

PREFACE.

At the request of the President of this Society we undertook, with some hesitation, to prepare the following notes, embodying all that can be gathered together concerning the career of the Florentine Navigator who appears to have been the first explorer of a portion of our coast. Besides a report addressed to the French King on his return from the voyage, there are several cœtaneous notices of the expedition, which are sufficient to authenticate it. The fact that a Planisphere, drawn by a kinsman of the explorer, about the year 1529, was in the Museo Borgiana, had been published in 1800, but it remained unnoticed, until Thomassy in 1852 described it *de visu*. This remarkable document, confirming the report of 1524, and dispelling all reasonable doubt as to its genuineness, remained for some years longer unpublished. Efforts to procure a copy of it by various persons had failed, until our President at last succeeded in obtaining photographs from it. These, though imperfect, are distinct enough to furnish sufficient evidence that the voyage was made at the time above indicated, and very nearly as described in the explorer's report to the King.

To the paper, as prepared for the Society, we have added some notes that further illustrate it, though not