

various countries of south-western Europe were eagerly over-running the maritime world in search of new lands and that likely treasure with which the experience of Spain had encouraged their imaginations to fill them.

The Norman seaports of France were those best prepared to respond to the expanding trade of the country. The increasing demand for foreign goods, which followed the introduction of Italian luxury and art with the home-coming of Charles VIII, stimulated French shipping. There followed a rapid expansion of the trade and enterprise of such Norman towns as St. Malo, Dieppe, Rouen and Harfleur. Norman sailors roamed the ocean in many directions, but the fisheries of Newfoundland first attracted them to the northern coasts of America. There was little in the fishing industry to fire the imagination of romantic knights or excite the cupidity of kings and courts. It was therefore left to be developed into a very profitable trade by private enterprise, while more ambitious schemes were attracting the attention of the court, and squandering French life and treasure in other parts of the world.

When, after a hasty ransacking of America, the search for the still fabled riches of Cathay was once more resumed, efforts were made to get round the American continent which barred the way. Expeditions under royal patronage visited the northern waters of America, Verazzano leading the way in 1526, but vanishing somewhere in those stormy seas on a second attempt. Cartier followed him and discovered that the St. Lawrence route was not likely for some time to prove a successful highway to the East. But the Indians in the neighborhood of Montreal told him, what even then they understood that all Europeans wished to know, that by the shores of great inland seas of fresh water there was abundance of the precious metals. Thus the closing of one avenue of royal interest in Canada opened the door upon another. It also brought to a close the period of prosperous unmolested development of Canadian resources by private enterprise.

It is not necessary to record the list of dismal failures of gold-laced and high-titled schemes which followed, and which called forth the following observation from Montaigne, an