

required the discovery of the compass and the wider knowledge of navigation which grew so naturally out of that event. It was made imminent by the Portuguese discovery of the Cape of Good Hope, in 1486, and inevitable by the growth of British maritime ambitions and the sea-dog spirit of the sturdy islanders. It became a fact when Columbus, after imbibing the love of the sea from his birth-place of Genoa, sailed the Mediterranean and the nearer waters of the Atlantic for twenty years and then made up his mind to discover a direct route to the East Indies. For long after coming to this conclusion, he haunted the courts of Europe, and finally impressed his belief in these new lands, and his faith in a new route to the East, upon the generous Isabella of Castile. The discovery of San Salvador and other islands of the West India group which followed, in the memorable year 1492, opened the way not only to a new world in territorial magnitude but to the greatest empires of history and to newer civilizations and larger liberties.

CABOT'S PLACE IN HISTORY

It remained, however, for a Venetian, sailing under the flag of England, to first touch the mainland of the continent. John Cabot has only now, after lying in the silence of forgotten dust during four long centuries, come into recognized honour and deserved renown. Whether, in 1497, he touched the shores of Canada amid the cold and ice of Labrador, or in the wilder country of Nova Scotia, there seems every reason to believe that he did reach it somewhere between those two regions.* A monument at Bristol, from which he sailed, and a memorial at Halifax, which he made possible as a British seaport and city, agree in marking the great importance of his work. Columbus, of course, had preceded him in touching the island fringe of

* Authorities differ greatly in opinion as to Cabot's landing place. Judge Prowse believes that he first touched the shores of Newfoundland, while Dr. Harvey favours the Cape Breton theory. Labrador is supported by H. H. Harsse, and in earlier days by Humboldt and Biddle. But the bulk of modern opinion, including Sir Clements Markham, Signor Tarducci, R. G. Thwaites, and Sir J. G. Bourne, is strongly in favour of Cape Breton as the landing place. This view has recently received almost conclusive support and proof at the hands of Dr. S. F. Dawson, of Ottawa.