

ished hope of penetrating the icy barriers of the northern seas, had well nigh faded away, dreams of almost fabulous wealth, to be derived from the mineral riches of the new world, took the form of reality in the mental visions of the promoters of these explorations. It was not until these day dreams of the credulous navigators had in turn been dispelled by the hard logic of a bitter disappointment, that the commercial "adventurers" of those days contented themselves with the more substantial profits of the baser peltry traffic, as a substitute for gold and precious stones. And it was under these circumstances that the rivalry for the traffic for furs between the French and English colonists commenced, which was afterwards marked by so much intrigue and violence, as well as relieved by so many personal incidents of romantic and stirring interest.

In order to understand how it came to pass that the French and English colonists claimed an equal right to hunt and trade for peltries in the Hudson Bay Territory, we shall take a rapid glance at the discoveries made by the English and French navigators respectively, on which those trading rights were held by treaty and occupation to have been founded.

EARLY SEA VOYAGES FROM EUROPE TO HUDSON'S BAY.

Although it does not appear that John and Sebastian Cabot in their voyage of 1497, or Sebastian alone, in his voyage of 1498, reached the coast of Labrador at a higher point than 46° and 48° of north latitude, still it is, we believe, indubitable that Sebastian Cabot himself, in his later voyage of 1517, did actually enter through the Straits into the great Baye du Nord itself.*

Neither Cortereal, the Portuguese navigator, in his voyage of 1501, nor Verrazzani, in his voyage of 1525, under the auspices of France, seem to have gone farther north than 50° ; nor do the fishermen of Brittany and Normandy in 1504-10 appear in their hardy enterprise to have gone much farther north than 53° or 55° . On behalf of the French monarch Cartier discovered and took possession of New France, with its indefinite boundaries in 1534; and nineteen years afterwards, Willoughby (in 1553) and Frobisher (in 1576) penetrated north of the

* "The main fact is indisputable that Sebastian Cabot passed through the Straits and entered the Bay,¹ which, after the lapse of nearly a century, took their name from Hudson. He himself wrote a "Discourse of Navigation," in which the entrance of the Straits was laid down with great precision, "on a card drawn by his own hand."² * * * He attained an altitude of $67\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$, *i.e.*—the arctic circle.—Bancroft's History of the United States, vol. i. p. 10. Routledge's Eng. Edi. 1861.

(1) "Anderson was the first of the later writers to mention the fact. History of Commerce An. 1496."

(2) "Ortelius' Map of America, in Theatrum Orbis Terrarum." * * * "Sir Humphrey Gilbert, in Hackluyt, iii., 49. 50."