

search of the island of Brazil and the seven cities, according to the fancy of this Genoese. The King determined to send out (ships) because, the year before, they brought certain news that they had found land. His fleet consisted of five vessels, which carried provisions for one year. It is said that one of them, in which one Friar Buil went, has returned to Ireland in great distress, the ship being much damaged. The Genoese has continued his voyage. I have seen, on a chart, the direction which they took, and the distance they sailed; and I think what they have found, or what they are in search of, is what your Highnesses already possess. It is expected that they will be back in the month of September. I write this because the King of England has often spoken to me on this subject, and he thinks that your Highnesses will take great interest in it. I think it is not further distant than four hundred leagues. I told him that, in my opinion, the land was already in the possession of your Majesties; but though I gave him my reasons, he did not like them. I believe that your Highnesses are already informed of this matter; and I do not now send the chart or *mapa mundi* which that man has made, and which, according to my opinion, is false, since it makes it appear as if the land in question was not the said islands." Can anything more distinctly state than this letter does, that, though the Bristol people had sent out expeditions every year since 1491, the King now sent out ships only because now, at length, in 1497, "they brought certain news that they had found land?"

But again:—if new lands in the West had been discovered in 1494 by John or Sebastian Cabot, Venetians in England who took a pride in the glory of their country, as represented by the discoverer, who was their countryman, would not have been asleep either to the fact or to its importance, nor would the unquestioned discovery of 1497 have been made the one great subject of claim to distinction. But what do we find?

The following is a letter dated from London, 23rd August, 1497, from Lorenzo Pasqualigo to his brothers Alvise and Francesco, about a fortnight after Cabot's return from his successful voyage in 1497:—

"The Venetian, our countryman, who went with a ship from Bristol in quest of new islands, is returned, and says that 700 leagues hence he discovered land, the territory of the Grand Cham (Grand Cam). He coasted for 300 leagues and landed; saw no human beings, but he has brought hither to the King certain snares which had been set to catch game, and a needle for making nets; he also found some felled trees, wherefore he supposed there were inhabitants, and returned to his ship in alarm.