

between banks of cold water eastward from the Gulf of Mexico. The Cabots made many voyages afterwards, and explored the American coast from extreme north to extreme south.

The French turned their attention to the northern parts of the New World. The rich fisheries of Newfoundland attracted them. A Frenchman sailed up the great St. Lawrence river. After some failures a French settlement was established there, and for a century and a half the French peopled Canada, until the English relieved them of the ownership.

Spanish adventurers never rested from their eager search after the treasures of the new continent. An aged warrior called Ponce de Leon fitted out an expedition at his own cost. He had heard of the marvellous fountain whose waters would restore to him the years of his wasted youth. He searched in vain. The fountain would not reveal itself to the foolish old man, and he had to bear without relief the burden of his profitless years. But he found a country hitherto unseen by Europeans, which was clothed with magnificent forests, and seemed to bloom with perpetual flowers. He called it Florida. He attempted to found a colony in the paradise he had discovered. But the natives attacked him, slew many of his men, and drove the rest to their ships, carrying with them their chief, wounded to death by the arrow of an Indian.

Ferdinand de Soto had been with Pizarro in his expedition to Peru, and returned to Spain enriched by his share of the plunder. He did not doubt that in the north were cities as rich and barbarians as confiding. An expedition to discover new regions, and plunder their inhabitants, was fitted out under his command. No one doubted that success equal to that of Cortes and Pizarro would attend this new adventure. The youth of Spain were eager to be permitted to go, and they sold houses and lands to buy them the needful equipment. Six hundred men, in the prime of life, were chosen from the crowd of applicants, and