

INTRODUCTION.

On ne doit aux morts que la verité.

In the year 1497, a Venetian citizen, called Giovanni Caboto, having obtained letters-patent from Henry VII. the year previous for a voyage of discovery, crossed the Atlantic Ocean, and, under the British flag, discovered the continent of North America.

In 1498, he fitted out in Bristol a new expedition, and again sailed westward; but scarcely anything further is known of that enterprise.

Caboto had a son named Sebastian, born in Venice, who lived in England not less than sixteen years, and then removed to Spain, where in 1518 Charles V. appointed him Pilot-Major. This office he held for thirty years.

In 1526, Sebastian was authorized to take command of a Spanish expedition intended for "Tharsis and Ophir," but which, instead, went to La Plata, and proved disastrous.

After his return to Seville, he was invited, in 1547, by the counsellors of Edward VI. to England, and again settled in that country. Seven years afterwards, he prepared the expeditions of Willoughby