

## THE EARLY STORY OF NEWFOUNDLAND.\*

BY JESSIE CAMERON.

IN the latter part of the fifteenth century, when Columbus brought home glowing accounts of the new lands he had discovered, the eyes of all Europe turned westward in wonder and curiosity and cupidity. Our judicious King Henry VII., desirous of adding new glories to his name, and new sources to his revenue, determined to profit by those discoveries which, had he not been penny-wise, would have been made under his patronage. Accordingly the king took counsel with one Giovanni Kabotto, or John Cabot, a clever and enterprising Venetian merchant, then residing at Bristol, and in 1496 granted him letters patent, empowering him to sail in search of new lands, not yet possessed by Christians.

Accounts of this first voyage, (taken, probably, by way of Iceland) are indefinite, but this is certain, that Cabot touched at Labrador and the north-eastern coast of Newfoundland. On his return to England the enterprising adventurer was knighted, very much praised and petted, substantially rewarded, and even treated to private presents from the king,—for we find noted in Henry's privy-purse, expenditures, August 10th, 1497, "To hym that found the new isle, £10."

The report of the spies must have been good, for in 1497 the king again did "give and graunte to our well-beloved John Kabotto, the Venecian, sufficiente authoritie and power that he, by him, his Deputie or Deputies, may take at his pleasure VI English shippes in any porte or portes, or other places within this our realm of England or obeisance, so that and if the said shippes be of the burthen of C. C. tonnes or under, with their apparail requisite and necessaire for the safe conduct of the said shippes, and them convey and leade to the lande and isles of

\* Among the sources of information for this paper are "The History of Newfoundland," by Pedley; Wilson's "Newfoundland and its Missionaries;" a pamphlet entitled "Episodes in our Early History," by Judge Prouse; and "This Newfoundland of Ours," by the Rev. M. Harvey.