

the philosophy or ideas which constitute the ground work upon which all facts are based. In other words, theory must precede action.

John Cabot, certainly, and Sebastian Cabot, possibly, were the first Europeans to discover the American continent and make record and cartographical representation of the same, preserving to all posterity the time, place and circumstance of their discovery. To the present time the American people have neglected to place one stone upon another designed to memorialize those men, or to express gratitude for the geographical discovery, which either made our great nation a possibility, or an accomplished fact. While we claim for the Cabots the distinguished honor of the first view of the American continent, technically, and in fact, we do not presume to name them as the discoverers of America, in the largest and more just sense of the phrase. That distinguished honor the world has long since accorded to Christopher Columbus, and their righteous judgment should never again be disputed. The discovery and exploration of America cannot be understood by *one* distinct statement of fact. The results of various navigations and explorations, attended with much peril and anxious solicitude, covering a period of two hundred years, makes intelligible and plain to us, what to the early navigators and explorers was chaotic and at most dubious, and solely problematical. Nor is it necessary for the purposes of this paper that we review all that early history in detail. The nautical problem and the geographical discoveries proposed by Diaz, Da Gama, Columbus, Magellan, Verrazano, and the Cabots, was not to find an unknown continent, but solely to ascertain the most feasible route to the eastern shores of Asia. At the time the Cabots made their first voyage of discovery all the knowledge that Europe possessed pertinent to the great problem, was, that Columbus had come upon islands in the Atlantic which he and all others supposed was the continent of Asia, or immedi-