

portance to the history of Newfoundland, as being the narrative of the earliest of those colonies which are now dotted around the globe.

#### THE DISCOVERY.

The close of the fifteenth century witnessed the grandest event of modern times--the discovery of the New World by Columbus. The news broke on men's minds with all the startling effect of a new revelation, a new creation. A boundless field for human energies was opened, kindling enthusiasm and awakening the brightest or the wildest hopes. The noblest and most daring spirits in Europe were stirred to their depths; and the impulse to explore the wonders and mysteries of the land, the curtain of which Columbus had just raised, fired many brave hearts. Among those who felt this quickening impulse most keenly was John Cabot and his son Sebastian. He was an Italian by birth, a native of Venice, who had for several years been settled in Bristol where he was engaged in trade, and who was destined to become to Britain what Columbus had become to Spain--the pioneer of new and boundless enterprise. Little is known of John Cabot beyond the fact that he was a thoughtful, speculative man, whose ideas travelled beyond his profession, and led him to take a deep interest in these maritime discoveries that were then stirring the pulses of the world. His son Sebastian, who was destined to be the *first discoverer of Continental America*, and thus to secure a fame second only to that of Columbus, inherited his father's predilections, and early entered on a sea-faring life. Doubtless the intelligence of Columbus's discovery, then filling all Europe with wonder, stirred the minds of these two thoughtful men, and awoke the conviction that, by taking a North-west course, instead of following the track of the great navigator which had led him to the San Salvador, they would discover new and unknown lands, perhaps find a shorter passage to Cathay, the great object of maritime adventure in those days. Henry VII. was then on the throne of England; and when the news of Columbus's achievement arrived, that monarch must have been sorely chagrined to find that he had missed, by a mere accident, the honour of having his name transmitted to posterity as the patron of the discoverer of the New World, and of being proclaimed master of vast realms, with their untold treasures, beyond the western waves. When then, John Cabot and his son made the proposal to the king of undertaking a voyage of discovery, from the port of Bristol to regions far north of those in which Columbus was then exploring, Henry lent a willing ear to the offer of the adventurous navigators, and letters patent, sanctioning their undertaking, were speedily granted.

#### LAND HO!

Never perhaps was a voyage of discovery, the consequence of which was to be so far-reaching, entered upon with less of show or circumstance, than that of Sebastian Cabot when, from the port of Bristol, in the spring of 1497, he sailed away into those stormy seas of the North Atlantic, never before furrowed by the keel of a European ocean-ranger. The voyage of Columbus had around it the halo of poetry