

I. PERIOD OF DISCOVERY.

1497-1603. 106 YEARS.

Leading features. — Columbus, the Cabots. Canada visited by French and English explorers. Unsuccessful attempts at colonization.

CHAPTER I.

DISCOVERY OF AMERICA.

9. Four hundred years ago America was unknown to the people of Europe. It is more correct to say that the knowledge of a western continent had fled out among them. Italian mariners trading to the ports in the Baltic may, it is supposed, have heard of discoveries, made by the Northmen adventurers from Norway, of lands lying far across a vast western ocean, and old records of Iceland told the curious of the voyages of Eric Raude, and other sea-rovers, which showed that they were the first to behold the coast of Labrador, and to enter through the strait that separates Newfoundland from the mainland, into the gulf, and sail along the coast as far south as Narragansett Bay. To the Northmen Newfoundland was "the land of broad stones;" Nova Scotia "the land of woods;" Massachusetts and Rhode Island "the land of vines."

10. The famous Genoese sailor, the immortal Christopher Columbus, is called the discoverer of America (1493). He only touched upon the Bahamas and Cuba and 1498 other outlying islands in his first voyage, and in 1497 he discovered the mainland of South America. He never saw the coast of North America. John and Sebastian Cabot, father and son, the former a native of Venice,