether Rojas underwent great suffering and peril on that island.

XXIV Int. Whether by continuing the voyage the expedition would have procured for the Emperor a profit of not less than two millions, even if they had only brought back a cargo of spices.

XXV Int. Whether Rojas by continuing that voyage would have gained ten thousand crowns.

XXVI Int. Whether all that is here asked is not the public voice and rumor.

WITNESSES.

The same day, November 2, 1530, that Rojas presented his Interrogatories, he also offered Anthony de Montoya a cit-



izen of Lepe, as a witness to his charges, and his deposition is annexed to the charges of the Interrogatories. But the chancellor before signing the deposition, records that the presentations of other witnesses follow after, “despues siguen las presentaciones de otros testigos ;” but their names or surnames are not given.

In the Proofs of both Catharine Vasquez and Sebastian Cabot, the depositions of the witnesses follow each interrogatory. Why is it not so here ? For my part, seeing that many of the accusations of Rojas are shown by a light as bright as noon-day to be pure slanders, I suspect that the matter is not altogether clear : that is to say, that Rojas presented at once that single witness whose testimony he was sure of ; and as to the rest that he handed in a list of names, but in fact no others were called to testify.

Then as to the single witness heard, the abstract of his evidence is quickly given by saying that he not only confirms all the charges, but most frequently in the very words of the accusation ; so that the chancellor of the court when at the beginning of each question he had substituted “dijó” for “Si saben,” it was only necessary in most instances to copy the rest.

---

### XXXVI.

*Abstract of Sebastian Cabot's Probança in the suit brought against him by Catharine Vasquez.*

I Int. Whether the witnesses know the persons implicated in this suit.

Ans. Yes.

II Int. Whether they know of the expedition conducted by Sebastian Cabot.

Ans. Yes. Here follow the names and surnames of the witnesses with their numbers. Afterwards the record gives only their number.

III Int. Whether they know that Martin Mendez, Rojas, and other officers met at Seville, and took an oath to unite always

against Cabot, and to depose him and make Rojas Captain.

Ans. The i heard it publicly stated.

The viii has heard talk of disagreement between Mendez and Rojas on one side and Cabot on the other, that the former had labored with the organizers of the expedition to have Rojas put in command: knows no more.

The ix has heard of the meeting and the oath, but was not told why.

The x has heard of the meeting and of the agreement to kill Cabot and put Rojas in his place. He was also told that a sailor had attempted Cabot's life, and every one believed he acted on behalf of the conspirators ; he had also heard that Rojas said that he would have killed Cabot at the Rio De Solis.

IV Int. Whether they know that at the Canaries the Seville conspirators met again and conspired with Alonzo de Santa Cruz.

Ans. The i has heard it publicly spoken of.

The vi saw the persons named assembled with Santa Cruz who was sick, but does not know for what.

The vii has heard it spoken of.

The ix has heard the meeting talked of, but was not told what it was for.

V Int. Whether they know that Cabot was a learned person and better informed on matters of the sea than any one else and on this account was placed at the head of the expedition: and that he took no step without first consulting the captains and officers.

Ans. All the eleven witnesses confirm this fully, some with lively sentiments of admiration, and also giving particulars.

VI Int. Whether Cabot at the Island of Saint Catharine sent Michael de Rodas and Anthony de Grajeda to sound the bottom of the sea.

Ans. The four witnesses called all confirm it.

VII Int. Whether the said Rodas and Grajeda reported they had taken soundings and that there was plenty of water for the ships.

Ans. Nine witnesses fully confirm it.

VIII Int. Whether the flag-ship was lost from not taking proper soundings.

Ans. The i witness confirms the fact and relates the despair of Rodas.

The ii, iii, v, vi, vii, and ix confirm it.

The x confirms it, adding the bluster of Rodas before the accident.

IX Int. Whether they know that great quantities of provisions, rigging, arms, &c., the best they had for the expedition, were lost with the flag-ship.

Ans. Eight witnesses confirm it of their own knowledge, having belonged to the ship, and one on hearsay.

The x, who belonged also to the same ship, estimates the loss at two thirds of all that the expedition had ; and for what was saved he gives the credit to Cabot's orders and energy.

X Int. Whether they know that many of the expedition died from the length of the voyage because they were not used to the sea, from the climate, etc.

Ans. The i testifies that many died of fever at the Island of Saint Catharine.

The ii, iii, iv, v, and vi confirm it.

The vi confirms it and adds the River de Solis to the Island of Saint Catharine, and hunger to fever, and that many were killed by Indians.

The viii confirms it, and says that every one, or nearly every one, was taken sick.

The ix confirms it, and explains that many died from the long navigation, change of climate, land, food, etc., as he has seen on the other voyages.

The x confirms it, and says that every one was sick, some died on the island, others on the voyage.

XI Int. Whether the inhabitants of the Island of St. Catharine and its neighborhood were friendly, and whether they found there many Christians from D. Rodrigo da Acunha's ship.

Ans. Eight witnessess fully confirm it.

XII Int. Whether Cabot was unable to continue the voyage after the loss of the flag-ship, because it was the half

of the expedition, and because all the men were suddenly taken sick at that place.

Ans. The i confirms it, adding the great deal that was told them of the wealth of La Plata.

The iii only knows of the great number taken sick

The iv knows of many sick, and the loss of victuals, and no more.

The v confirms it.

The vi, viii, and ix know of the loss of victuals, and of the many sick, but no more.

The vii confirms it, and derives his conviction from the fact that the few that escaped the sickness were not enough to work the ships.

The x confirms it, repeating that about two thirds of all that was in the ships was lost with the flag-ship.

XIII Int. Whether Cabot landed at Pernambuco in consequence of foul weather, and the same weather drove him back when he tried to depart.

Ans. The i confirms it, deposing that they tried three times to leave there and were always driven back again.

The other nine confirm the question.

XIV Int. Whether they know that the foul weather lasted three months

Ans. The witnesses confirm it.

XV Int. Whether they know that at the time of this rest Cabot arrested Francis Rojas and Martin Mendez for the war they had made on him, and were every day making with his men ; and whether it is true that they wanted to revolt and kill Cabot.

Ans. The i knows of the arrest, public report said they wanted to revolt, that he afterwards saw them set free and in the same power as before.

The ii, iv, v, viii, and ix only know of the arrest.

The iii and vii know of the arrest : it was a public rumor that they meant to revolt.

The x knows of the arrest ; public report confirms what is in the question.

The vi knows nothing, now hears it spoken of for the first

time ; he saw them serving well and faithfully, and heard others say so.

XVI Int. Whether Cabot at Pernambuco released Francis de Rojas and restored him to the command of the Trinidad, admonishing him, etc.

Ans. The i, ii, iii, vii, and viii confirm it.

The iv, v, and x know of the release and return to command, not of the admonition.

The ix testifies to the restoration to freedom, heard the rest from public report.

XVII Int. Whether at St. Catharine Cabot stopped to build a galiot by agreement with the officers, in order to load it with what was saved from the loss of the flag-ship.

Ans. The i, ii, iii, iv, v, vii, viii, and ix confirm all.

The vi confirms the building of the galiot, infers the agreement from the harmony between the officers and Cabot.

The x confirms the building, infers the agreement.

XVIII Int. Whether at the Island of St. Catharine two men were found who had been with Captain de Solis, and whether they urged going to the river discovered by De Solis, asserting that one of their companions had gone there, and brought away a great quantity of gold and silver.

Ans. The ten witnesses called fully confirm the matter.

XIX Int. Whether the expedition stopped at the River de Solis by agreement of all the officers.

Ans. The i, ii, iii, v, vii, viii, and ix confirm it.

The iv confirms it, adding that Cabot did nothing without first agreeing with the officers.

The vi confirms it, but remembers that Rojas opposed it.

The x confirms it, giving also what some of the officers said of the wealth they should find at the River de Solis.

XX Int. Whether on leaving the Bay of St. Catharine, about all the men were sick, and in consequence of sickness unable to follow.

Ans. The i says many were sick when they left there, many died at the entrance of the river, where they stopped ; that the officers held council with Cabot, and it was decided to leave the sick there, and continue the exploration of the river with the rest.

The ii, iii, iv, v, vi, viii, ix, and x all confirm it, some adding also the want of food, and the extreme weakness of all.

XXI Int. Whether in consequence of the sickness and extreme weakness they were obliged to abandon two anchors which they could not draw from the bottom of the river

Ans. Nine witnesses confirm it.

XXII Int. Whether they remained on the River Parana more than half a year waiting for the convalescents to recover, and in the meantime many of them died.

Ans. The i, ii, iii, iv, v, and vii fully confirm it.

The vi knows they remained some time on the Parana, but does not know how long; remembers one death, no more.

The ix knows that some died, but does not know that they were so many; and does not remember how long they remained there.

The x knows that some died, but does not know as they were so many; they remained there half a year, a little more or less.

XXIII Int. Whether at the Island of St. Catharine, Cabot found sufficient proof that Francis Rojas, Martin Mendez, and Michael de Rodas were raising the men up against him, and having this proof brought them to trial, and although they deserved death, changed this punishment to deposition.

Ans. The ii, iii, iv, and v only know of the deposition.

The viii knows of the deposition but not of the reason; but he saw, while the men were ashore, the sails of the caravel hoisted, and heard afterwards that it was an attempt at revolt.

The ix saw witnesses called to give evidence against Rojas and his companions; knows no more.

The x knows of the deposition, heard say that it was for an attempt to revolt.

XXIV Int. Whether Cabot left the three deposed officers well provided with food and arms; and whether he recommended them to the principal Indians for good treatment.

Ans. The i knows of the provisions of his own knowledge, of the recommendation by hearsay.

The ii knows both on hearsay.

The iii confirms both of his own knowledge.

The iv confirms both on hearsay.

The v, vi, vii, and x confirm both with some details.

The ix confirms both, and adds particulars.

XXV Int. Whether they know that Francis de Rojas stabbed Genoese Michael to death, and then tried to kill Martin Mendez and Michael de Rodas, who fled from him in consequence and went towards Port San Vincente where there were many Portuguese, but were drowned on the way.

Ans. The i, ii, iii, and v have heard it spoken of at the Island of St. Catharine itself.

The vi gives various details of the quarrel between the three officers, and of the reason why Rojas killed the Genoese ; he does not know that Rojas also threatened the two others.

The ix and x confirm it with many particulars.

XXVI Int. Whether they know that Cabot executed two men who revolted and tried to induce others to revolt ; that one of them used his power to the injury of the Indians, who revolted, and Cabot had much to do to quiet them.

Ans. The i confirms it, relating that he had also heard that they meant to kill Cabot.

The ii, iii, and v confirm it.

The vi makes a long deposition with most interesting details, on the hunger they endured, the desertion of the two Christians, their arrest, death, etc.

The viii confirms it, making likewise a deposition very rich in details.

The x confirms and gives further details.

XXVII Int. Whether Lieutenant Calderon had the ears cut off a sailor found stealing, and who fled inland.

Ans. The nine witnesses called all confirm it.

XXVIII Int. Of Cabot's care in governing the expedition.

Ans. The i, ii, iii, iv, ix, and x confirm it.

The vi and viii confirm it, adding important details.

XXIX Int. Whether Cabot treated the Indians well, and would not suffer them to be ill-treated.

Ans. Nine witnesses confirm it.

XXX Int. Whether they know that John de Junco (treasurer of the expedition on the Santa Maria ) is one of Cabot's principal enemies, and was one of the conspirators against him at Seville.

Ans. The vi, on the contrary, found them always friendly, knows nothing of the conspiracy.

The ix, from what he has seen him doing against Cabot since their return, concludes that he hates him.

The x believes the enmity, but explains that it was because Cabot had often reprov'd him for ill-treating the sailors, and because once, when he found him threatening to kill a smith, Cabot told him if he did, he would soon kill him, and he is strengthened in his opinion by the fact that, as soon as they arrived in Spain, Junco talked with the officers of the Contratacion, and Cabot was arrested immediately afterwards.

XXXI Int. Whether Alonzo Bueno is Cabot's enemy because he had been often punished by him for keeping a public gaming-place, being a blasphemer, and selling necessaries to sailors at an exorbitant price.

Ans. The i confirms the facts, and infers from them the enmity, and gives the names of the four officers who had the most influence in procuring Cabot's arrest.

The ii, iii, v, vi, and viii, confirm the facts.

The ix since returning to Spain has seen the said Alonzo doing Cabot all the harm possible, and therefore judges him to be his enemy.

The x confirms it fully, mentioning also other faults of Alonzo.

XXXII Int. Whether Santa Cruz is Cabot's enemy, so declared, and one of the conspirators against him.

Ans. The ix confirms the enmity from the facts, has heard that he was one of the conspirators.

The x confirms it.

XXXIII Int. Whether Gasmirez is Cabot's enemy because punished by him for speaking ill of the Emperor.

Ans. The viii confirms it.

The x, from what he has seen him do against Cabot, infers that he is his enemy.



I Additional Int. Whether they know that Ferdinand Mendez, Martin's brother, died a natural death, like many others on the Island of St. Catharine, before Cabot deposed his brother Martin, and whether there is at that place abundance of food, and whether Cabot treated said Ferdinand perfectly well.

Ans. The iii and v confirm it all, except that they say nothing as to whether Ferdinand died before his brother Martin was deposed.

The iv confirms it on hearsay.

The vi confirms all fully.

The vii and x confirm it.

The ix confirms it with additional circumstances.

II Add. Int. Whether, while they were going to the Paraguay, Cabot sent a band of men in search of food, they all returned but one, and he sent twice to look for him, with all possible diligence, and wanted to continue the search, till the officers insisted on departing in order not to die of famine.

Ans. The iv, v, and ix confirm the first part fully.

The vi and x confirm the whole.

The viii confirms it with many particulars.

After the proceedings of the trial, at the end, are recorded :

A. An information presented to the Casa de Contratacion by Catharine Vasquez, August 2, 1530.

B. Another information taken by Sebastian Cabot on board of ship July 2, 1528. It is there said that the order for the arrest of the three officers who were deposed, was based on this information.

C. A third information taken by the Casa de Contratacion to ascertain what was done on the voyage and what was discovered on land. This information was taken without interrogatories, July 28, 1530.

D. There is also a record of some opinions which Cabot at the harbor of San Salvador asked of some of the officers about a voyage to . . . (?) ; a record presented by Cabot for his defence, those officers having all said that the voyage ought not to be made. These opinions were taken October 6, 1529.

E. Another summary information presented by Cabot to

show by whose fault the fort of San Espiritu in the port of San Salvador was captured. The capture was October 12, 1529.

F. Another summary information taken at Cabot's request before the ordinary court at Seville, August 7, 1530.

---

XXXVII.

*Extract from the Letter of Luis Ramirez.*

Despues de una breve introduccion en que indica el objeto que se propuso al escribirla, refiere como salieron de la bahia de San Lucar á 3 de Abril de 1526.\* Detienenense en la isla de Palma para proveerse de agua y leña y atravesando el cenador llegaron á Pernambuco por Junio del mismo año. — Allí se detubieron algun tiempo para proveerse de lo necesario é informarse de la tierra, cuyos productos señala, describiendo tambien las costumbres barbaras de sus habitantes. Al poco tiempo de haber salido de este puerto (29 de Setiembre) sufrieron una horrorosa tormenta en que pereció el batel de la nao capitana, teniendo que detenerse junto á una gran montaña donde habia madera para la construccion del nuevo batel. Estando en esto llegaron indios en canoas, y dierónles a entender que habia por allí algunos cristianos, de los cuales en efecto llego al dia siguiente uno que dia noticia al capitan general de otros varios hasta quinze que estaban allí desde la derrota sufrida por la armata de Loaisa, iendo á las islas de especerie. Otros dos españoles habia allí por nombre Melchor Ramirez y Enrique Montes, los cuales informaron ál capitan de la gran riqueza de la tierra y de como saliendo del rio de Solis y entrando por el Paraguay llegaron á dar con una sierra abundante en oro, plata y otros metales con los que podrian llenar las naves. Pideles el general alguna muestra de aquel oro y plata, y refieren como habiendo estado cerca de la sierra algunos de

---

\* The original has 1536 which does not accord with the other facts of the narrative (Note added to the abstract).

sus compañeros á ver al rey Blanco, pudieron observar las prendas de oro que llevaban los indios traídas de la misma sierra, y que habiendo querido volver á aquel sitio fueron asaltados de los guaranis para arrebatárles los esclavos que traían cargados del metal; y que por esto, como por haber mandado á España poco antes hasta dos arrobas de oro (que al fin se perdieron) no conservaban mas que unas cuentas que tenían reservadas par la V. de Guadalupe unico objeto de oro que presentaron. A la oferta que ellos hicieron de acompañarle contestó el capitán que no era aquel su camino. Habiendo perdido la nao capitana retiranse á un monte para construir una galeota en la cual y en la provision de viveres fueron muy ayudados de los indios, gracias á las diligencias de Enrique Montés que los conocia. Refiere en seguida algunas de las costumbres del país con sus productos y las enfermedades que hubieron de sufrir á este sitio á causa da ser malsano. Salieron deste puerto que llamaron de Sta Catalina el 15 de Febrero de 1527 llegando despues de seis dias á Sta Maria puerto á la desembocadura del rio de Solis (La Plata). Señala la magnitud del rio y cuenta los muchos trabajos que pasaron hasta llegar á un puerto que llamaron de S. Lazaro donde se detubieron un mes para informarse de la tierra.—Un tal Francisco del Puerto, cautivo desde la derrota de Solis les entera de la mucha riqueza del país y del camino que deban seguir para dar con la referida sierra. Con esto el capitán determinó salir de allí el 6 de Mayo no sin dejar alguna gente pare la guarda de la hacienda que en aquel sitio quedaba. Unos y otros padecen muchos trabajos y hambres, hasta que el general manda la galeota para conducir la gente y hacienda de S. Lazaro, de donde salieron el 25 de Agosto para llegar el 28 al nuovo sitio donde el general habia hecho asiento y una fortaleza para la defensa. — Habla luego de las diversas tribus comarcanas, sus costumbres, productos de la tierra etc., etc. . . . y como segun informacion de los mismos indios el camino mas breve para ir á la sierra, era entrar por el Paraguay. Continuan pues el viaje dejando la fortaleza á cargo de Gregorio Caro y llegan á la isla *Año nuevo* este mismo dia (1528). Desde aqui mandó el cap. gen. á Miguel Rifos con 35 hombres

para apaciguar y castigar á los tribus que trataban de rebelarse contra ellos. Consignase la completa victoria y el rico botin que adquirieron, y la rara costumbre que las indias tienen de cortarse un dedo á la muerte de sus hijos.—Durante este viaje encontraron varias tribus cuyas costumbres se describen y tampoco faltaron hambres por la escasez de viveres. Llegan por fin á abocarse con el Paraguay por el cual se encaminan, y en el que los trabajos y el hambre se duplican, á causa de haberseles concluido por completo los viveres ; viendose precisados á comer los animales mas inmundos y las plantas mas agrestes. Para remediar tan urgente necesidad manda el capitán un vergantín á todo remo en busca de bastimentos á unos caserios bastante distantes, volviendo al poco tiempo bien provisto. Con esto pudieron llegar á dicho pueblo que se hallaba regido por un indio principal llamado *Jaquaron*, el cual les recibió muy bien y les provego de abundantes viveres. En este puerto que recibió el nombre de S. Ana estuvieron algunos dias y como vieron que los indios llevaban orejeras y planchas de oro y plata, quisieron saber de donde lo traían así los de este pueblo como los de otro inmediato á donde se mandó á Fr. <sup>co</sup> del Puerto.—Este pudo averiguar que los chandules (pueblo distante 60 ó 70 leguas), se lo daban en cambio de otros objetos. Determina el general continuar el viaje hasta los mismos chandules, que según decía se hallaban cercanos á la sierra.—Pueblos que fueron descubriendo por la ribera del río. El cap. gen. manda un vergantín delante para que descubre la boca del río Nepetín que según los indios significaba barriento por el color de sus aguas, el cual traía su origen, según los mismos, de la referida sierra. Tratan de celebrar paces con el pueblo de los agales, y al principio son bien recibidos, pero como temiesen los indios ser castigados por las muertes que antes habían hecho, matan traidoramente al teniente del vergantín Miguel Rifos con algunos mas, volviendo los restantes tristes á la galeota, que les había seguido desde lejos y con dificultades por las condiciones especiales del río. El desgraciado éxito de esta expedición y el saber que andaba una armada portuguesa en el río Solís fueron motivos para que el general determinase vol-

verse río abajo hasta el Paraná donde encontraron otra armada del Emperador, cuyo capitán Diego Garcia de Moguer trató de unirse á nuestra armada para volver bien pertrechados á la dicha sierra ; pero al fin no hubo convenio entre ambos generales, siguiendo cada cual rumbo distinto. Viendose indecisos mandan á España á Nersi Calderon y Royel Barco con una carabela y algunos presentes de oro y plata, para que expongan á S. M. las necesidades de la armada y mande proveer lo necesario. Desde S. Salvador á el río Solis á 10 de Julio de 1528.

LUIS RAMIREZ.

---

### XXXVIII.

*Abstract of the Narrative which Diego Garcia made of his voyage to the Plata in 1526.*

On the 15th of January, 1526, I sailed from Cape Finisterre, which lies in 43°, and from there sailed towards the Canaries, which are . . . \* leagues from Cape Finisterre, we passed by Madeira, which lies in 32°, 30', on the other side of which at . . . \* stands Porto Santo, and ten leagues from Madeira there is an island which is called Deserta. There we came to the Island of Palma, which lies at 29°, and at the Canaries we took on what we needed for our voyage, for we came from Corunna without supplies, and we left there the first of September, because in the middle of September the sun begins to bring the summer in the places we were going to, and every one sailing to those parts, ought to sail at this season—† “and this navigation Sebastian Cabot did not know enough to make, with all his astronomy, and took the contrary like a man who . . . .” ‡ and we took the direction of the Cape Verde Islands, and from the Canaries to these islands it is 250

---

\* The text is illegible. Many such breaks are found in the narrative.

† Literal translation of the text.

‡ The text is illegible.

leagues, at the Island of Buona Vista we took on a fresh supply of provisions.

( Here he tells the geographical position of the different islands of the Cape Verde group, and mentions the articles of their commerce ).

From the Island of Buona Vista we made sail towards Cape St. Augustin which is  $8^{\circ}$  and a sixth beyond the equinoctial line, and this course has to be sailed with great care and knowledge of seamanship, for there are strong currents running from the Gulf of Guinea \* “and these currents Sebastian Cabot did not know how to take, for he was not a seaman, and did not know navigation.” From the Cape Verde Islands to Cape St. Augustin it is 500 leagues across.

( Here he touches on the difficulty of this crossing on account of the currents. )

From there we passed to Cape Frio, which is at 23 degrees and  $\frac{1}{2}$  on the side of the south, where the sun makes the longest day on the 13th of December, and from Cape St. Augustin to Cape Frio is fifty leagues, and at seventeen degrees there is a bay which is called All-Saints', and all the coast from Cape St. Augustin to Cape Frio is inhabited by a bad race that eat human flesh and go naked, and from this bay to Cape Formoso at twenty-two degrees there are many rocks and sand-banks. We found there an island not marked on any chart, which we reserved for recognition till our return. From there we went for fresh supplies for the ships to the Bay of St. Vincent which is in thirteen degrees, where a certain bachelor and his son-in-law have been living thirty years, and we remained there till the 15th of January of the next year, 1527, and we obtained there a great supply of fresh meat and fish and whatever we wanted. From this bachelor's son-in-law I bought a brigantine and he agreed to come with us as interpreter. And I bargained with the bachelor and his son-in-law to let them have my big ship to carry eight hundred slaves to Spain, and made the bargain

---

\* Literal translation of the text.

with the agreement of all my officers ; and it was agreed that we should deliver the ship at the Rio de la Plata, because she could not enter the river, and I had often told Don Ferdinand's auditor that this ship could not enter the river on account of her size ; but they tried to make me load her with slaves, and I did so, because they did not carry out His Majesty's orders, that they should have given me what was agreed on in the bargains ; and they did not give me the ship at the time stipulated for, as they ought to have given me the ship in September and they did not give it to me till the middle of January.

We sailed from the Bay of St. Vincent in the middle of the month of January of the said year, and reached Cape St. Mary which is in thirty-four degrees and a half ; here is the entrance to the Rio de la Plata, and from St. Vincent to Cape St. Mary is two hundred and sixty-three leagues : \* "and going on our way we came to a river which is called the Rio de Patos, which is in twenty-seven degrees and has a good population who do much good work for the Christians and are called Carriares, and here they gave us much food, as millet, mandioco, meal &c., &c, for they were good Indians, and it was here that Sebastian Cabot arrived dead with hunger at the time while I was there, the Indians gave him food and all that he and his men needed for their voyage, and when he wanted to go where he was going he took four sons of the principal persons there, and carried them to Spain, and has three of them at Seville, which did harm to that harbor which was the best and the people the best in those parts because he had taken the sons of the principal men of the island."

Continuing our voyage we came to Cape St. Mary which is as we have said at thirty-four degrees and a half and outside of the cape there is an island called de los Pargos, and here we remained eight days waiting for our brigantine which came behind. And further on the river forms an island which is called La Palma, which gives good shelter for a few ships ; and on all the coast around not an Indian was seen, but fur-

---

\* *Literal translation of the text.*

ther on there is a population called Charruaes who eat human flesh and live by hunting and fishing. Here came our brigantine and we went to the Island of Las Pietras seventy leagues further on. Here we remained to put together the brigantine which we were carrying in separate pieces, and after she was equipped I began to ascend the river with her and after sailing twenty-five leagues we came to a place where there were two of Sebastian Cabot's ships, and Anthony de Grajeda was there as a guard.\* "He came against us with some Indian canoes and an armed boat believing we were Rojas and Michael Rodas and Martin Mendez coming to attack him, for he had left them on an island abandoned among Indians, and we thought we should have to fight supposing that he came to hurt us. But I recognized him as Anthony de Grajeda, and we knew at once that it was Sebastian Cabot's fleet, and we went with him to his ships and he showed us great honor, and gave us news of his Captain-general, and how he had received a letter that day in which he informed him how he had killed more than four hundred Indians, and was going with great victory further up the river making war on the Indians. We went back to our ships and with the approval of all my officers it was immediately agreed to send the ship out of the river because she was in great danger from the strong winds blowing at that season in the river, and let her go to take in the cargo of slaves of the said bachelor who had chartered her for Spain, and would carry the news how Sebastian Caboto was doing on the river." And the (big) ship went to St. Vincent, and the others joined Sebastian Cabot's ships, and fifteen days after, I left there on my brigantine with sixty men and we arrived eighty leagues further up at a place where Sebastian Cabot had for a fort a house all made of straw and he called it the Fort of San Espiritu, and Gregory Caro was there on guard. So far we saw no Indians, and in this place and around it there were Indians called Guaranis.\* "We urged Gregory Caro to abandon this conquest because it did not concern him, and he answered us very well, and said that they were in that house for His Majesty and Se-

---

\* Literal translation of the text.



bastian Cabot, and for the rest, he was at my command ( *respondio muy bien, dijo que todo lo obederia, e questavan en aquella casa por su mayestad e por Sebastian gavoto e que estava a mi servicio*), and gave us news of his captain, that the Indians had told him that Sebastian Cabot had been defeated further up, and many men killed, and begged me if I found any of them in the places where I was going to make discoveries, that I would ransom them and he would pay me back the price, and commended himself to my mercy, that if his captain was dead I would not leave him on the River, but take him with me and I should be doing a service to God and Your Majesty." I sailed from there on Good Friday and in twenty-seven days I discovered as much as Sebastian Cabot in five months and we navigated the river as far as St. Ann in Paraguay. From the harbor of San Espiritu to this place is one hundred leagues and it is in the 28th degree.\* "And it was up to this place of St. Ann that we discovered and Sebastian Cabot discovered, and above here. . . † leagues they killed his first men he had with him, and they killed through his fault twenty and ( or ? ) thirty men, and this was . . . † We went to them, and did not see them nor find them, and this is the truth that we came as far as this, he and we."

Here he gives the names of some of the people he met, Guaranis, Iaanaes, etc.; of their customs he only says what they eat, "comen carne, comen pescado e carne," etc., and asserts that these populations "dan nuevas deste paraguay que en el ay mucho oro e plata e grandes riquezas e piedras preciosas." And with the record of these riches his narrative ends: "y esto es lo que sabemos deste descubrimiento."

---

\* Literal translation of the text.

† Text illegible.

## XXXIX.

*Inscription on the chart of Sebastian Cabot of 1544, relative to his exploration of la Plata.*

Llaman los Indios a este gran Rio el Ryo hurnai, en Castellán el Rio de la Plata toma este nombre del Rio hurnai el qual es un Rio muy caudaloso que entra en el gran Rio de Parana descubriolo Ioan Diaz de Solis piloto mayor de los catholicos reynos de gloriosa memoria y descubrio hasta una isla que el dicho Ioan Diaz puso nombre la isla de Martin Garcia, porque en ella entierro un marinero, que se decia Martin Garcia, la qual dicha isla esta obra treynta leguas arriba de la boca deste Rio y coste le bien caro lo dicho descubrimiento, porque los Indios de la dha tierra lo mataron, y lo comieron, y despues passados muchos Annos lo bolvio a hallar Sebastian Caboto Capitan y Piloto mayor de S. c. m. del Imperador don Carlos quinto deste nombre, y Rey nuestro Sennor, el qual yva por Capitan general de una armada que su majestad mando hazer para el descubrimiento de Tarsis, y Catayo Oriental, el qua dho capitan Sebastiã Caboto vino a este Rio por caso fortuito, porque la nao capitana en que yva sele perdio, y visto que no podia seguir el dho su viaie, accordo de descubrir con lagente que lluava el dicho Rio, vista la grãdissima relacion, que los Indios de la tierra le dieron de la grãdissima riqueza de oro, y plata, que enla dha tierra avia, y no sin grãdissimo trabaio y hambre, y peligros asi de su persona como de los que conel yvan, y procuro el dho capitan de hazer cerca del dicho rio algunas poblaciones de la gente que llevo de espana. Este Rio es mayor que nynguno de quãtos aca se conoscen tiene de enco enla entrada, que entra enla mar, veinte y cinco leguas, en ancho la causa de ser tan grãde y poderoso, es que entran enel otros muchos rios grãdes y caudalos Es rio de infinitissimo pescado, y el mejor que ay enel mundo, le gente en llegãdo aquella terra quiso connoscer si era fertil, y apareiada para labrar y llevar pan y senbraron en el mes de setiembre

LII granos de tigre que no se hallo mas en las naos y cogieron luego en el mes de deziembre cinqueta, y do mill granos de tigre, que esa misma fertilidad se hallo en todas las otras semillas. Los que en aquella tierra biven dicen que no lexos de ay en la tierra a dentro que ay unas grãdes sierras de donde sacan infinitissimo oro, y que mas adelante en las mismas sierras, sacan infinita plata. Ay en esta tierra unas aveias grandes como asnos comunes, de figura de camelbos, salvo que tienen lalana tan fina como seda, y otras muy diversas animales. Lagente de la dha tierra es muy discrete entre si, porque los que biven en las aldeas de las sierras son blancos como nos otros, y los que estan hazia la Ribera del Rio, son mornos. Algunos dellos dicen que en las dhas sierras ay hombres que tienen el Rostro como de perro y otros de la rodilla abaxo como de Abestruz y que estos son grandes trabaiadores, y que cogen mucho mays de que hazen pan y vino del, otras muchas cosas dicen de aquella tierra que no se pone aquy por no ser prolixas.

---

XL.

*Abstract of the summons made by Diego Garcia on Captain Francis de Rojas, in the name of Sebastian Cabot.*

It commences with Diego Garcia's order to the notary of his squadron to proceed to deliver to Captain Francis de Rojas in person an order of Sebastian Cabot. The document is dated at the Port of St. Vincent, Tuesday, March 22, 1530.

Next follows Sebastian Cabot's order. It commands Captain Rojas to come on board of the Santa Maria del Espinar, now the flag-ship, "to be taken to Spain and delivered to His Majesty, and to the council of the Indies, to account for and answer certain accusations that have been made against you, for acts against His Majesty's service and mine." He was to present himself within six days, under penalty of life and the loss of all his property; and, if not obeying, he was to be

held thenceforth as condemned, and his property confiscated for the Chambers and Treasury of His Majesty. In order that he should not fear to present himself, he gave him his faith and word on behalf of the King to grant him any safe conduct he wanted for his personal security, until delivered to His Majesty or to the royal council of the Indies.

This order bears the same date as the preceding

Then comes the declaration of Diego Garcia's notary, which avers that he presented to Captain Francis de Rojas the above order on Tuesday, March 24, 1530, at the house of Gonzalo da Costa, a Portuguese. Rojas answered that he would reply within the time allowed by law ; the names of four witnesses present at the service of the order, come after.

Next follows the reply of Rojas. It begins by declaring that he does not recognize Cabot's authority over him, since he had long ago removed him from his power and jurisdiction, abandoning him in a land of Infidels who eat human flesh, and left him the slave of an Indian, where he had suffered much and undergone great peril. Now recalling that Cabot had been the cause of it all, he saw plainly that, as before, so now also he wanted to cause his death, and therefore tried to bring him by fraud into his power in order to dispose of him at his pleasure. But he would not second his intentions. He was ready to proceed to give an account of his conduct to His Majesty, but with some one not under Cabot's orders, and as he truly desired to serve His Majesty, and has learned that Cabot left seventy to eighty men at Cape St. Mary, he offers to go there and take them off as he has a ship built in partnership with Gonzalo da Costa. But as this ship is not yet equipped he demands of Cabot all the men and supplies needed for fitting it out. On returning he and they will place themselves under his command. And since he has been told that at the Isle of Patos he seized four Indians by whose capture the whole land is turned upside down, he offers to take those young men back to their island.

Rojas then reports that the emperor had authorized all the Captains and officers of Cabot's fleet to carry off two slaves apiece. And as he has his two, he demands that Cabot take

them on his ship and carry them and deliver them to his relatives in Spain.

The reply of Rojas is dated Saturday, March 26 ; and the Monday following, the 28th, the notary Alonzo Gomez Varela of Diego Garcia's squadron, carried the reply to Cabot. Cabot required it to be written in legal form for presentation to His Majesty and the Council of the Indies.

---

## XLI.

*Historia geral do Brazil . . . por un socio do Instituto historico do Brazil, natural de Sorocaba.* (F. Ad de Varnhagen.)—Madrid, 1854. Tomo primeiro. (Bibl. Nact. LII-3) p. 439.

### *Carta de Simão Affonso—de Sevilla.*

Sñr. en estou vesta cidade de sevilha esperãdo reguado de Vosa Alteza pa daqui hir a corte do emperador pedir execucao cotra João frz. de crasto e seus bensse V. A. asi onner per seu serviço por que aqui ja esta determinado q. se não ha de fazer sem o d. ° conselho vir per especial mãdado as justiças desta cidade que a fação segundo tenho escrito a V. A. e per não ver mandado de V. A. não são ja partydo por que sua justiça se perde e esto se dilatar mãdeme V. A. o que for seu serviço porque não espero outra cousa. esta somana chegou aqui hum piloto e capitão que era hydo a descobrir terra o qual se chama gabote piloto mor destes reinos e he ho que mãdon o navio que veo ter a lixboa agora ha dous anos que trazia nova de huma tera descuberta polo rio Perenai qui dezião ser de muito ouro e prata, elle veo muy desbaratado e pobre por q. dize que não tras ouro nem prata nem cousa algua de proveito aos armadores e deduzentoshomems que leuon não tras vyte que todos los outras dyzen que la ficão mortos hums de trabalho e fame outros de guera q. cos mouros tiverão por q. as frechadas dize q. matarão muitos deles e lhe desfizerão hua fortaleza de madeyra que la tinhão feyta, de maneira que

elles vem mal contentes e o piloto está presso e dizem que queren mǎdar á corte ver o q. mǎdão q. se dele faça, o q. disto pude saber e se aqui pobrica aynder que muy paso he que na terra que dezião ser descuberto não deixão nenhum reguado saluo a gente morta e o gasto perdido. dizem com tudo estes homes que vierão que a terra he de muita prata e ouro e a cauza perq. não trazem nada he segundo dizem per que o capitão os não quis de-ixar tractar e tanbem perque os mouros os enganarão e se al-  
 evanartarão contrelles disto podera V. A. creer o que lhe parecer, da terra ficar deserta não tenha duvida o rio dizem que he muy grande e alto e muito largo, na entrada. se V. A. onner por seu seruiço mǎdar la agora o podera fazer, porq. esta gente apartase muito donde não ve dr. °, e se acerca disto poder ao diãte saber mais particularidades escreuerei á V. A., noso sñr a vida e real estado de V. A. conserve e acrecente per muitos anos, de sevilha ha ij dagosto de 1530 — Simão, doctor.

---

## XLII.

1533. *Letter of Sebastian Cabot to H. M's Secretary Juan de Samano.* (Seville, 24 of June).

Al muy magnifico señor el señor Juan de Samano secretario de su magestad mi señor en madrid.

muy magnifico Señor=

oy dia del bien aventurado san Juan recebi una carta del adelantado de canaria por la qual me parece que todavia tiene gana de tomar la empresa del rio de parana que tan caro me questa un criado del dicho adelantado me dio la carta y me diyo que va alla y lleva carta del dicho adelantado para los señores del consejo sobra la dicha empresa plega dios nuestro señor de encaminarle todo como su santa fe catolica sea aumentada y el ynperador nuestro señor servido. Señor la carta que vuestra merced me envio a mandar que yriese ya la

tengo acabada y dada al contador dela casa dela contratacion para que la envie la vuestra merced Suplico a vuestra merced me perdone por no averla acabado mas presto y en verdad sino fuera por la muerte de my hija y por la dolencia de my muger y mya dias ha que vuestra merced la huvyera recebido bien pense de llevarla yo mismo (con otras dos que tengo fecho para su magestad) creo que su magestad y los señores del Consejo quedaran satisfechos della porque veran como se puede navegar por redondo por sus derotas como se açe por una carta y la causa porque nordestea y noruestea la guja y como es forçoso que lo haga y que tantas quartas a de nord-estear y noruestear antes que torna abolverce azia el norte y en que meridiano y con esto terra su magestad la regla cierta para tomar la longitud.

Señor suplico á vuestra merced me aga merced de escribir á estos Señores oficiales dela casa dela contratacion que me socorran con un tercio de my salario adelantado para que me pueda desmpechar de a qui e yr alla a besar las manos de vuestra merced y a ablar con los señores del Consejo y llevarle un criado mas que quedo enla carta del brasil el qual vino con los portogueses que de alla vinieron para de relacion de todo lo que alla an fecho los portogueses y esto suplico a vuestra merced allende de otra muchas mercedes que de vuestra merced tengo recibidas, nuestro señor guarde la magnifica persona de vuestra merced y estado acreciente como por vuestra merced es deseado y vuestro servidore desean y a my Señora dona Juana beso la mano de Sevilla oy dia del bien aventurado San Juan del 1533 años besa la mano de vuestra merced su muy cierto servidor—Sebastian Cabofo—hay una firma.”

Es copia conforme con el original de su referencia esistente en este Archivo Grat de India, en el. Ectante 143—Cajon 3—Legajo 11.

*Sevilla de Junio de 1891.*

El Archivero-Géfe  
CARLO SIMENER-HACE.

## XLIII.

*Extract from the Letter of Robert Thorne to the King of England, Henry VIII, in 1527, inviting him to open a way into the northern seas in order to put himself in communication with the eastern lands of Cathay.*

Yet these dangers or darkness hath not letted the Spaniards and Portuguese and others, to discover many unknown realms to their great peril. Which considered (and that your Graces subjects may have the same light) it will seem your Graces subjects to be without activity or courage, in leaving to do this glorious and noble enterprise. For they being past this little way which they named so dangerous, (which may be two or three leagues before they come to the Pole, and as much more after they pass the Pole) it is clear, that from thenceforth the seas are as temperate as in these parts, and that then it may be at the will and pleasure of the mariners, to choose whether they will sail by the coasts, that be cold, temperate or not. For they being past the Pole, it is plain they may decline to what part they list.

If theis will go toward the Orient, they shall enjoy the regions of all the Tartarians that extends toward the midday, and from thence they may go and proceed to the land of the Chinese, and from thence to the land of Cathaio Oriental, which is of all the mainland, most Oriental that can be reckoned from our habitation. And if, from thence, they do continue their navigation, following the coasts that return toward the Occident, they shall fall in with Malaca, and so with all the Indies, which we call Oriental, and following the way, may return hither by the Cape of Buona Speranza ; and thus they shall compass the whole world. And if they will take their course after they be past the Pole, toward the Occident, they shall go in the backside of the Newfoundland, and which of late was discovered by your Grace's servants. And so continu-



ing their voyage, they may return through the strait of Magellan to this country, and so they compass also the world by that way ; and if they go this third way, and after they be past the Pole, go right toward the Pole antarctic, and then decline towards the lands and island situated between the Tropics, and under the Equinoctial, without doubt they shall find there the richest lands and islands of the World of Gold, precious stones, balmes, spices, and other things that we here esteem most which come out of strange countries, and may return the same way.

By this it appeareth, your Grace hath not only a great advantage of the riches, but also your subjects shall not travel halfe of the way that others do, which go round about as aforesaid.

.....

To which places there is left one way to discover, which is into the North ; for that of the four parts of the world, it seemeth three parts are discovered by other princes. For out of Spaine they have discovered all the Indies and seas Occidental and out of Portugal all the Indies and seas Oriental : so that by this part of the Orient and Occident, they have compassed the world. For the one of them departing toward the Orient, and the other toward the Occident, met again in the course or way of the midst of the day, and so then was discovered a great part of the same seas and coasts by the Spaniards. So that now rest to be discovered the said North parts, the which it seemeth to me, is only your charge and duty. Because the situation of this your realm ys thereunto nearest and aptest of all others ; and also for that you have already taken it in hand. And in mine opinion it will not seem well to leave so great and profitable an enterprize, seeing it may so easily and with so little cost, labor, and danger, be followed and obtained, though heretofore your Grace hath made thereof a prooffe, and found not the commodity thereby as you trusted, at this time it shall be no impediment. . . . . etc.

Hakluyt, vol. i, p. 213.

## XLIV.

*Extract from the Letter of Robert Thorne to D. Ley, Ambassador of Henry VIII in Spain, in regard to the new lands discovered in the West Indies.*

. . . . . For out of Spaine they have discovered all the Indies and seas Occidental, and out of Portugale all the Indies and seas Oriental . . . . so that nowe rest to bee discovered the said North partes, the which it seemeth to mee is onely your charge and dutie. Because the situation of this your Realme is thereunto neerest and aptest of all other : and also for that you have already taken it in hande, and in mine opinion, it will not seeme well to leave so great and profitable an enterprise . . . . Though, heretofore, your Grace hath made thereof a prooffe, and found not the commoditie thereby as you trusted, at this time it shall bee no impediment. For there may bee nowe provided remedies . . . . and lettes remooved that then were cause your Grace's desire tooke no full effect, which is, the courses to be chaunged, and followe the aforesaid new courses.

And nowe to declare some thing . . . . it ys very cleere and certaine that the seas that commonly men say that without great danger, difficultie, and perill, yea, rather, it is impossible to passe, those same seas bee navigable, and without any such daunger but that shippes may passe . . . . For they (*your Grace's Subiects*), being past this little way which they named so dangerous, which may bee ii or iii leagues before they come to y<sup>e</sup> Pole, and as much more after they passe the Pole, it is cleere that from thence forth the seas and Landes are as temperat as in these partes, and that then it may be at the will and pleasure of the mariners to choose whither they will saile . . . . For they being past the Pole, it is plaine they maye decline to what parte they list. If they will goe towarde the Orient they shall inioy the regions of all the Tartarians . . . . from thence . . . . to the land of

y<sup>e</sup> Chinas . . . of Cathaio oriental. . . . And if they will take their course after they be past the pole towarde the occident, they shall goe in the backe side of the new found lande, which of late was discovered by your Grace's subiectes, untill they come to the backside and South seas of the Indies occidentall. And so continuing their viage, they may returne thorowe the Straite of Magallanos to this countrey . . . . and if they goe this thirde way, and after they bee past the pole, goe right towarde the pole Antartike, and then decline toward the lands and Ilands situated betweene the Tropikes and under the Equinoctial....and may returne the same way."\* Hakluyt, I. 243.

---

XLV.

*Pension given by Edward VI to Sebastian Cabot.*

Edwardus sextus Dei gratia Angliæ, Franciæ, et Hiberniæ rex omnibus Christi fidelibus ad quos præsentis hae literae nostrae pervenerint, salutem. Sciatis quod nos in consideratione boni et acceptabilis servitij, nobis per dilectum servientem nostrum Sebastianum Cabotam impensi atque impendendi, de gratia nostra speciali, ac ex certa scientia, et mero motu nostro, nec non de advisamento, et consensu praeclarissimi avunculi nostri Edwardi Ducis Somerseti personae nostrae Gubernatoris, ac Regnorum, dominiorum subditorumque nostrorum protectoris, et caeterorum consiliariorum nostrorum, dedimus et concessimus, ac per præsentis damus et concedimus eidem Sebastiano Cabotae, quandam annuitatem sive annalem redditum eidem Sebastiano Cabotae, durante vita sua naturali, de thesauro nostro ad receptum seacarij nostri Westmonasterij per manus thesaurariorum et Camerariorum nostrorum, ibidem pro tempore existentium, ad festa annuntiationis beatae Mariae Virginis, nativitatis sancti Joannis Baptistae,

---

\* Robert Thorne supposed, like many others, that the polar seas were as easily navigable as our own.

sancti Michaelis Archangeli, et Natalis Domini per aequales portiones solvendum. Et ulterius de uberiori gratia nostra, ac de advisamento, et consensu praedictis damus, et per praesentes concedimus praefato Sebastiano Cabotae, tot et tantas Denariorum summas, ad quot et quantas dicta annuitas sive annalis reditus centum sexaginta sex librarum, tresdecim solidorum, et quatuor denariorum, a festo sancti Michaelis Archangeli ultimo praeterito huc usque se extendit, et attingit, habendas et recipiendas praefato Sebastiano Cabotae et assignatis suis de thesauro nostro praedicto per manus praedictorum Thesaurariorum, et Camerariorum nostrorum de dono nostro absque computo, seu aliquo alio nobis, haeredibus, vel successoribus nostris proinde reddendo, solvendo, vel faciendo: eo quod expressa mentio, etc. In cuius rei testimonium etc. Teste Rege, apud Westmonasterium 6 die Januarij, anno 2. Regis Edwardi sexti." Hakluyt, III, 31. Ed. 1600.

---

XLVI.

*Dispatches of the English Ambassadors on the request for Sebastian Cabot's return to Spain.*

25 Nov. 1549.

And farther where as one Sebastian Gaboto general p[ilot] of the emperours Indias is presently in England forasmuch as he cannot stand the King your Mr. in any greate [stead] seing he hath smale practise in these sees and is a v [erie] necessary man for the emperour whose servaunt he is [and] hath a pencion of hym his ma<sup>tie</sup> desyreth sume ordre[to] be taken for his sending over in suche sorte as his [ma<sup>tes</sup>] Ambassadour shall at better length declare unto the king your Mr<sup>s</sup> counsell.

[Cotton M. Galba B. XII, fo. 124. Despatch from sir Thos. Cheyne and sir Phil. Hoby, English ambassadors to Charles V, to the Privy Council. Brussels, 25 nov. 1549].

## XLVII.

*Reply of the English Ministers to the request to send back Cabot.*

And as for Sebastian Cabot answere was first made to the said Amb.<sup>or</sup> that he was not detained heere by us, but that he of himself refused to go either into Spayne or to the emp<sup>or</sup>, and that he being of that mind and the kinges subiecte, no reason nor equitie wolde that he shulde be forced or compelled to go against his will. Upon the w<sup>ch</sup> aunswere, the said Am<sup>dor</sup> said that if this were Cabottes aunswere then he required that the said Cabot in the presence of some one whom we could appointe might speke with the said Amb<sup>dor</sup> and declare unto him this to be his mind and aunswere wherunto we condescended, and at the last, sent the said Cabot w<sup>t</sup> Richard Shelley to thembassador. Who as the said Shelley hathe made report to us, affirmed to the said Amb<sup>dor</sup> that he was not minded to go neither into Spayne nor to themp<sup>or</sup> Nevertheles having knowlege, of certain thinges verie necessarie for the Emp<sup>ors</sup> knowlege, he was well contented for the good well he bere themp<sup>or</sup> to write his mind unto him, or declare the same here to enie such as shulde be appointed to heare him. Wherunto the said amb<sup>dor</sup> asked the said Cabot, in case the kinges mat<sup>ie</sup> or we shuld command him to go to themp<sup>or</sup> whether then he wold not do it? Wherunto Cabot made aunswere as Shelley reportethe that if the kinges highnes or we did command him so to do, then he knew wel moughe what he had to do. But it semeth that the amb<sup>dor</sup> tooke this aunswere of Cabot to sound as though Cabot had answered, that being commanded by the Kinges highnes, or us that then he wolde be contented to go to the emp<sup>or</sup> wherin we reken the said Amb<sup>dor</sup> to be deceived, forthat the said Cabot had divers times before declared unto us that he was fullie determined not to go hens at all.

Grenewich, 21 april 1550. The counsail to sir Ph. H.

[British Museum, Harleyan Mss. 523 f. q.]

## XLVIII.

*Letter of Charles V to Mary Tudor for Sebastian Cabot's return.*

Tres haulte tres excellente et tres puissante princesse nostre tres chiere et tres amee bonne seur et cousine. Pour ce que desirerions communiquer aucuns affaires concernans la sheurete de la navigation de noz Royaulmes et pays avec le capitaine cabote cidevant pilote de noz Royaulmes de Spaignes, et le quel de nostre gre et consentement sest puis aucune annees passe en Angleterre nous vous requerons bien affectueusement, donner conge audit cabote et luy permecter venir devers nous, pour avec lui communiquer sur ce que dessus. Et vous ferez en ce tres agreable plesir selon qu'avons en charge a nos ambassadeurs devers vous le vous declarer plus particulierement. Atani tres haulte tres excellente et tres puissante princesse nre. chiere et tres amee bonne seur et cousine nous prions le createur vous avoir en sa tres sainte et digne garde. A Mons en Haynnau le IX<sup>e</sup> de septembre 1553.

vre bon frere et cousin Charles

Baué

A tres haulte tres excellente et tres puissante princesse nre. tres chiere et tres amee bonne seur et cousine la Royne d'Angleterre.

M. W. B. Turnbull, *Foreign Calendars*, 1553-58, t. i, No. 31, p. 10.

## XLIX.

*Dispatch of the Council of Ten to James Soranzo, Venetian Ambassador to England, as to the manner of sending Sebastian Cabot to Venice, 12 September 1551.*

Per le lettere vostre de' 17 dei mese passato indriciate alli Capi del Consiglio nostro di Dieci, havemo inteso quello che vi è occorso di avvisarne in materia del fedelissimo nostro Seba-

stiano Gaboto, il che mi è stato molto grato, et vi laudamo della diligentia che avete usato in darne particolar informatione delle qualità et conditioni soe : in risposta delle quali vi dicemo che li dobbiate far intendere che questa sua offerta ne è stata gratissima, usandole quelle bone parole che vi parevano per la prudentia vostra ; et quanto alla richiesta che vi è stata fata da quei signori circa li crediti che pretende et ricuperatione de beni, li risponderete che noi desideramo in tutto quello che potemo far cosa grata a aquella Maestà, ed a loro Signorie, ma che non essendo il detto Caboto conosciuto da alcuno de qui, saria necessario che esso medesimo venisse per giustificare la sua persona et le ragion sue, essendo quelle cose di che si parla molto vecchie, e questo istesso havemo risposto al Magnifico Ambasciator di quella Maestà, il quale di ciò ne ha fatto instantia in conformità delle lettere vostre, però anchora ed esso Gaboto farete intender il tutto. Con questa occasione possa dimandare et ottenere la licentia di venire, la quale vederete, che il procuri di avere, trasferendosi di qui quanto più presto potrà, ne restarete però in questo mezo di sforzarvi di intendere da lui più avanti quei maggior particolari che potrete dir, e il disegno suo di questa navigatione, dando del tutto particolare notitia alli capi

+ 25—2—0

[Archivio di Stato, Venezia, Consiglio dei Dieci, Parti Secrete, Filza N. 8, 1551-54].

---

L.

*Dispatch of Peter Vannes, Ambassador of England to Venice, on the recommendations in favor of Sebastian Cabot.*

To the Council

. . . . Touching Sebastian Cabot's matter, concerning which the Venetian Ambassador has also written, he has recommended the same to the Seigniory, and in their presence delivered to one of their secretaries Baptista Ramusio, whom

cabot put in trust, such evidences as came to his hands. The Seigniorie were well pleased that one of their subjects by service and virtue should deserve the Councils good will and favour; and although this matter is about 50 years old, and by the death of men, decaying of houses and perishing of writings, as well as his own absence it were hard to come to any assured knowledge thereof, they have commanded Ramusio to ensearch with diligence any way and knowledge possible that may stand to the said Sebastian's profit and obtaining of right.

M. W.<sup>m</sup> B. Turnbull, [ *Foreign Calendar*, dra, 1861, p. 171, N. 444 ].

---

## LI.

*Extract from the Narrative of Ramusio's second Anonymous on the Voyages to the North-East seas.*

Si aveva messo in fantasia Sebastiano Cabota inglese, nato di padre venetiano, instrutto prima da Giovanni Caboto suo padre, e molti anni col pensier discorso haveva, poter essere che qualche passo fosse nel mar settentrionale, per il quale o di verso Levante o di verso Ponente con breve navigatione e facile da queste nostre parti nel grande Oceano Indico passare si potesse, purchè dall'oppositione di qualche terra incognita esso passo impedito non fosse, persuaso ad immaginarsi questa cosa così dal testimonio d'alcuni authori antiqui, come dall'esperienza de' molti moderni. Gli argomenti che movevano et il padre et il figliuolo a credere, che questo esser potesse, erano che Plinio servendosi del testimonio di Cornelio Nepote scrive che dal Re di Svetia furon donati a Metello Celere proconsole della Gallia, alcuni mercadanti Indiani, che erano da fortuna marittima stati trasportati da' lor paesi ne' liti di Svetia. Dicono ancora trovasse scritto, che a' tempi di Ottone Imperatore fu presa nel mar settentrionale Germanico una certa nave, che di Levante dalla forza de' contrari venti vi era stata portata. Il che ( come essi affermano ) a modo alcuno far non



si saria potuto, se quel mare settentrionale fosse per cagione de' gran freddi e ghiacci semper innavigabile. Un altro argomento ancora havevano ; che oltre il mar Indico, il golfo Gangetico, l'Aurea Chersoneso, over Malacha, e la provincia de Sina, et oltra le navigationi de' Moderni, sapevano di certo, che questo mare Indico era posto in lunghezza quasi nel grado 180 et in larghezza nel 25 grado, poco di la del meridiano di Tartaria, e dell'amplissimo imperio del Cathai (qual da naviganti è cercato, come scopo e premio delle fatiche loro) e considerando come e quanto questo gran mar delle Indie si andasse ogni hor più sotto questo meridiano ingolfando e piegando verso settentrione, non con legger coniettura, ne senza ragione (essendo che le cose incognite possono essere cosi false come vere) giudicavano esser verisimile, che se il mar nostro settentrionale o di verso levante o di verso ponente si distendesse alla volta di Mezo giorno se particolarmente sotto quell'istesso meridiano, sotto il quale il mar Indico verso settentrione si piega, che facilmente sotto l'istesso meridiano col mar d'India congiungere si potrebbe . . . . . Questi sono i principali argomenti, ne' quali Sebastiano Cabota confidatosi, persuase agli huomini di questi paesi, di potersene passare dal mar settentrionale dalla banda di Levante (perciocchè quella di Ponente havevano indarno et esso et il padre cercata ) facilmente et in curto tempo nell'India Orientale, o almeno di giungere nel regno del Cathai, di dove sperava ritornare carico di oro, di gioie e di speziarie.

*Ramusio*, 2.<sup>a</sup> Ediz., Venezia, 1606, presso i Giunti, vol. ii, p. 212.

---

## LII.

*Extract from Lanquet's Chronicle on the Voyage of 1553 to the North-East.*

In this meane whyle there were three noble shyppes furnyshed for the great adventure of the unknown viage into the easte by the north seas. The great encourager of this

viage was Sebastian Gaboto, an englisheman, borne at Bristow, but a Genoways sonne. These shyys dyd shortly after passe gallantly by Grenewiche in the kinges presence, one of the mariners Standyng upon the mayne topmaste of one of them."

[*Lanquet, Cooper et Crowley. An Epitome of cronicles, London, Thomas Marshe, 1559, sub anno 1553*].

---

### LIII.

*Extract from Grafton's Chronicle on the same Voyage.*

About this time there were three noble ships set forth and furnished for the great adventure of the unknowne voyage into the East, by the North seas. The great doer and encourager of which voyage was Sebastian Gaboto an Englishe man, borne at Bristow, but was the sonne of a Genoway. These shipes at the last arrived in the country of Muscovia, not without great losse and danger, and namely of their captain, who was a worthy and advenferous gentlemā called sir Hugh Willoughby, Knight, who beyng tossed and driven by tempest, hee was at the last found in his ship frozen to death and all his people. But now the said voyage and trade is greatly advanced. . .

[*Grafton, A Chronicle at large, London, 1569, sub anno 1553*].

---

### LIV.

*Extract from Holinshed's Chronicle on the same Voyage.*

Edward VI An. Reg. 6	About this time there were three notable ships set forth and furnished for the great adventure of the unknowne voyage into the east by the north seas. The great doer and encourager of which voiage was Sebastian
-------------------------	--

Gaboto an Englishmā born at Bristow, but was the son of a Genowaies. These ships at the last arrived in the countrie of Moscovia not without great losse and danger, and namely of their captaine, who was a worthie and adventurous gentleman called sir Hugh Willoughby knight who being tossed and driven by tempest, he was at the last founde in his ship frozen to death and all his people. But now the sayde voyage and trade is greatly advanced . . .

[*Holinshed*, The Chronicles of Englande, Scotlande, and Irelande, London, 1557, t. ii, p. 1714, sub anno 1553].

---

LV.

*Extract from John Stow's Chronicle on the same Voyage.*

Edward VI  
A. D. 1553

The twentieth of May, by the encouragement of one Sebastian Cabotte three great ships wel furnished were sette forthe for the adventure of the unknown voyage to Muscovia, and other easte partes by the North seas, divers merchants and other being free of that voyage, yeilded towards the charges of the same five and twentie pounds apeece. Sir George Barnes and Sir William Garrard being y<sup>e</sup> principal doers therein.

[*Stow*, Chronicle, Lond. 1580, p. 1057].

---

LVI.

*Cabot's Instructions.*

Ordinances, instructions, and advertisements of and for the direction of the intended voyage for Cathay, compiled, made and delivered by the right worshipfull M. Sebastian Cabota Esquier governour of the mysterie and companie of the Marchants adventurers for the discoverie of Regions,

Dominions, Islands and places unknowen, the 9. day of May, in the yere of Lord God 1553 and in the 7. yeere of the reigne of our most dread soveraigne Lord Edward the 6 by the grace of God, king of England, Fraunce and Ireland, defender of the faith, and of the Church of England and Ireland, in earth supream head.

First the Captaine general, with the pilot maior, the masters, marchants and other officers, to be so knit and accorded in unitie, love, conformitie, and obedience in every degree on all sides, that no dissention, variance, or contention may rise or spring betwixt them and the mariners of this companie, to the damage or hinderance of the voyage: for that dissention (by many experiences) hath overthrowen many notable intended and likely enterprises and exploits.

2 Item, for as much as every person hath given an othe to be true, faithfull, and loial subjects, and liege men to the kings most excellent Maiestie, his heires and successors, and for the observation of all lawes and statutes, made for the preservation of his most excellent Maiestie, and his crown Imperiall of his realmes of England and Ireland, and to serve his Grace, the Realme, and this present voyage truely, and not to give up, intermit or leave off the said voyage and enterprise untill it shalbe accomplished, so farre forth as possibilitie and life of man may serve or extend: Therefore it behoveth every person in his degree, as well for conscience, as for dueties sake to remember his said charge, and the accomplishment thereof.

3 Item, where furthermore every mariner or passenger in his ship hath given like othe to bee obedient, to the Captaine generall, and to every Captaine and master in his ship, for the observation of these present orders contained in this booke, and all other which hereafter shalbe made by the 12 counsailers in the present book named, or the most part of them, for the better conduction, and preservation of the fleete, and atchieving of the voyage, and to be prompt, ready and obedient in all acts and feates of honesty, reason, and duetic to be ministred, shewed and executed, in advancement and preferment of the voyage and exploit: therefore it is

convenient that this present booke shall once every weeke ( by the discretion of the Captaine ) be read to the said companie, to the intent that every man may the better remember his othe, conscience, duetie and charge.

4 Item, every person by vertue of his othe, to doe effectually and with good wil ( as farre forth as him shall complie ) all and every such act and acts, deede or deeds, as shalbe to him or them from time to time commanded, committed and enioyned (during the voyage ) by the Captain generall, with the assent of the Counsell and assistants, as well in and during the whole Navigation and voyage, as also in discovering and landing, as cases and occasions shall require.

5 Item, all courses in Navigation to be set and kept, by the advice of the Captaine Pilot maior, masters, and master mates, with the assents of the counsailers and the most number of them and in voyces uniformly agreeing in one to prevaile, and take place, so that the Captaine generall, shall in all counsailes and assemblies have a double voyce.

6 Item, that the fleete shall keep together, and not separate themselves asunder, as much as by winde and weather may be done or permitted, and that the Captaines, Pilots and masters shall speedily come aboard the Admiral, when and as often as he shall seeme to have iust cause to assemlee them for counsaile or consultation to be had concerning the affaires of the fleete and voyage.

7 Item, that the marchants, and other skilful persons in writing, shal daily write, describe, and put in memorie the Navigation of every day and night, with the points, ond observation of the lands, tides, elements, altitude of the sunne, course of the moon and starres, and the same so noted by the order of the Master and pilot of ever ship to be put in writing the captaine generall assembling the masters together once every weeke (if winde and weather shal serve) to conferre all the observations and notes of the said ships, to the intent it may appeare wherein the notes do agree, and wherein they dissent, and upon good debatement, deliberation and conclusion determined, to put the same into a common leger, to remain of record for the company: the like

order to be kept in proportioning of the Cardes, Astrolabes, and other instruments prepared for the voyage, at the charge of the companie.

8 Item, that all enterprises and exploits of discovering or landing to search Iles, regions and such like, to be searched and attempted, and enterprised by good deliberation and common assent, determined advisedly. And that in all enterprises, notable ambassages, suites, requests, or presentement of giftes, or presents to Princes, to be done and executed by the captaine generall in person, or by such other, as he by common assent shall appoint or assigne to doe or cause to be done in the same.

9 Item, the steward and cooke of every ship, and their associats, to give and render to the captaine and other head officers of their shippe weekely (or oftner), if it shall seeme requisite, a iust or plaine and perfect accompt of expense, of the victuals, as wel flesh, fish, bisket, meate, or bread as also of beere, wine, oyle or vineger, and all other kinde of victualling under their charge, and they, and every of them so to order and dispende the same, that no waste or unprofitable excesse be made otherwise then reason and necessitie shall command.

10 Item, when any inferiour or meane officer of what degree or condition he shalbe, shalbe tried untrue, remisse, negligent, or unprofitable in or about his office in the voyage, or not to use him selfe in his charge accordingly, then every such officer to be punished or removed at the discretion of the captaine and assistants, or the most part of them, and the person so removed not to be reputed, accepted, or taken from the time of his remove, any more for an officer, but to remaine in such condition and place, as hee shall be assigned unto, and none of the companie, to resist such chastisement or worthie punishment, as shalbe ministred unto him moderately, according to the fault or desert of his offence, after the lawes and common customes of the seas, in such cases heretofore used and observed.

11 Item, if any Mariner or officer inferiour shalbe found by his labour not meete nor worthie the place that he is presently

shipped for, such person may bee unshipped and put on lande at any place within the kings Maiesties realme and dominion, and one other person more able and more worthy to be put in his place, at the decretion of the captaine and masters, and order to be taken that the partie dismissed shalbe allowed proportionably the value of that he shall have deserved to the time of his dismissal or discharge, and he to give order with sureties, pawn, or other assurance, to repay the overplus of that he shall have received, which he shall not have deserved, and such wages to be made with the partie newly placed as shalbe thought reasonable, and he to have the furniture of al such necessaries as were prepared for the partie dismissed, according to right and conscience.

12 Item, that no blaspheming of God, or detestable swearing be used in any ship, nor communication of ribaldrie, filthy tales, or ungodly talke to be suffred in the company of any ship, neither dicing, carding, tabling, nor other divelish games to be frequented, whereby ensueth not onely povertie to the players, but also strife, wariance, brauling, fighting, and oftentimes murther to the utter destruction of the parties and provoking of Gods most iust wrath, and sworde of vengeance. These and all such like pestilences, and contagions of vices, and sinnes to bee eschewed, and the offenders once monished, and not reforming, to bee punished at the discretion of the captaine and master, as appertaineth.

13 Item, that morning and evening prayer, with other common services appointed by the kings Maiestie, and lawes of this Realme to be read and saide in every ship daily by the minister in the Admirall, and the marchant or some other person learned in other ships, and the Bible or paraphrases to be read devoutly and Christianly to Gods honour, and for his grace to be obtained and had by humble and heartie praier of the Navigants accordingly.

14 Item, that every officer is to be charged by inventorie with the particulars of his charge, and to render a perfect account of the diffraying of the same together with modest, and temperate dispending of powder, shot, and use of all

kinde of artillery, which is not to be misused, but diligently to be preserved for the necessary defence of the fleete and voyage, together with due keeping of all instruments of your Navigation and other requisites.

15 Item, no liquor to be spilt on the balast, nor filthines to be left within boord: the cook room, and all other places to be kept cleane for the better health of the companie, the gro-mals and pages to bee brought up according to the laudable order and use of the Sea, as well in learning of Navigation, as in exercising of that which to them appertaineth.

16 Item, the liveries in apparel given to the mariners be to be kept by the marchants, and not to be worne, but by the order of the captaine, when he shall see cause to muster or shewe them in good aray, for the advancement and honour of the voyage, and the liveries to bee redelivered to the keeping of the marchants, untill it shall be thought convenient for every person to have the ful use of his garment.

17 Item, when any mariner or any other passenger shal have neede of any necessarie furniture of apparell for his body, and conservation of his health, the same shall bee delivered him by the Marchant, at the assignement of the captaine and Master of that shippe, wherein such needie person shall be, at such reasonable price as the same cost, without any gaine to be exacted by the marchants, the value therof to be entred by the marchant in his booke, and the same to be discounted off the parties wages, that so shal receive, and weare the same.

18 Item, the sicke, diseased, weake, and visited person within boord, to be tendred, relieved, comforted and holpen in the time of his infirmitie, and every maner of person, without respect, to beare anothers burden, and no man to refuse such labour as shall be put to him for the most benefite, and publike wealth of the voyage, and enterprise, to be atchieved exactly.

19 Item, if any person shal fortune to die, or miscary in the voyage, such apparell, and other goods, as he shall have at the time of his death, is to be kept by the order of the captaine and Master of the shippe and an inventorie to be made of it, and conserved to the use of his wife, and children, or other-



wise according to his mind, and wil, and the day of his death to be entred in the Marchants and Stewards bookes : to the intent it may be knowen what wages he shall have deserved to his death, and what shall rest due to him.

20 Item, that the Marchants appointed for this present voyage, shall not make any shew or sale of any kind of marchandizes, or open their commodities to any forreine princes, or any of their subiects, without the consent, privitie or agreement of the Captaines, the cape Marchants and the assistants, or foure of them, whereof the captaine generall, the Pilot Maior, and cape Marchant to be three, and every of the pettie marchants to shewe his reckoning to the cape marchant when they, or any of them shall be required : and no commutation or trucke to be made by any of the pettie marchants, without the assent abovesaid: and all wares, and commodities trucked, bought or given to the companie, by way of marchandise, trucke, or any other respect, to be booked by the marchants, and to be wel ordred, packed, and conserved in one masse entirely, and not to be broken or altered, until the shippes shall returne to the right discharges, and inventorie of al goods, wares, and marchandises so trucked, bought, or otherwise dispended, to be presented to the Governor, Consuls, and assistants in London, in good order, to the intent the Kings Maiestie may be truly answered of that which to his grace by his grant of corporation is limited, according to our most bound dueties, and the whole companie also to have that which by right unto them appertaineth, and no embezelment shall be used, but the truth of the whole voyage to bee opened, to the common wealth and benefite of the whole companie, and mysterie, as appertaineth, without guile, fraude, or male engine.

21 Item, no particulier person, to hinder or preiudicate the common stocke of the company, in sale or preferment of his own proper wares, and things, and no particular emergent or purchase to be employed to any severall profite, until the common stocke of the companie shall be furnished, and no person to hinder the common benefite in such purchases or contingents, as shal fortune to any one of them, by his owne proper policie, industrie, or chance, nor no contention to rise in that

behalfe, by any occasion of iewel, stone, pearles, precious mettals, or other things of the region, where it shall chance the same to rise, or to be found, bought, trucked, permuted, or given: but every person to be bounden in such case, and upon such occasion, by order, and direction, as the Generall Captaine, and the Councell shall establish and determine, to whose order and discretion the same is left: for that of things uncertaine, no certaine rules may or can be given.

22 Item, not to disclose to any nation the state of our religion, but to passe it over in silence, without any declaration of it, seeming to beare with such lawes, and rites, as the place hath, where you shall arrive.

23 Item, for as much as our people, and shippes may appeare unto them strange and wonderous, and theirs also to ours: it is to be considered, how they may be used, learning much of their natures and dispositions, by some one such person, as you may first either allure, or take to be brought aboard your ships, and there to learne as you may, without violence or force, and no woman to be tempted, or intreated to incontincie, or dishonestie.

24 Item, the person so taken, to be well entertained, used and apparelled, to be set on land, to the intent that he or she may allure other to draw nigh to shewe the commodities: and if the person taken may be made drunke with your beere, or wine, you shal know the secrets of his heart.

25 Item, our people may not passe further into a land, then that they may be able to recover their pinnesses, or ships, and not to credit the faire words of the strange people, which be many times tried subtile and false, nor to be drawn into perill of losse, for the desire of golde, silver, or riches, and esteeme your owne commodities above al other, and in countenance shew not much to desire the forren commodities nevertheless take them as for friendship, or by way of permutation.

26 Item, every nation and region is to be considered advisedly, and not to provoke them by any disdain, laughing, contempt, or such like, but to use them with prudent circumspection, with al gentlenes and curtesie, and not to tary long in one place, untill you shall have attained the most worthy

place  $\frac{t}{y}$  may be found, in such sort, as you may returne  $\frac{t}{w}$  victuals sufficient prosperously.

27 Item, the names of the people of every Island, are to be taken in writing, with the commodities and incommodities of the same, their natures, qualities and dispositions, the site of the same, and what things they are most desirous of, and what commodities they wil most willingly depart with, and what mettals they have in hills, mountaines, streames, or rivers, in or under the earth.

28 Item, if people shal appeare gathering of stones, gold metall, or other like, on the sand, your pinnesses may drawe nigh, marking what things they gather, using or playing upon the drumme, or such other instruments, as may allure them to harkening, to fantasie, or desire to see, and heare your instruments and voyces, but keepe you out of danger, and shewe to them no poynt or signe of rigour and hostilitie.

29 Item, if you shall be invited into any Lords or Rulers house, to dinner, or other parliance, goe in such order of strength, that you may be stronger then they, and be warie of woods and ambushes, and that your weapons be not out of your possessions.

30 Item, if you shall see them weare Lyons or Beares skinnes, having long bowes, and arrowes, be not afraid of that sight : for such be worne oftentimes more to feare strangers, then for any other cause.

31 Item, there are people that can swimme in the sea, havens, and rivers, naked, having bowes and shafts, coveting to draw nigh your ships, which if they shal finde not wel watched, or warded, they wil assault, desirous of the bodies of men, which they covet for meate ; if you resist them, they dive, and so wil flee, and therefore diligent watch is to be kept both day and night, in some Islands.

32 Item, if occasion shal serve, that you may give advertisements of your proceedings in such things as may correspond to the expectation of the company, and likelihood of successe in the voyage, passing such dangers of the seas, perils of ice, intollerable coldes, and other impediments, which by sundry authors and

writers, have ministred matter of suspition in some heads that this voyage could not succede for the extremitie of the North pole, lacke of passage, and such like, which have caused wavering minds, and doubtful heads, not onely to withdraw themselves from the adventure of this voyage, but also disswaded others from the same, the certaintie wherof, when you shall have tried by experience, ( most certaine Master of all worldly knowledge) then for declaration of the trueth, which you shall have experted, you may by common assent of counsell, sende either by land, or otherwaies, such two or one person, to bring the same by credite, as you shal think may passe in safetie : which sending is not be done, but upon urgent causes, in likely successe of the voyage, in finding of passage, in towardlines of beneficiall traffike, or such other like, whereby the company being advertised of your estates and proceedings, may further provide, foresee, and determine that which may seeme most good and beneficiall for the publike wealth of the same : either providing before hand such things, as shall bee requisite for the continuance of the voyage, or else otherwise to dispose as occasion shall serve : in which things your wisdomes and discretions are to be used, and shewed, and the contents of this capitule, by you much to be pondred, for that you be not ignorant, how many persons, as well the kings Maiestie, the Lords of his honorable Counsel, this whole companie, as also your wives, children, kinsfolkes, allies, friends and familiars, be replenished in their hearts with ardent desire to learne and know your estates, conditions, and welfares, and in what likelihood you be in, to obtain this notable enterprise, which is hoped no lesse to succeed to you, then the orient or occident Indias have to the high benefite of the Empereur, and kings of Portugal, whose subiects industries, and travailes by sea, have inriched them, by those lands and Islands, which were to all Cosmographers, and other writers both unknowne, and also by apparances of reason voide of experience thought and reputed uninhabitable for extremities of heates, and colds, and yet indeed tried most rich, peopled, temperate, and so commodious, as all Europe hath not the like.

33 Item, no conspiracies, parttakings, factions, false tales, untrue reports, which be the very seedes, and fruits of contention, discord and confusion, by evill tongues to be suffered, but the same, and all other ungodlines to be chastened charitably with brotherly love, and alwaies obedience to be used and practised by al persons in their degrees, not only for duetie and conscience sake towards God, under whose mercifull hand navigants above all other creatures naturally bee most nigh, and vicine, but also for prudent and worldly pollicie, and publike weale, considering and alwaies having present in your mindes that you be all one most royall kings subiects, and naturals, with daily remembrance of the great importance of the voyage, the honour, glorie, praise, and benefite that depend of, and upon the same, toward the common wealth of this noble Realme the advancement of you the travaillers therein, your wives, and children, and so to endeavour your selves as that you may satisfie the expectation of them, who at their great costs, charges, and expenses, have so furnished you in good sort, and plentie of all necessaries, as the like was never in any realme seene, used, or knowen requisite and needful for such an exploit, which is most likely to be achieved, and brought to good effect if every person in his vocation shall endeavour himselfe according to his charge, and most bounden duetie : praying the living God, to give you his grace, to accomplish your charge to his glorie, whose merciful hand shal prosper your voyage, and preserve you from all dangers.

In witnes whereof I Sebastian Gabota, Governour aforesaide, to these persent ordinances have subscribed my name, and put my seale, the day and yeere above written.

The names of the twelve Counsellors appointed in this voyage.

## LVII.

*Appointment of Sebastian Cabot as Governor of the Company of Merchant Adventurers, 26 Feb. 1555.*

Febr. 26 1555. Westminster.

Letters patent constituting William marquis of Westminster and others a body corporate, by name of Merchant Adventurers of England for discovery of lands, territories etc. unknown and not before frequented etc. S[ebastian] C[abot] to be the first Governor.

[R. Lemon, Calendar of Domestic State Papers, 1547-80. T. L. p. 65].

## LVIII.

*Queen Mary's Confirmation of the pension for life to Sebastian Cabot.*

Anno D. 1555.

Rex et Regina, Omnibus ad quos, etc. salutem.

Sciatis quod nos,

De gratia nostra speciali, ac ex certa scientia et mero Motu nostris, nec non in consideratione boni veri et acceptabilis servitii Nobis, per dilectum servientem nostrum Sebastianum Caboto armigerum ante hac impensi et imposterum impendendi,

Dedimus et concessimus, ac per Praesentes pro nobis Haereditibus et Successoribus nostris, damus et concedimus praefato Sebastiano, quandam Annuitatem sive annualem Redditum centum sexaginta sex librarum tresdecim solidorum et quatuor denariorum legalis monetae angliae,

Habendam gaudendam et annuatim percipiendam eandem

Annuitatem sive Annualem Reditum centum sexaginta sex librarum tresdecim solidorum et quattuor denariorum praefato Sebastiano et Assignatis suis, a festo Annunciationis beatae Virginis ultimo praeterito, ad terminum et pro termino Vitae eiusdem Sebastiani de Thesauro nostro Haeredum et Successorum nostrorum per manus Thesaurari et Camera-riorum nostrorum Haeredum et Successorum nostrorum ibidem pro tempore existentium, ad festa Nativitatis Sancti Johannis Baptistae, Sancti Michaelis Archangeli, Natalis Domini et Annunciationis beatae Mariae Virginis, per aequales Portiones annuatim solvendam ; prima solutione inde incipiente ad festum Nativitatis Sancti Johannis Baptistae ultimo praeterito ;

Eo quod expressa mentio etc.

In cuius rei etc . . . . .

Teste Rege et Regina apud Saint James XXVII. Die Novembris.

Per breve de Privato sigillo—*Rymer*, XV, 427.

---

LIX.

*Decree of Queen Mary, dividing the pension of Sebastian Cabot with William Worthington.*

Anno D. 1557.

Rex et Regina omnibus ad quos etc. salutem.

Cum nos, per Literas nostras Patentis gerentes datam apud voestem. vicesimo septimo die Novembris annis Regnorum nostrorum secundo et tertio, de gratia nostra speciali, ac ex certa scientia et mero Motu nostris, necnon in consideratione boni veri et acceptabilis servitii nobis per dilectum servientem nostrum Sebastianum Caboto Armigerum antea impensi et tunc in posterum impendendi, pro Nobis Haeredibus et Successoribus nostris dederimus et concesserimus praefato Se-

bastiano quandam Annuitatem sive annualem Reditum centum sexaginta sex Librarum tresdecim solidorum et quatuor Denariorum legalis Monetae Angliae,

Habendam gaudendam et annuatim percipiendam eandem Annuitatem sive annualem Reditum centum sexaginta sex Librarum tresdecim solidorum et quatuor Denariorum praefato Sebastiano et assignatis suis a festo Annunciationis beatae Mariae Virginis, tunc ultimo praeterito ad minum et pro Termino Vitae eiusdem Sebastiani de Thesauro nostro Haeredum et successorum nostrorum per manus Thesaurari et Camerariorum nostrorum ibidem pro tempore existentium ad festa Nativitatis Sancti Johannis Baptistae, et Sancti Michaelis Archangeli, Natalis Domini, et Annunciationis Beatae Mariae Virginis per aequales Portiones annuatim solvendam, prima solutione inde incipiente ad Festum Nativitatis Sancti Johannis Baptistae tunc ultimo praeterito, prout in dictis Literis Patentibus inter alia plenius continetur.

Quas quidem Litteras Patentes praefatus Sebastianus Caboto nobis in Cancellariam nostram sursum reddidit et restituit cancellandas, et ibidem jam cancellatae existunt, prout certam inde habemus notitiam, ea tamen intentione quod nos, alias literas nostras patentes de Annuitate praedicta eidem Sebastiano et dilecto servienti nostro Willielmo Worthington Armigero ac eorum alteri diutius viventis in forma sequente facere et concedere dignaremur ;

Sciatis igitur quod Nos pro considerationibus praedictis nec non in consideratione boni veri et fidelis servitii Nobis, per dilectos servientes nostros Sebastianum Caboto et Willielmum Worthington Armigeros ante hac impensi et in posterum impendendi, de Gratiis nostris specialibus, ac ex certis scientiis et meris Motibus nostris, dedimus et concessimus, ac per Praesentes, pro Nobis Haeredibus et Successoribus nostrum praefatae Reginae damus et concedimus eisdem Sebastiano et Willielmo ac eorum alteri diutius viventis, dictam Annuitatem sive annualem Reditum centum sexaginta sex librarum tresdecim solidorum et quattuor Denariorum legalis Monetae Angliae,

Habendam gaudendam et annuatim percipiendam eandem



annuitatem sive annualem Redditum centum sexaginta sex Librarum tresdecim solidorum et quatuor Denariorum praefatis Sebastiano Caboto et Willielmo Worthington ac eorum alteri diutius viventis et assignatis suis, ac assignatis eorum alterius diutius viventis, a festo Annunciationis beatae Mariae Virginis ultimo praeterito ad Terminum et pro Termino Vitarum eorunden Sebastiani et Willielmi, ac eorum alterius diutius viventis, de Thesauro nostro, Haeredum et Successorum nostrorum dictae Reginae, ad Preceptam sacarii nostri Westum. Haeredum et Successorum nostrorum dictae Reginae, ibidem pro tempore existentium ad festa Nativitatis Sancti Johannis Baptistae, Sancti Michaelis Archangeli, Natalis Domini, et Annunciationis beate Mariae Virginis, per aequales portiones annuatim solvendam ;

Eo quod expressa mentio, etc.

In cuius rei etc.

Teste Rege et Regina apud Westmonasterium vicesimo nono die Mai.

Per Breve de Privato Sigillo.—*Rymer*, XV. 466

---

THE END.

1  
2  
3

4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10

11  
12

13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20

# LIFE OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.

BY FRANCESCO TARDUCCI,

AFTER THE LATEST DOCUMENTS.

*TRANSLATED FROM ITALIAN BY*

HENRY F. BROWNSON.

---

Two volumes in one, 8vo. cloth, - - - - \$3.00.

Sent post-paid on receipt of this price.

---

DETROIT, MICH.:

PUBLISHED BY H. F. BROWNSON.

---

## EXTRACTS FROM REVIEWS OF TARDUCCI'S LIFE OF COLUMBUS.

**The Boston Transcript :** Mr. Henry F. Brownson's translation of Tarducci's "Life of Christopher Columbus" is a work admirably written, absolute in its facts, clear in its details, and authoritative in its statements.

. . . . Although an enthusiastic admirer of Columbus, Tarducci shows the utmost impartiality in estimating his character and acts.

The translation is a remarkably faithful one, and merits a permanent place in historical literature.

**The Boston Herald :** We wish to-day to bring out the personality of Columbus, so far as it can be done, into a stronger and clearer light, and Sig. Tarducci's work has the rare distinction of rendering this service. He is more anxious to tell the truth about his hero than to make a brilliant story, and by this means he places in our hands the facts which are most interesting concerning Columbus, and is able to vouch for their truth. It is really a great biography which he has produced, and we cannot but be grateful to Major Brownson for having given the American public a trans-

lation of this important work at the time when the people are demanding an authentic history of Columbus, and of the methods by which he was led to realize the great aim of his life. The translator deserves the thanks of those who are interested in the great celebration, and this work is the one which deals with the great fact which we are to celebrate in the form of a personal history.

**The Literary World :** On the eve of the fourth centennial of the discovery of America by Columbus, it appears most fitting and a happy augury for both nations, that an admirable biography should be written in Italy and rendered available for the United States.

. . . . The author of this most complete monograph belongs to the purists—faithful sentinels of the Italian language.

The purity and vitality of his idiom are apparent even in the English translation. Mr. Brownson has well apprehended the qualities of the original work, and faithfully conveyed them so far as the spirit of a diverse speech permitted. . . This biography of Columbus is written in the modern temper, which, first of all, desires to paint the portrait of the man as he existed, rather than to catalogue his deeds. . . The candid temper of the author admits the shadows through which a portrait assumes the appearance of life.

**The N. Y. Sun :** Prof. Tarducci's interesting book does justice alike to his (Columbus's) magnificent conception of what the earth had to yield in the path of discovery, his extraordinary energy even under the most distressing feebleness and anguish of body, his power of leadership, his undaunted courage, and the religious fervor and fancy that graced his most practical achievements. Not the least marvelous of the gifts of Columbus was his extraordinary power of detailed observation, which attracted the profound admiration of Humboldt. Not a change in compass or current not a wisp of floating weed, or flight of birds, escaped his studious eye, and his recorded inferences and conclusions would alone place him among the wisest of mankind.

**The N. Y. Times :** This translation of one of the most minute and painstaking of the many lives of Columbus has appeared very opportunely, at a time when the four hundredth anniversary of the great discoverer's crowning exploit is so near at hand. Though evidently written by a warm admirer of the famous Genoese, the work is happily free from that extravagant and unreasoning adulation with which Johnson was bedaubed by Boswell, and Frederick the Great by Carlyle. The hero's shortcomings are told as plainly as the great exploits that redeemed them ; but, while frankly admitting them, the author has labored zealously and not unsuccessfully to show that Columbus, when judged by the standard of his own age, was a man of singularly blameless life, elevated sentiments, and almost unique charity and unselfishness. . . . No one who has studied these volumes can close them without a feeling of burning indignation at the mean and miserable ingratitude that required the noblest service ever rendered by mortal man to thankless and heartless royalty.

# THE WORKS OF ORESTES A. BROWNSON.

COLLECTED AND ARRANGED BY

HENRY F. BROWNSON.

---

Twenty Volumes, 8vo. Cloth, \$60. Half-morocco, \$100.

A LIBERAL REDUCTION FOR CASH.

---

## EXTRACTS FROM NOTICES BY THE PRESS.

“No writer among us has done more for the political education of the people of the nation. These volumes can never be popular; they are fit only for the thinkers, but our rising statesmen, both Catholic and Protestant, can find no better preparation for their highest political service than to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest what Dr. Brownson has written on the higher politics in his capacity as a Catholic publicist. He was at once a statesman and a philosopher, and his different publications are among the most valuable contributions to our political and philosophical literature.”—*The Boston Herald*.

“His style, based on the best English models, gives an additional charm to all he wrote. He stands out certainly unsurpassed, perhaps unequalled, by any of our countrymen, in his masterly handling of the mother tongue. But the beautiful workmanship is as nothing compared to the glorious material which it adorns. It is like the mantle of gold which enwrapped the matchless Olympian Jove of Phidias. His logical power is simply wonderful: no sophistry, no specious reasoning of error or unbelief can stand before it. And coupled with this is the gift so rare among profound thinkers and subtle dialecticians of bringing home his triumphant process of reasoning to the minds even of ordinary readers with clearness and precision.

“Persons who have an unbroken, complete series of the successive numbers of *Brownson's Quarterly Review* are greatly mistaken if they suppose that in it they have a full collection of Brownson's writings. Many of his most important papers were given to the public through other channels and in other ways. Those, too, that appeared in the *Review* followed each other in the order of time, and as various circumstances suggested. But his son and posthumous editor, Henry F. Brownson, has collected *all* his most important writings, and has arranged them rather in a logical than an historical order. This gives an additional value to Dr. BROWNSON'S WORKS, as now republished, through the strength which one article, following another in order of thought, gives to that which succeeds it.”—*American Catholic Quarterly Review*.

“THE English language in Dr. Brownson's grasp is a weapon to slay and a talisman to raise to life. Never was argumentation made more delightful reading;

never did a teacher instruct more by the aid of his pupils' highest faculties. It is indeed a most enviable gift to be able so to write, or rather to be able so to think, discern, judge, penetrate, decide, concerning the greatest topics of the human understanding, and then to clothe one's conclusions in language as adequate to express as human language well can be. Clearness, force, purity, vividness, loftiness, are terms applicable to Dr. Brownson's literary style. True, besides the higher class of students of fine writing, the general reading public will not study him, or any such order of men, merely for the sake of his literary excellences. But let one have any shadow of interest in the great questions he treats, and every page displays the possession of a style which is the rarest of literary gifts. For his writing, being colorless of those lesser beauties which catch the eye but to arrest its deepest glances, and absolutely free from the least obscurity, becomes the instinctive expression of a most enlightened mind. It is a magnetic medium uniting the master's personality, the disciple's understanding, and the subject's essence."—*The Catholic World*.

"They deserve a place in the library of every fair-minded American citizen. Printed and bound in a manner highly creditable to the publisher, they cannot suffer by comparison with the works of any standard author. The devoted editor has done his work with manifest care, accuracy, good taste, and sound judgment. The volumes are uniform in size and appearance, each containing about 594 pages, and having a carefully prepared table of contents.

"The indexes are complete, accurate and admirably arranged. They bear witness to careful and painstaking labor on the part of the editor. The 'Index of Titles' covers twenty-three pages. The many articles and reviews published, about 940 in number, are appropriately indicated under this head, due reference being made to the volumes and pages where they may be found. These deal with a great variety of subjects—in fact, every thing inviting discussion and comment, or concerning the interests and welfare of humanity, during the author's long and busy life,—and every subject treated appears to gain in interest, importance, and lustre from the charm of his gifted pen. The 'Index of Subjects' comprises 171 pages, and enables the reader to refer at once to the volume and page where each and every noteworthy matter is presented. To prepare these indexes was manifestly a most laborious task, but well and ably has it been accomplished."—*The Ave Maria*.

"It has been conceded that the late Dr. Brownson was a clear-minded and independent thinker, but until his scattered writings were brought together it was not apparent that in religion and philosophy he had wrought with the large purpose and the wide sweep through the realm of thought which is now apparent: but a study of the volumes in the collected edition of his writings shows that in the closely related subjects of philosophy and religion he wrought with the force of a master, and was always consistent with his purpose and aim. His writings all tend toward the Roman Church as the ark of religion in the world, but they have the singular merit among the philosophical productions of the age, that they do not sever philosophy from Christianity, but show the strong and true affiliations between the two in a way that does not compromise the essential integrity of either. Dr. Brownson is a constructive thinker, and his writings are more useful in the present effort to place our religious thought upon a right basis than those of any other American. They include more; they mean more; they better harmonize reason with religion; they organize religious thought upon a basis that can be depended upon. The whole body of reasonable truth is here worked over by a remarkably keen and honest mind. It may almost be said that what Thomas Aquinas did for the scholastic

philosophy of the middle ages, Dr. Brownson has done for the philosophical expression of the truths of religion and philosophy in the terms of modern thought. One rather marvels at Dr. Brownson's versatility in these papers, and in the almost unexampled range of discussion to which the several volumes bear witness. He had great confidence in himself, but his writings more than justify it. He was a strong and clear thinker and knew his ground.

"Whoever doubts the high position here assigned to Dr. Brownson, needs only to study his writings without prejudice, and measure calmly and slowly the scope of his thought to become assured of its correctness. He will then find that Dr. Brownson was quite underrated while living, and that no American thinker has done more thorough, substantial, or constructive work. No more effective monument could be erected to his memory than the publication of his writings, and though differing widely from him in religious opinion, candor compels us to acknowledge heartily and thoroughly the qualities in his work which give him a high place among the religious and philosophical thinkers of the age. The conviction has slowly grown from repeated reading of the volumes already published, that the intelligent and honest study of his writings will do more to prepare clergymen and teachers for the adequate instruction of their fellow men in the truths of religion and philosophy and broadened life than they are yet aware of. It is very rare that a great philosopher is a confirmed believer in Christianity, and a thorough student of both in their correspondence. Dr. Brownson has the merit of having spent his life in their study without losing his faith in either, and this edition of his works will prepare the way for a better appreciation of his thinking at the hands of the present generation."—*New York Times*.

"In the writings of Orestes A. Brownson, as they were first given to the world in the pages of the *Democratic Review*, *Brownson's Review*, and other periodicals and detached volumes, we are struck with his wonderful power of logic and with the strength and eloquence of his style. But it is only now, when they are arranged and brought into their proper connection by his son, Major Henry F. Brownson, in this complete edition, that we see the full force and symmetry of his whole thought on all the great questions discussed in this country.

"A large portion of the essays in these volumes were hurriedly written against the views and doctrines the author was combating, and while this adds to their freshness and attractiveness for the reader it necessarily detracts somewhat from their completeness as treatises on the subjects under consideration if taken separately and without reference to what he has elsewhere written on those subjects. This was, perhaps, the principal cause of the frequent misunderstanding of his views of which Dr. Brownson was accustomed to complain. His real meaning was often mistaken by those who only read an article or two in a review and judged it without reference to his previous writings and whole line of thought. In the volumes before us, however, the writings are so arranged under the different heads to which they belong that the unity of the thought becomes clear and the meaning of one article which might be thought ambiguous or carried to an extreme is determined by what immediately precedes or follows.

"In the course of his philosophical writings Brownson analyzes and explains the system of almost every philosopher that ever lived, from Plato and Pythagoras to Gioberti and Sir William Hamilton. No one ever more fully possessed the power to seize an author's meaning and explain it in a few sentences. It was this power, combined with his evident fairness in argument and criticism, that caused him to be called 'a born reviewer.' In all his controversies he seeks to present his opponent's

doctrine and argument in their strongest, not their weakest form, his aim being, as he has said, to secure the triumph of the truth, not a mere personal victory over his adversary.

“But perhaps the most wonderful trait of Dr. Brownson’s mind was the ability to direct his investigations to an immense variety of subjects. There is scarcely a matter of political, social, or philosophical interest which he has not discussed, scarcely a theory in science or theology on which he has not something to say in these volumes.”—*New York Herald*.

“DR. ORESTES A. BROWNSON compelled the attention of thoughtful men, while living, to what he said, and there has been a growing demand for his writings since his death. He was one of the few Americans who did not give up his independent thinking when he entered the Roman church, and his loyalty to the pope never interfered with his fidelity to the American republic. He did a great work in religious and political philosophy, and was one of the leading minds of the century in America. Such a man’s thought does not easily die, and his son, Mr. Henry F. Brownson, of Detroit, Michigan, has at length recognized the necessity for the republication of his writings, partly because they cannot otherwise be had, and partly because he is the fairest interpreter of the Roman church to the American people who has yet appeared. The collected writings will be found almost an exhaustless treasury of discussion in the sphere of politics, philosophy, and religion.

“The prejudice may exist in some directions that Dr. Brownson was so much given up to the Roman communion that it is not worth while for Protestants to consult them. Unquestionably much of his writing is thoroughly partisan ; he was a good hater, and liked to demolish shams ; but the problems of philosophy are the same for both Protestant and Catholic, because truth is one and eternally the same, and Dr. Brownson has stated and illuminated these problems in such a way that intelligent readers and thinkers cannot afford to overlook his thought. These volumes ought to be widely read ; their thought has come to stay ; and, should some deal almost exclusively with papal matters, they, nevertheless, are intertwined through the courses of history with present thought, and possess a certain present value. Mr. Brownson is rendering a great service to Christian philosophy in America in making his father’s writings accessible and in bringing them out in good style ; and the collected works, though seemingly formidable for the private library, will be indispensable to all who are to do the intelligent thinking for the rest of the century.”—*Boston Daily Advertiser*.

“The twentieth and final volume of the writings of Orestes A. Brownson, collected, arranged, and published at Detroit by his son, Henry F. Brownson, contains sundry explanatory, and miscellaneous papers, and an index of subjects embracing all the volumes and filling nearly two hundred pages, which is a marvel of painstaking labor. The son certainly has reared a noble monument to his father’s memory in collecting these writings. The elder Brownson was one of the freshest thinkers, ablest disputants, and skilled writers of English we have ever had. Scarcely any reader could fail to get intellectual quickening and profit from reading his essays, if only as specimens of keen English.”—*Boston Journal*.

“Dr. Brownson was in no sense the founder of a school, any more than Emerson was. But like Emerson, he has exerted an influence upon the thought of his time and age, and upon the thought of thousands who are utterly unconscious of such influence. His writings, now collected for the first time, are not only a



mine of literary and philosophical wealth, but one of the best studies extant in the art of the essayist."—*Detroit Free Press*.

"The late Dr. Brownson was undoubtedly the greatest and most original thinker that America has ever produced. This fact is admitted by non-Catholics as well as by Catholics. For profound philosophical or metaphysical speculation, cogency of reasoning, logical force, and dialectic skill, he is *facile princeps*. . . . In the higher branches of philosophical research which includes such subjects as ontology and metaphysical theology, he was profoundly original, and, as has been truly remarked by one of his admirers, he has laid down the basis of natural religion with all the profundity of Plato, and all the precision of Aristotle. Typographically the volumes cannot be surpassed. The type is clear, the paper of the finest and best. The book is certainly a credit to Detroit, and could not be excelled by any publishing house in the country."—*Toronto Tribune*.

"DR. ORESTES A. BROWNSON was a man of gigantic intellect, profound and varied study, and nothing seemed too deep, nor any subject too great for him. He fearlessly met and refuted error wherever found, and no matter how ably concealed by fine phrases and plausible reasoning, he exposed it in so able and direct and exhaustive a manner that nothing further was left to be said on the subject. To any young man tainted with the materialistic tendencies of the day, no better course of reading could be recommended than a series of Dr. Brownson's essays. If carefully read they would have the same effect on his moral and intellectual nature that a season of the mountains or seaside, inhaling the pure, invigorating air, laden with the stimulating odors of wood and sea, would have on him physically after spending years in a crowded city, breathing its vitiated atmosphere, and having his sensibilities blunted by its dissipations and distractions."—*American Catholic News*.

"No clergyman or intelligent layman, can afford not to have his library graced with Brownson's works. They are within the reach of purse, and should be within the reach of scholarly taste. It would be a serious reflection on the 'learned profession' not to possess, read, and study them. It would be an especial reproach on Catholic Americans, laying claim to more than ordinary intelligence, not to honor thus their distinguished countryman, whose fame and name as a publicist, polemic, and metaphysician, cover both hemispheres. In all of which his English is pure and classical, his reasoning powerful and incisive; sophistry writhes before his penetrating and dissecting mind; falsehood and sham are unmasked by his keen logic.

"His political writings are of special interest to Americans, as they deal largely and learnedly with questions intimately and closely connected with the social and political phases of our country. Very few, in fact hardly any, of his political essays are obsolete. They are as full of interest to-day as when first published, and can be read with as much profit now as they were then. They show a wholesome independence of thought, and freedom and clearness of expression that is positively refreshing. Many of our so-called essays and reviews have a soporific tendency. Brownson's essays and reviews, no matter on what subject, have the contrary effect. They keep the reader's attention riveted from the first line to the last. They leave an impress for good on the reader's mind. Brownson never wrote a line for an *ad captandum* effect. He wrote as he felt. He was honest in his views, and fearless in expressing them. For this he was often maligned, more often misunderstood. He was too honest for his day. Since he has passed away,

much of what was then wrongly or maliciously interpreted in his writings is now accepted as true and sound.

"Brownson abhorred superficial writing and thinking. He argued from first principles. On these he built and thought and wrote. Seldom did he err in his conclusions, which he expressed in language clear, acute, profound.

"His reviews of books and other publications are unequalled. In them he gives the reader an insight into the depth and breadth of his mind and scholarly attainments. Whatever he reviewed in the literary world he reviewed honestly and conscientiously, giving praise where due, and picking flaws and exposing error where found."—*The Catholic Universe*.

"His POWER as a writer lies principally in the exposition of the principles of faith or reason. When he developed these principles and their consequences, he seemed armed with the club and the might of Hercules. With these he crushed the Hydra of error with its many heads of heresy, infidelity, and atheism. His style was clear and forcible, and so likewise were the trains of thought and reasoning of which it was the expression. 'A certain childlike simplicity and candor,' says the Rev. C. L. Jenkins, 'an apparent love of truth which sought for no disguise, and a boldness of spirit which took no account of earthly considerations, gave to his writings a singular charm and influence.'

"We have now had frequent occasions of commenting on the style of Brownson in reviewing one after another of the many volumes of his works that have already appeared. The more we become conversant with his articles, the more satisfied we are of the merits by which they are marked. The fourth part of the writings in defence of the Church appears to us exceedingly valuable. The doctrinal articles are singularly lucid, orthodox, and moderate; indeed, we doubt whether the next generation of English-reading Catholics will have, . . . any complete body of works defending and illustrating the Catholic religion more luminous and readable than that of Orestes Brownson. We are struck by the lucid and brilliant writing of this great doctor, and go on reading, entranced by the music and wisdom of the strain. We never get weary of the volumes of Dr. Brownson's works, for though many, they are void of repetition, and always charming, through their easy, fluent, and attractive style, which flows like milk and honey."—*The London Tablet*.

Also taken from Brownson's Works and sold Separately,  
bound in cloth, 8vo.

THE SPIRIT-RAPPER : An Autobiography, - - \$1.00  
AN ESSAY IN REFUTATION OF ATHEISM, .60  
THE TWO BROTHERS ; or, Why are you a Prot-  
estant? - - - - - .60  
UNCLE JACK AND HIS NEPHEW ; or Conversa-  
tions of an Old Foggy and a Young American. .60

Order from your bookseller, or from

HENRY F. BROWNSON.

33 & 35 West Congress St., Detroit Mich.







**14 DAY USE**  
**RETURN TO DESK FROM WHICH BORROWED**  
**LOAN DEPT.**

This book is due on the last date stamped below, or  
on the date to which renewed.

Renewed books are subject to immediate recall.

13 Nov '62 GR

REC'D LD

NOV 13 1962

JAN 6 1966 2 1

REC'D LD

JAN 10 '66 -6 PM

AUG 3 2 1995

RECEIVED

JAN 0 5 1996

CIRCULATION DEPT.

LD 21A-50m-3,'62  
(C7097s10)476B

General Library  
University of California  
Berkeley

YC 49937

~~YB 36748~~

U. C. BERKELEY LIBRARIES



C047771530

