

THE RIVAL CLAIMANTS FOR NORTH AMERICA.

1497-1755.

IN considering the respective claims of the English and French to North America, it must be remembered that the conflict of rights is not only one on identical lines arising from discovery, but one also on opposed lines arising from different conceptions of the rights of discovery. The claims are also represented by contrary methods and purposes in enforcing them.

The French, in the time of Francis I. and later, claimed the new continent by reason of Verrazzano's voyage along its Atlantic coast. The claim, however, was not made good by permanent occupation anywhere along the seaboard of the present United States.

Moreover, the English, under the Cabots, had sailed along this coast earlier. Still it was not till nearly a century had passed that the English government, urged by the spirit which Hakluyt and Dr. Dee were fostering, awoke to the opportunity and began seriously to base rights upon the Cabot voyages. The French at a later day sought to discredit this English claim, on the ground that the Cabots were private adventurers and could establish no national pretensions. The English pointedly replied that their Henry VII. had given them patents which reserved to the crown dominion over any lands which were discovered. This reply was triumphant so far as it went, but it still left the question aside, whether coast discovery carried rights to the interior, particularly if such inland regions drained to another