

Cabot must have considered Tanais north of Bristol, as it is so given on Ptolemy's map. Hence, he concludes, the argument would tell against myself.

Dr. Dawson fears I underrate the general extent of knowledge of mediæval cartography. Well, if the authorities he cites in Appendix E, and which he more than endorses, are specimen witnesses, his fears are groundless. We had thought the day was passed, and with it the strange hallucination that warped men's vision, when a writer could suggest that the human mind had been stagnant for long centuries. A noted English writer has tersely rebuked this mental attitude by saying:—"Those who speak of the ignorance of the Middle Ages only show their own ignorance of its achievements." I shall only add to this that it is incomprehensible how men can think that the Ages which studded Europe with the finest specimens of architecture, filled them with the noblest works of sculpture and paintings, adorned them with exquisite taste and skill, both in mosaic and wood-carving, which produced the greatest poets, witness Dante, Petrarch, Tasso—the most profound philosophers and theologians, such as Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas and a score of other schoolmen, learned writers and historians, navigators like Columbus, the Cabots, Amerigo Vespucci,—were characterized by mental stagnation. Dr. Dawson waxes mirthful over a certain Cosmas Indicopleustis. I fear he will be obliged to hold his sides (since he finds a case of not very inexcusable ignorance so amusing) when he reads that an enlightened Englishman wrote, and a first class English Quarterly published, a very few years before the introduction of railways, that the idea of travelling on an iron road, by steam, at the rate of ten miles an hour, was as absurd as the proposition to go from the arsenal to Woolwich on a Congreve rocket.

On account of the neglect of, or contempt for mediæval literature, human progress has lost at least a century. The solid foundations, and many feet of shapely walls, of the temple of human knowledge had been built by the Ancients and their successors of the Middle Ages. Instead of continuing the work, men of these latter centuries started to build anew. The many superficial, fanciful and shifting theories of our day prove that the foundations of the new temple have been laid on sand.

That vague ideas of the whereabouts of Tanais existed, and still exist, may be granted. But I shall prove that before, during and after Cabot's time, the Venetians, Genoese, Milanese and Italians in general, knew Tanais as a definitely located State or Country in Europe. Certainly as a distinct tribe the Tanaitæ of Ptolemy did not exist, but the country remained and was known as Tana, though not always men-