

ate outlying islands. That discovery was made on the eleventh day of October, A.D. 1492. When Columbus returned to Spain, in the Spring of 1493, and reported his discovery, Pope Alexander VI promptly proceeded to make partition between Spain and Portugal, of all the regions of the earth lying between Western Europe and Eastern Asia. This decree (technically called a "bull") gave all lands discovered, or to be discovered, to the west of a meridian one hundred leagues west of the Azores and Cape Verde islands to Spain, and all lands eastward of that line to Portugal. The convention of Tordesillas, June 7, 1494, fixed the line of demarcation at a meridian 370 leagues west of the Cape Verde islands. This was very acceptable to Spain and Portugal, but England recognized no such right or authority in the Papal office. In the meantime the discovery of Columbus was bruited among the English people, and at the English court. Both court and people were pricked with enterprise to compete with Spain for a share of what was to be gained by discoveries at the west. This fact is the proper introduction of the Cabots to our consideration. We need constantly to keep before our minds the total ignorance of all parties at that time of the real nature of the discovery of Columbus. Columbus supposed he had reached Eastern Asia, and no one then could dispute his claim. No correct conception was possible until twenty years had passed, and Balboa had, from the height of Darien, discovered ten thousand miles of ocean breadth between the newly discovered lands and Eastern Asia.

John Cabot, like Columbus, was a native of Genoa. He later removed to Venice, and became a citizen of that place. He migrated to England about the year 1490, with his three sons, the second of them being Sebastian, who was 24 or 25 years of age in 1497. The services of father and son are so commingled and confused by the chroniclers of their day that it is an impossible task on our part to justly distinguish and