

Comparative Agency of John and Sebastian Cabot ; and it is in the course of these arguments that he has made an attack upon the integrity and honesty of Richard Hakluyt, a writer to whom the history of maritime discovery is under the deepest obligations. These two points, therefore,—the discovery of North America and the credit due to the evidence of Hakluyt,—must necessarily be considered in conjunction ; and we trust we shall convince every impartial reader of the accuracy of our assertion, that John Cabot was the discoverer, and that the attack upon Hakluyt is perfectly unfounded.

Before, however, proceeding to the more immediate subject of inquiry, we may be permitted to say, that, although it becomes our duty to point out repeated and material errors, and in some instances considerable injustice committed by the biographer of Cabot, we are anxious to avoid that peculiar asperity which he has unnecessarily mingled with a subject so remote that it may surely be approached in a spirit of great calmness and impartiality. We wish to employ no expression which may give a moment's unnecessary pain to the biographer. His Memoir of Cabot, as may be seen from the references to it in the course of this volume, has been frequently of use to us. Although rather a piece of biographical and historical criticism than a pure biography, it is a meritorious work ; it points out to the reader some recondite sources of information,—its deductions and arguments are often acute and ingenious,—and, confused and deficient as it is in its arrangement, it contains occasional passages which are eloquently written. But it is impossible not to regret that there is infused into the whole book a more than ordinary proportion of that bitter and querulous spirit which, in a greater or less degree, seems inseparable from the lucubrations of the antiquary,—that the author has poured abuse, contempt, and ridicule upon those who have fallen into errors, which he sometimes has, and at other times imagines he has detected,—and that he is unscrupulous in imputing unfair and ungenerous motives to those who little deserve such an accusation. Robertson, Forster, Henry, Campbell, Southey, Barrow, and other able writers, are attacked in unmeasured terms, as the arch propagators of all that is erroneous and superficial on the subject of maritime discovery ; and our excellent friend Richard Hakluyt, who has slept in