

His life, full of significance, is the true beginning of her eventful history.

When America was first made known to Europe, the part assumed by France on the borders of that new world was peculiar, and is little recognized. While the Spaniard roamed sea and land, burning for achievement, red-hot with bigotry and avarice, and while England, with soberer steps and a less dazzling result, followed in the path of discovery and gold-hunting, it was from France that those barbarous shores first learned to serve the ends of peaceful commercial industry.

To leave this cloudland of tradition, and approach the confines of recorded history: The Normans, offspring of an ancestry of conquerors; the Bretons, that stubborn, hardy, unchanging race; the Basques, that primeval people, older than history,—all frequented from a very early date the cod-banks of Newfoundland.<sup>2</sup>

From this time forth the Newfoundland fishery was never abandoned. French, English, Spanish, and Portuguese made resort to the Banks, always jealous, often quarreling, but still drawing up treasure from those exhaustless mines, and bearing home bountiful provision against the season of Lent.

While French fishermen plied their trade along these gloomy coasts, the French Government spent its energies on a different field. The vitality of the kingdom was wasted in Italian wars. The crown passed at length to Francis of Angoulême.<sup>3</sup> The light which was beginning to pierce the feudal darkness gathered its rays around his throne. Among artists, philosophers,

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<sup>2</sup> There is some reason to believe that this fishery existed before the voyage of Cabot in 1497; there is strong evidence that it began as early as the year 1504.

<sup>3</sup> **Francis I.**—King of France, born 1494, died 1547. He left a great reputation for gallantry, generosity, and royal accomplishments.

During his reign a league was formed against him by Charles the Fifth of Spain, Henry VIII. of England, and Pope Leo X., and the French were expelled from Italy after a series of battles, at Sesia 1524, in which the famous chevalier Bayard fell, and at Pavia in 1525.