

the French king, in which he gives a short and sketchy report of his explorations, without naming any points, and in such general terms that many have doubted the genuineness of the letter. It was not published in France, but first appeared in Italian, in Venice, 1556, in the third volume of the *Collection of Voyages*, edited by Ramusius, which was prepared in 1553, but no document positively confirming the letter has since been found.

No serious doubt, however, had ever been raised impugning the truth of this letter until the late Buckingham Smith attempted, in two critical articles, published in 1864 and 1869, to disprove its genuineness.

LIFE AND VOYAGES OF VERRAZANO.

Geographers, as well as historians, meet with many historical riddles. Even concerning Columbus, much remains to be explained, and of the early voyages of Sebastian Cabot just enough is known, in the lack of further documentary evidence, to render the search for truth almost hopeless. The voyages of Americus Vesputius present a wide subject for controversy, and the few facts concerning Verrazano, whose voyages more closely than any other early navigator relate to our own coast, invite the most searching criticism of geographers.

We have, in this case, to deal with an individual who was known under two characters, as a privateer and as an explorer. On this account we must treat of him in each character separately, in order not to confuse the narrative of his career. In later times, a Hawkins or a Drake, a Cavendish or an Anson, united these opposite occupations and were famed in both, but Verrazano's exploits as a corsair have been hitherto only alluded to in scattered notices, and uncertainty rests on the time and manner of his death. He was the first to show how the growing power of Spain could be crippled, and Spain, in return, has not honored his memory.

We have collected many detached notices of his cors-