

1497. of its being discovered on the day of John the Baptist, they gave the name of St. John. Continuing their course westwardly, they soon reached the continent, and then sailed along the coast northwardly to the latitude of 67 and a half degrees.¹ Finding that the coast stretched toward the east, and despairing of making the desired discovery here, they turned back, and sailed along the coast toward the equator, "ever with an intent to find the passage to India," till they came to the southernmost part of that tract of the continent, which has since been called Florida. Their provisions now failing, and a mutiny breaking out among the mariners, they returned to England, without attempting either settlement or conquest in any part of the New World.²

Coast along
the conti-
nent of
the New
World.

Return to
England.

Remark.

Through a singular succession of causes, sixty one years elapsed from the time of this discovery of the northern division of the Continent by the English, during which their monarchs gave little attention to this country, which was destined to be annexed to their crown, and to be a chief source of British opulence and power, till, in process of time, it should become an independent empire.³ This remarkable neglect of navigating the coast, and of attempting colonization, is in some measure accounted for by the frugal maxims of Henry VII, and the unpropitious circumstances of the reign of Henry VIII, of Edward VI, and of the bigotted Mary; reigns peculiarly adverse to the extension of industry, trade and navigation.⁴

¹ For an illustration of the probable extent of this voyage, to the north and south, see Note I. at the end of the volume.

² P. Martyr, 232. Hakluyt, i. 513; iii. 6—9. Smith Hist. Virginia, p. 1. Purchas, i. 737, 738. Jesselyn's Voyages, 230. Harris, i. 860. Robertson, b. ix. 16, 17. Univ. Hist. xl. 378. Forster, 266, 431. Belknap Biog. i. 132. Mather's Magnalia, i. 2. Prince Chron. Introd. 80. Biog. Britan. Art. GILBERT.

³ Robertson, book ix. p. 22.

⁴ Univ. Hist. xxxix. 235, 406. Brit. Emp. Introd. vi, vii.

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