

graphy which were beyond the reach of students of twenty or thirty years ago.

Neither presumption on my part, nor disrespect for the opinions of former writers, can be inferred from the fact that the conclusions in this book are sometimes directly at variance with those of Major and others; for, though the old ground has been gone over again, and new tracks found, this has been done by the aid of new lights.

The investigation was entered upon with an open mind, and I have been led to the definite conclusions arrived at as to the fraudulent character of the younger Zeno's work, by the impartial consideration of the evidence afforded by many books and maps, the titles and dates of which have been given fully in every instance, so that readers may themselves easily refer to the authorities if disposed to do so.

I trust that the facts and arguments have been so presented that the conclusions may be generally accepted; that it may even be hoped that the last word has been written on this great and mischievous imposture; and that the Zeno narrative and map may henceforth cease to be regarded as reliable sources of history and geography.

The literature and cartography relating, more or less directly, to the alleged voyages of the brothers Zeni and to the remarkable "Carta da Navegar" which illustrated the work of the younger Zeno, are very voluminous. Though I have given at the end of this book a list of nearly four hundred maps and books bearing upon the subject, I am aware that that list is by no means exhaustive.

The supposed pre-Columbian discovery of America by Antonio Zeno at the end of the fourteenth century, has long been one of the stock stories of nearly all histories of America and of histories of Venice and of Venetian literature and commerce. It is, however, to be noticed that, of late years, the story has been quietly dropped out of Mr. Henry Harrisse's *The Discovery of North America* and Sir Clements R. Markham's *Columbus*. It survives, however, in the works of those who, without investigating the matter for themselves, adopt Major's opinion as final and conclusive. Examples of the latter class of works are Mr. Charles I. Elton's *Career of Columbus* and Mr. John Fiske's *Discovery of America*. Other authors, as, for instance, the late Mr. Justin Winsor in his *Christopher Columbus*, admit the story, but upon a doubtful footing.

It has been thought well not to be sparing in the matter of the reproduction of maps. It was originally intended to give only the