

mighty river¹ which runs into the great river Parana. Juan Diaz de Solis, pilot-major of their² Catholic Majesties³ of glorious memory, discovered it, and he explored it as far as an island, to which the said Juan Diaz gave the name of the island, of Martin Garcia, because in it he buried a sailor who was called Martin Garcia, which said island is about thirty leagues above the mouth of this river and the said discovery cost him very dear, for the Indians of the said land slew him and ate him; and after many years had gone by it was again discovered by Sebastian Cabot, Captain and Pilot-major⁴ of his Sacred Cesarean Catholic Majesty the Emperor Don Carlos Fifth of the name, and king, our lord, who was commander of an expedition which his Majesty ordered should be made to discover Tarsis and Ophir⁵ and Oriental Cathay; which said Captain Sebastian Cabot came to this river by chance, for the commander's ship, in which he was, was lost,⁶ and seeing that he could not continue his said voyage, he determined to explore with the people he had with him the said river, by reason of the very great account which the Indians of the land gave him of the very great wealth in gold and silver which there was in the land, and not without very great labor and hunger, and dangers both of his own person and of those who were with him.⁷ And⁸ the said⁹ Captain endeavored to make near the said river certain settlements of the people whom he brought from Spain.¹⁰ This river is larger than any that is known up to the present time. Its breadth at the mouth where it enters the sea is thirty-five¹¹ leagues, and three hundred leagues above the said mouth it is two leagues in breadth. The cause of its being so great and mighty is that there run into it many other and mighty rivers. It is a river infinitely full of fish and of the best there is in the world. The people, on arriving in that land, wished to learn if it were fertile and fit to plough and raise bread; and they planted in the month of September fifty-two grains of wheat,—for there was no more in the ships,—and they gathered soon in the month of December fifty-two thousand grains of wheat; and this same fertility was found in all the other seeds.¹² Those who live in that land say that not far from there, in the country inland, there are certain great mountain-ranges from which they take infinite gold, and further on in the same mountains they take infinite silver. There are in this land certain sheep large as ordinary asses, of the shape of camels, except that the wool they bear is fine as silk, and other animals of different kinds. The people of the country differ very much; for those who live on the slopes of the mountains are white like us, and those who are near the banks of the river are dark. Some say that in the said mountains there are men who have faces like dogs, and others are from the knee down like ostriches, and that these are great workers, and that they raise much maize, of which they make bread and wine. Many other things they say of that land, which are not put down here lest they be tedious.¹³

Nº 8. This land was discovered by Juan Cabot, a Venetian, and by Sebastian Cabot, his son, in the year of the birth of our Saviour Jesus Christ 1494, on the 24th of June,¹⁴ in the morning, to which they gave the name of "first land seen" (*prima tierra vista*); and to a large island which is situated along the said land they gave the name San Juan, because it had been discovered the same day.¹⁵ The people of it are dressed in the skins of animals. They use in their wars bows and arrows, lances and darts, and certain clubs of wood, and slings. It is a very sterile land. There are in it many¹⁶ white bears, and very large stags like horses, and many other animals; and likewise there is infinite fish,—sturgeons, salmon, very large soles a yard in length, and many other kinds of fish,—and the greatest quantity of them is called (*baccallaos*) codfish;¹⁷ and likewise there are in the same land hawks black as crows, eagles, partridges,¹⁸ linnets, and many other kinds of birds of different species.

1 into which runs.

2 conquering and.

3 Ferdinand and Isabel.

4 most skilful in the art of navigation and of astronomy.

5 Ciapangu and Eoicatai.

6 being buried in the stormy waves.

7 [In the Latin version the last clause, beginning "and not without very great labor," precedes the clause beginning "by reason of."]

8 Wherefore.

9 most energetic.

10 and to build certain citadels and forts by which the Spanish inhabitants could easily be protected and could thence repel the attacks of their Indian enemies.

11 twenty-five.

12 This extraordinary statement as to the productiveness of a grain of wheat in the country of the *Ta Plata* is repeated in the Latin version of this section. It is probably an inadvertence. Eden, who copied this section from Cabot's map, in the free English version, into his "Decades of the New World," London, 1555, pp. 317-319, corrects the error, but on what authority, except his own knowledge of natural history, we do not know. He makes the text read thus: "Taking, therefore, fifty grains of wheat and committing the same to the earth in the month of September they gathered thereof two thousand and fifty at December next following." Eden then proceeds: "Wherein some being deceived and mistaking the thing, have written in the stead of two thousand and fifty, fifty thousand and two."—*Note by Mr. Deane.*

13 [In the Latin version the last sentence follows immediately after "infinite silver," and is itself followed by the clause beginning "and that these are great workers,"]

14 24 July, at the fifth hour, about daybreak.

15 on the solemn festival of St. John.

17 by the common people.

16 lions.

18 dark.