

posal the proposed investment of his remaining capital. It is said that one of the sons settled at Venice and the other at Genoa. The recital of the discovery by the father would, of course, be stated, under the circumstances, as the consideration of the second patent in his favour. Another reason for the introduction of the father's name concurrently at first with his sons', and afterwards exclusively, may perhaps be found in the wary character of the king, whose own pecuniary interests were involved in the result. He might be anxious thus to secure the responsibility of the wealthy Venetian for the faithful execution of the terms of the patent, and finally think it better to have him solely named rather than commit powers, on their face assignable, to young men who had no stake in the country, and who were not likely to make it even a fixed place of residence. On the whole, there may at least be a doubt whether the father really accompanied the expedition."* It is surely quite unnecessary to attempt a serious reply to this singular passage, which, advancing from one step of an improbable and unsupported hypothesis to another, lands the reader at last in that conclusion of outrageous scepticism which has just been quoted. The words of the second commission state a simple fact, "*that the land and isles were discovered by John Cabot.*" The biographer, in reply, first talks discursively and at some length on the motives which induced the sons, Lewis, Sanchez, and Sebastian, to withdraw a capital, which there is no proof they ever advanced,—subjects of little moment,—and he then at once gets rid of the stubborn fact, that John Cabot is named as the "sole discoverer," by the incidental remark, that this would, of course, be stated as the ground of the second patent,—a species of reply which irresistibly reminds us of the celebrated mode of getting rid of any difficulty "by a concatenation." We leave the reader to form his own conclusion from the words of the commission, with no anxiety as to the result.

It is asserted that Hakluyt is guilty of perversion when he describes John Cabot as "very expert and cunning in the knowledge of the circuit of the world, and islands of the same, as by a sea-card, and other demonstrations reasonable, he shewed;"† and in the same breath the biographer proceeds to arraign Campbell, Macpherson, and

* Memoir of Cabot, p. 50.

† Hakluyt, vol. iii. p. 9.