

Rialto in 1455, he saw two Tartars who were held as slaves by the owner of the shop. He complained to the authorities who, after investigation, set the men free. Our author took them to his house and kept them until "the ships were leaving for Tanais," when he sent them home. These were really the Tanais line of ships for the words are, "*Col partir delle navi della Tana io li mandai a casa.*" Trade between Venice and Tanais was still brisk in 1455. At that time John Cabot was an able-bodied seaman, and it is more than probable he commanded a ship of the Tanaian line.

Some of the leading merchants of Venice were interested in the traffic, as the names of the "seven merchants" who met at Tanais in 1437 disclose. The trip therefore to that place was both profitable and adventurous. Who can doubt that Cabot made it more than once.

We may add that from the first ages of the Christian era Tanais was an Episcopal See. Although for centuries no Bishop has resided in it, it is still a Titular one. In 1827 Bishop Fraser was consecrated with the title of Bishop of Tanais, and appointed Vicar Apostolic of Nova Scotia.

Incidentally our author refers to a Friar of the Order of St. Francis, showing that a monastery of that Order existed at Tanais in 1438.

I do not know when this interesting booklet first appeared. There is positive internal evidence that it was not written until, at least, thirty-five years after an event which took place in 1438. As our author returned from a long sojourn in Persia, an account of which is also published, in the year 1473, and as he must then have been verging on 70, it is probable the story of his voyages appeared in 1474 or 1475.

Notwithstanding the blighting influence of Turkish rule which destroyed the trade of Capha and other ports, Tanais remained a great commercial centre for at least one hundred years after its capture. The Venetians and Turks frequently fought, but they exchanged commodities more frequently. Gerardus Mercator in his description of "Taurica Chersonesus," written before 1569 for his great Atlas, speaking of Tanais, which the "Ruthenians call Azac," says:—"It is a noble emporium to which merchants from various parts of the world sail, where there is free access for everyone, free permission to buy and sell." "*Estque nobile emporium, ad quod mercatores ex diversis Orbis partibus commeant, ubi cinque liber patet accessus, libera emendendi et vendendi facullas.*" Evidently it was the real "open door" of which we have lately heard so much.

The Tartars and Turks, as Mercator insinuates, had a superabundance of fish of which they rarely partook, and were very well pleased