

generally been esteemed the discoverer of its continent, an honour undoubtedly due, if not to John Cabot, to his son Sebastian.

Before Columbus had obtained any assistance from the court of Spain, his brother in vain solicited aid from Henry VII. in that of England; and, perhaps, after the fame of his discoveries had reached his ears, that over-cautious monarch repented his unbelief, for when a proposition was made to find a shorter passage in more northern latitudes to Cathay, he readily embraced it.

There was then residing in England one already eminent among the navigators and geographers of the age, "men capable of making sea-charts, and expert in globes, maps, astrolabes, and like convenient instruments," who, although an Englishman by birth, had, when young, been taken by his father to Venice, and in that great nursery of navigators imbibed the first principles of nautical science, and probably the outlines of those ideas which he afterwards so gloriously matured.*

* Robert Eden says he told him:—"He (his father) tooke me with him to the citie of London whyle I was