

experientia apertissime constat, defectus & variationes aëris nauticæ crebro fieri cum Arctici observatione."

Which I translate thus, without holding myself responsible for the bad construction of the language :—

"Sebastian Cabot, Captain and Pilot of his Sacred Imperial Catholic Majesty the Emperor Charles, fifth of that name and King of Spain, put upon me the finishing hand, and, projecting me after this form, delineated me in a plane figure in the year of Redemption and of the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ 1497; who has described me according to the latitude and longitude of degrees, the position of the winds, so learnedly and so faithfully in the fashion of a sailing chart, following the authority of the geographer Ptolemy and the belief of the more skilled Portuguese, and also from the experience and practice of long sea service of the most excellent John Cabot, a Venetian by nation, and of my author, Sebastian his son, the most learned of all men in knowledge of the stars and the art of navigation, who have discovered a certain part of the globe for a long time hidden from our people. . . . Sebastian Cabot, sailing into the Western Ocean, reached a certain sea and region where the lily of the compass needle pointed due north at one quarter north-north-east. For which reasons, and by the safest nautical experience, it is most clearly evident that defects and variations of the compass frequently occur with observation of the North."

Since the time of Chytraeus this theory of the date of 1494 has been propounded at intervals by Harris, Pinkerton, Sir John Barrow, and others, while there have not been wanting those who believed that the rightful date was 1497. Now it so happens that opposite opinions on this subject have been put forth so recently as 1869 by two friends of mine of high distinction in the world of letters, and as it happens in the self-same book, a book of which there are probably not half a dozen copies in England, but with one of which I have had the honour to be presented. It is entitled, *A History of the Discovery of the East Coast of North America, particularly the Coast of Maine, from the Northmen in 990 to the Charter of Gilbert in 1578.* By J. G. Kohl, of Bremen. Portland, 1869, 8vo. published by the Maine Historical Society. It is a most admirable work, and I am proud to think that it was at my suggestion that the proposal was made to my learned friend to undertake so responsible and difficult a task. In the chain of Kohl's labours the discoveries of the Cabots, of course, formed an important link, and his critical acumen has struck out some very valuable ideas in furtherance of the argument that the first discovery of *terra firma* was in