

demeanour. Perhaps Robert had detected the odour of rum, ineffectually concealed by the fragrance of a smoking pipe, more frequently than merely after dinner, and seen the sad shadow on his daughter's face, following. But that did not prevent Captain Armytage's being a very agreeable and well-informed companion nevertheless.

"Granted that 'Canada' is a pretty name," said he; "but it's Spanish more than native. 'Aca nada'—nothing here—said the old Castilian voyagers, when they saw no trace of gold mines or other wealth along the coast. That's the story, at all events. But I hold to it that our British John Cabot was the first who ever visited this continent, unless there's truth in the old Scandinavian tales, which I don't believe."

But the gallant officer's want of credence does not render it the less a fact, that, about the year 1001, Biorn Heriolsen, an Icelander, was driven south from Greenland by tempestuous weather, and discovered Labrador. Subsequently, a colony was established for trading purposes on some part of the coast named Vinland; but after a few Icelanders had made fortunes of the peltries, and many had perished among the Esquimaux, all record of the settlement is blotted out, and Canada fades from the world's map till restored by the explorations of the Cabots and Jacques Cartier. The two former examined the seaboard, and the latter first entered the grand estuary of the St. Lawrence, which he named from the Saint's day of its discovery; and he also was the earliest white man to gaze down from the mighty precipice of Quebec, and pronounce the obscure Indian name which was hereafter to suggest a world-famed capital. Then, the dwellings and navies of nations and generations yet unborn were growing all around in hundreds of leagues of forest; a dread magnificence of shade darkened the face of the earth, amid which the red man reigned supreme. Now, as the passengers of the good brig "Ocean Queen" gazed upon it three centuries subsequently, the slow axe had chopped away those