

coveries farther South. The attention of Spain was greatly given to the colonization of the West Indies, and to looking out these parts which promised the most ready returns in gold and silver. England was also in the field, and had sent out the Cabots in search of a north-west passage. As early as 1504, French subjects had discovered the bank and island of Newfoundland, but the French government claimed no interest in the New World before 1523.

At this period King Francis I, gave command of four vessels to Verrazani, a Florentine navigator in the French service, who made three voyages; on the last of which, vessels and crews were lost.

In 1534, the attention of the French King was again drawn to the subject of seeking to share with his brother monarchs in their golden and territorial acquisitions; and to obtain a firm footing upon the main land of America, an armament was equipped and placed under the direction of Jacques Cartier, a skilful and experienced navigator.

Cartier sailed from St. Malo in 1534, and in 20 days reached the coast of Newfoundland, whence passing into the Gulf, he touched at some points and took possession in the name of the King. He also held some intercourse with the aborigines, two of whom embarked and returned with him to France. From these, he first learned of the great river, and in May, 1535, he made a second voyage, and guided by these Indians, entered the river which he named