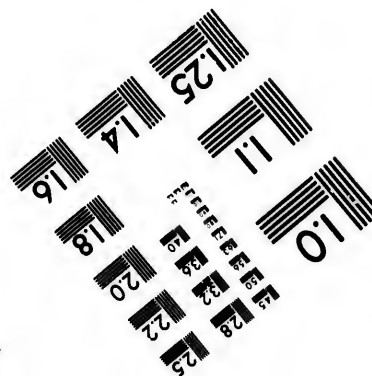
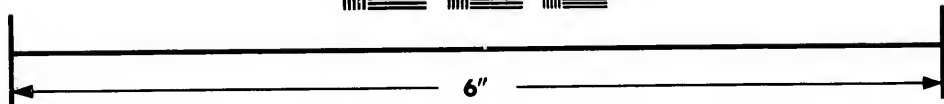
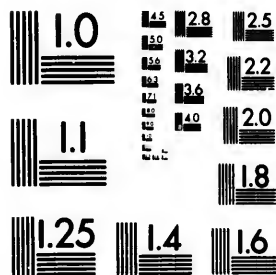


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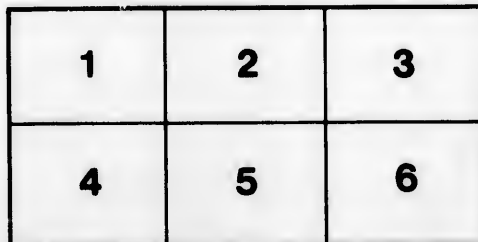
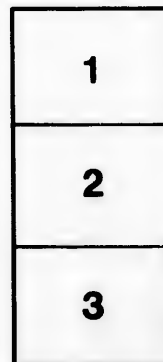
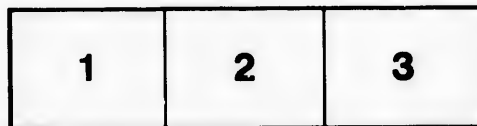
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Mag of American Hist

Oct 1891

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CABOT'S LANDFALL

So much has been written on this subject that it may appear superfluous to spend any more time with the theme. I certainly should not attempt to write did I not feel confident that I can throw fresh light upon it. It must surely be admitted that notwithstanding the volumes of literature which have been published, all endeavoring to fix the disputed point, still no thoroughly satisfactory statement has yet been made. I do not pretend at present to say that this, my effort, shall be absolutely the last word on the question; it does not fully satisfy myself, but it brings us a step nearer to a conclusion.

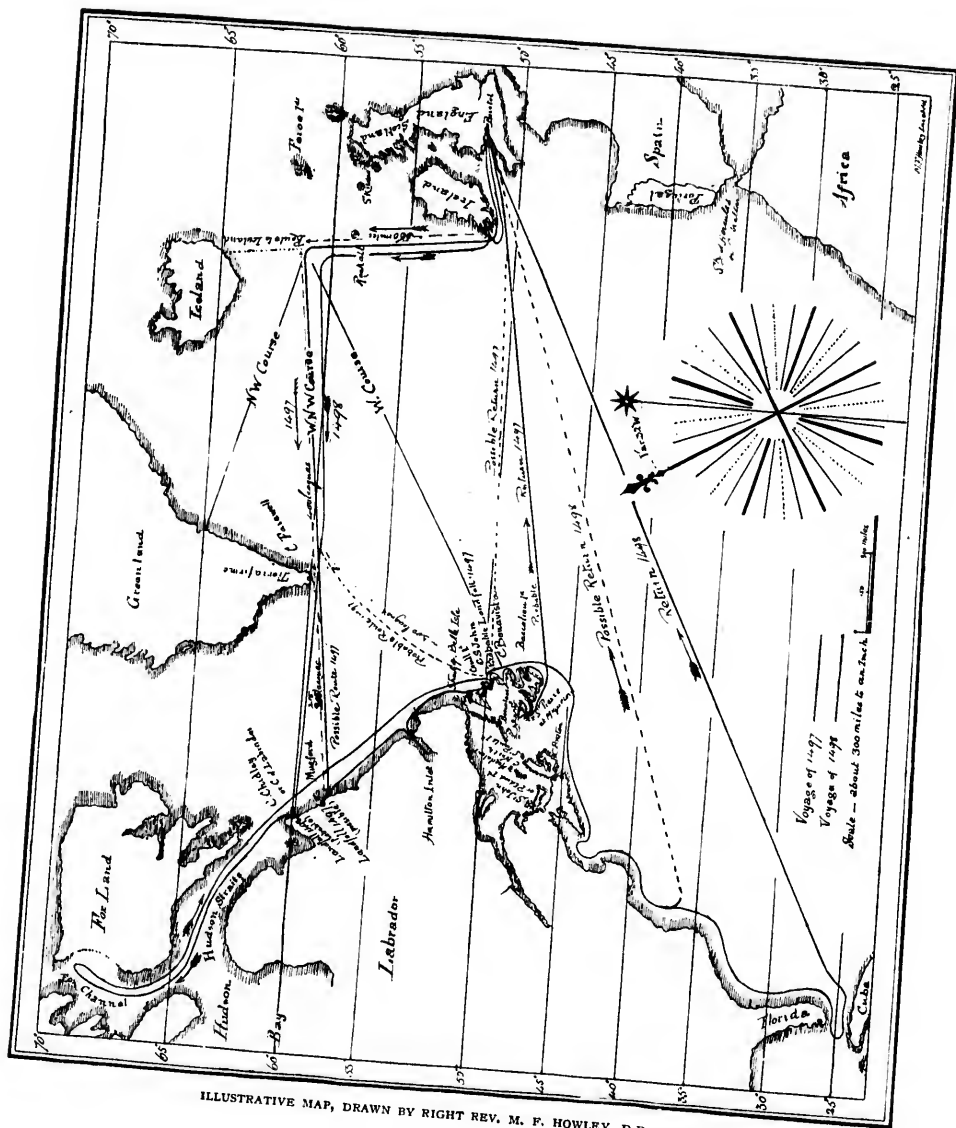
I was induced to prepare this monograph through seeing an article by the Very Rev. Abbé Beaudouin in *Le Canada Français* of October, 1888, in which the reverend and learned author contended for Cape North, in Cape Breton, as the site of the landfall. Subsequently I saw an article by J. P. Howley, F.G.S., in the *Transactions of the Geographical Society of Quebec*, 1889. This latter article had for its object, first, to refute Professor Horsford, who contends for an imaginary site called Norumbega as the landfall; second, to establish as most probably the site of the landfall some part of the Labrador coast between 55° and 60° north latitude. Incidentally Mr. Howley touches upon the Cape North theory, and shows the unreliable character of the supposed Cabot map of 1544, the only vestige of foundation on which that theory rests, which it is my intention here to put to final rest. But first I shall say a few words about the actual landing spot. At present all evidence tends to point to a place on Labrador, somewhere in the neighborhood of Mugford or Cape Chidley, 55° to 60° north. There still, however, remains a strong presumption in favor of Bonavista, or Cape St. John, on the coast of Newfoundland.

As a Newfoundlander, reared in the tradition which has been held from time immemorial, that

"Bonavista, happy sight!"

was the landfall, I feel loath to give it up without a struggle. It is still in possession, and until fairly and irrevocably displaced by irrefutable arguments, we have a right to hold on to it, and bring forth every possible title of proof in favor of it. This I have done, and I leave it to my readers to weigh the strength of the arguments. I will proceed at once to the consideration of the voyages and the fixing of the landfall, leaving the

CABOT'S LANDFALL



ILLUSTRATIVE MAP, DRAWN BY RIGHT REV. M. F. HOWLEY, D.D., P.A.

refutation of the Cape North theory till afterwards, as it follows almost like a corollary from the former. The following are the only facts we know concerning the first voyage of Cabot (1497). We must carefully avoid applying to the first voyage facts and statements belonging to the second. The confounding of these data has hitherto been the cause of much confusion among writers, not only concerning Cabot, but all early navigators.

The patent or commission of Henry VII. to John Cabot and his three sons, Louis, Sebastian, and Sanctius, is dated March 5, 1495, old style, as this was previous to the correction of the calendar by Pope Gregory XIII. (1582). The year, according to the Julian calendar, began on March 25, hence this patent was given in the spring of 1496, as we would now call it. The expedition, however, did not, for some reason or other, set out that year, perhaps owing to the intrigues of De Puebla, Spanish ambassador in England, at the instigation of Ferdinand and Isabella, who were jealous of this new English enterprise, and feared an encroachment on the realms so lately acquired for their crown by Columbus. At all events the expedition did not start from Bristol till May 2, 1497, and the voyagers returned August 6. There was but one small ship, the *Matthew*, with eighteen men, principally sailors from Bristol.

The accounts of the voyage extant, or at least which have yet been discovered, are very meagre. We have a letter, dated August 23, 1497, from a certain Lorenzo Pasquaglio, a Venetian merchant living in London, to his brothers, Aloisio and Francesco, in Venice. The letter contains the popular error, not then exploded, that the land newly discovered was the eastern shore of Asia, the land of the Grand Kham described by Marco Polo. "The Venetian, our countryman," writes Pasquaglio, "is returned, and says that seven hundred leagues from this he discovered land. He followed the coast for three hundred leagues, and landed. He did not see any human being; but he brought to the king certain nets or snares for taking game, and a needle for making nets. He also found some felled trees, wherefore he supposed there were inhabitants, and returned to his ship in alarm. He was three months on his voyage, and on his return he saw two islands to starboard, but he did not land, time being too precious. He says that the tides are slack, and do not flow as they do here. He planted on his new-found land a large cross, with one flag of England and another of St. Mark, by reason of his being a Venetian, so that our banner has floated very far afield."

Next we have a letter, written almost at the same date, August 24, 1497, from Don Raimondo Soncini, envoy of the Duke of Milan, at the court of Henry VII. of England. He was well acquainted with the

Cabots, and describes what he actually witnessed with his own eyes. Both these letters, it will be observed, were written only about three weeks after Cabot's return, and while all England was ringing with the wondrous news. Raimondi writes: "Some months since, his majesty sent a Venetian, who is a great navigator, and who has great skill in discovering new isles. He has returned safe and sound, after having discovered two isles, very large and very fertile. He places the discovery of the new land at four hundred leagues from the west coast of Ireland."

On December 18, 1497, Raimondo wrote another letter to the Duke of Milan, which gives some further particulars. He says that Cabot, having rounded the southwest coast of Ireland, "bent his course towards the north, and after a few days (*fra qualche giorni*) he left the north on his right hand and began to sail towards the east"—i.e., the west.* After wandering a long time (*avendo errato assai*) he found *terra ferma*, where he planted the royal banner and took possession in the name of the king. He says that the sea in those parts was full of fish called *stocchi fisci* (stock fish, or cod), which are taken not only by means of nets, but by a sort of basket or pot immersed in the water."

All this he (Raimondo) says he had from the mouth of John Cabot himself. He says also that Cabot made a map and a globe, or solid sphere, "on which he shows where he landed." "He [Cabot] says that he went much farther *eastward* than *Tanaïs*,† and thinks that the land discovered is that where grows the Brazil wood and the silk tree; and now that they know where to go, they say it is a voyage of not more than fifteen days."

We have another letter touching this first voyage. It was written on July 25, 1498, while the explorers were still away on their second voyage. It is from Pedro de Ayala, protonotary and ambassador of Spain in England, to their majesties Ferdinand and Isabella. It reveals the jealousy with which the action of England was regarded by Spain at the time. De Ayala says he saw the map which Cabot had made, and on it the direc-

* The writers of that day speak of the west as the east and *vice versa*. Believing in the roundness of the earth, they knew that if one could proceed far enough westward he would come to the east, and they believed the new lands discovered were the East Indies. So on the other hand this same Raimondo says elsewhere of John Cabot, that when on one of his journeys to Mecca, seeing the caravans of spices coming from the far east to Alexandria, he argued that they must come from the country of the *north towards the west* (i.e., east), or from China (Cathay) or Japan (Chipango).

† *Tanaïs* was the classical name for the River Don, separating Europe from Asia; it was supposed to divide the earth into two equal parts, east and west, as alluded to in the following line of Lucretius:

"*Mediæ dirimens confinia terræ.*"

tion which the discoverers had taken, and the distance which they had run upon the sea. He also (Ayala) speaks of the imaginary *seven cities*,* and says that for the past seven years the people of Bristol had annually sent three or four vessels in search of these isles at the instigation of the Genoese (*i.e.*, Cabot). De Ayala also speaks of the imaginary isle of Brazil, where was supposed to grow the tree *caesalpinia cchinata*, from the wood of which was made the celebrated red dye. In conclusion he writes: "I will not send this time to your majesties the copy of the *mappa mundi* which Cabot has made. I think the new land is not more than four hundred leagues from here. In my opinion the map is false, for it shows that the land in question" (*i.e.*, the land discovered by Cabot) "was *not* the same as the said isles." That is to say, De Ayala was of opinion that the land discovered by Cabot, and claimed for England, was in reality that which had been discovered a few years before by Columbus for England. Hence, because it did not seem to occupy the same place on the map, De Ayala suspects Cabot of having made a false map.† These are all the particulars that remain to us of the first voyage of Cabot. No trace has been found up to the present day either of the map or globe made immediately after, or more probably during, the voyage. From the words of De Ayala it would seem that every day's journey, with course and distance, was plotted out on the chart as exactly as it is done by our most skillful navigators of the present day. "I saw," says De Ayala, "on the map the course they took and the distance run."

Leaving out the errors current in that semi-classical age concerning the isles of the ocean, the seven cities, and so forth, we find the following facts. On rounding Cape Clear, the southwest point of Ireland, the voyagers turned their course northwardly, and coasted along the western

* The idea of this imaginary place arose from a tradition of seven Spanish bishops flying from the Saracens in the eighth century. The name is still retained by a part of the Island of St. Michael's, in the Azores.

† This confounding of the discoveries of Cabot and Columbus will account, it seems to me, for the strange intermingling, on the early maps of Verrazani, Majollo, Ribero, etc., of the names of places in the West Indies with those of the coast of Newfoundland. Thus interwoven with Bacalaos, Bonavista, Fuego, Aves, C. de Grat, C. de Raz, C. Spera, C. de Pinos, Rognosa, Labrador, and others still existing on the coast of Newfoundland, we find others which have not now, and never had, an existence there, such as Monte Christo, Mille Virgines, Sombrero, St. Thomas, Santa Cruz, St. Anna, Point Diamante, etc. Now, if we look at a map of the West Indies, beginning with the island of San Domingo, and tracing through the Leeward Islands, not only do we find all these names, but what is more, in the exact order in which they occur on the maps of Verrazani and Ribero. This discovery, which I have only lately made, will, I think, help to throw great light on the study of those maps, especially when taken in connection with the suspicions expressed by De Ayala in the above-quoted letter.

shores of Ireland and Scotland for some few days; then they turned to the east (*i.e.*, west), leaving the north on the starboard side, or on the right hand (*a mano dritta*, so writes Raimondo). A vessel sailing with the north on her right side, is, of course, sailing westwardly. Sailing in this direction they discovered land either at four hundred leagues distant or at seven hundred leagues, or (as I shall show) at both these distances.

We have no exact statement as to how far they sailed northwardly before turning to the west, but we can give a pretty accurate guess from the data before us. The navigators said that the new land was about seven hundred leagues, or twenty-one hundred miles distant, and that they could reach it in fifteen days. That would be allowing about one hundred and forty miles a day ($140 \times 15 = 2,100$), or nearly six knots an hour ($24 \times 6 = 144$), which is very good sailing. Now, Raimondo says that on rounding Cape Clear they sailed north for *a few days* (*qualche giorni*). Taking this expression in its ordinary acceptation, we may allow three or four days. Sailing northward from Cape Clear for four days, at six knots an hour, more or less, would give five hundred and sixty miles ($140 \times 4 = 560$). This would bring them to the neighborhood of St. Kilda's, or Rockall, or between that and the Feroe Islands. Then turning their course westward, more or less, they would meet exactly at four hundred leagues distant, Cape Farewell in Greenland. Thus would be verified the statement of the two writers, Raimondo and De Ayala; that the navigators found the new land at four hundred leagues. On Majollo's map (1527) there is a point given exact: . . . responding to this cape, and marked *tierra-firme* (Spanish). It is evidently intended to represent the first land seen by Cabot, which point Raimondo calls *terra ferma* (Italian).

This was doubtless the first land seen by Cabot; but being uninviting in appearance, bleak and barren, moreover being evidently only a headland, and the open ocean being still to the westward before him, he pushed onwards without landing, and some three hundred leagues further on—thus making up the seven hundred leagues as mentioned by Pasquaglio, and reconciling those hitherto apparently conflicting statements—he would again strike land, either on the coast of Labrador or on the east coast of Newfoundland. If he had continued westwardly from Greenland, with a tendency towards the north, say west northwest, he would strike the coast of Labrador, about where the Island of Mugford is situated, or between 55° and 60° north latitude. If, however, he had allowed his course to tend somewhat more towards the southwest, he would make land at the same distance of three hundred leagues on the east shore of Newfoundland, and somewhere in the neighborhood of Cape St. John or Cape Bonavista. I

shall show hereafter that there is a probability, at least, of his having done so, but for the present we will take the former supposition. Pasquaglio tells us that Cabot took possession of the land by raising the royal standard of England and the standard of Venice or St. Mark. Now, on this spot, namely, between 50° and 55° north latitude, we have on Ribero's map (1528) a headland called Cape de Marco. Again, it is stated that Cabot discovered the land on St. John's day, June 24, and gave it the name of the saint, or rather (as stated on the legend of Clement Adams's map of 1549) "a little island which stood out from the land he called St. John." Here again we have on all the old maps, Verrazani, Majollo, and Ribero, in latitude about 56° , a small island off the coast, called San Juan.

From all these data it is clear that at that date it was believed that this was Cabot's landfall. It was certainly intended by these cosmographers to represent it. It is quite possible that they may have had by them copies of Cabot's lost map. At all events they had all the traditions of the event fresh in their memories, as they were only removed from the actual event by some thirty years. And Ribero might have had recourse to Cabot himself, who was in Spain during the construction of his map, which continued from 1494 to 1529. Still the knowledge of the new world was as yet so vague and elementary as to easily allow of the east coast of Newfoundland being the site of the landfall of the first voyage.

The proofs of the *second* voyage are more conclusive in favor of Labrador, and are so ample and clear as, in my opinion, to remove all shadow of doubt from any reasonable and unprejudiced mind. The writers who have hitherto discussed this question have invariably, as far as I have seen, confounded the descriptions of the two voyages (1497 and 1498), taking certain statements which were made only in reference to the second voyage as if they belonged to the first, and *vice versa*. Thus, for instance, with regard to the latitude. While there is not any allusion whatever to latitude in the accounts of the first voyage, there are several such concerning the second. It is a mistake to speak of these statements of latitude as belonging to the first voyage; yet we may indirectly draw from them certain conclusions which will throw light on the first, and that for the following reasons:

First, Cabot on this second voyage had in view the same object as on the first—to find a passage to Cipango and Cataia, the imaginary land of spices, of the silk and Brazil wood, of the gold and precious gems. Hence he made for the same place at which he discovered land on the previous voyage, thence to take a new departure in search of the coveted spice-islands. This is not a mere supposition or conjecture. It is expressly

stated by Raimondo, in his letter of December 13, 1497. "He intends," says Raimondo, "starting from the point already occupied the previous year, to go farther towards the east [*i.e.*, west], coasting along all the time." ("*Da quello loco già occupato andarsene sempre a riva-riva verso il levante.*") That is to say, first making land as near as possible to the landfall of the previous year, he will then coast along towards the west, always in search of the passage to Cipango.

Second, he intended to follow the same route as in 1497, as appears from what the voyagers said to Raimondo: "Now that we know where to go, we can reach there in fifteen days." Hence they intended to go to the same place.

Third, the track they followed, along the coasts of Ireland and Scotland northwardly, as far as the point for turning west, was a well-known one at that time to Cabot, Columbus, and other navigators, the route to Iceland. Hence we find Cortereal two years later (1500), taking the same route and discovering Newfoundland or Labrador in the same spot. Jacques Cartier, following the same track in 1534 and 1535, made Bonavista and Bird Islands, or Funks, off Cape Freels (latitude $49\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ north). It follows from all this that Cabot's landfall in his second voyage was not far from that of the previous voyage. If, then, we can fix more accurately the landfall of 1498, it will help us to form an approximate idea of that of the previous year.

The commission for the voyage of 1498 was issued on February 3, 1497-1498. The expedition did not start till the beginning of May. The fleet consisted of six vessels with three hundred men. Sebastian Cabot went with his father, and doubtless had charge of one of the vessels. De Ayala, in the letter cited above (July 25, 1498), tells us that they encountered severe weather, and one of the ships had to put back to Ireland in a damaged state. There was an Augustinian friar named Buel aboard of this vessel. She was obliged to abandon the voyage, being so injured by the storm. The others proceeded on their way.

The historians on whom we rely for the accounts of this voyage, and from whom all other writers have taken their information, are Peter Martyr, a Spanish historian; Ramusio, an Italian, in his *Viaggi*; Richard Edens, a friend of Cabot; and Gomara, a Spaniard. Peter Martyr says the fleet bore away to the *northwest*, and went so far that even in the month of June or July they encountered large quantities of ice, and the days were so long as to be almost perpetual; so that he put about and sailed towards the west (that is to say, the east). Gomara says: "The days were very long, almost without night, and what night there was, was very

bright." He says that after having gone as far north and west as was possible, "on his way back he rested at Baccalaos," meaning, of course, the place of the landfall, the point from which he had taken his departure to go northwesterly alongshore. Edens says: "Cabot told me that the ice in those regions was of fresh water," which is a fact. All these statements prove quite clearly that he must have gone very far north, very near the seventieth degree of latitude.

Now we come to consider the statements of these writers concerning the latitude. Ramusio, *Sommario delle Indie*, gives 55° as the extreme limit of the course. But the same writer, in another place, *Conversazione a Caffi*, gives 56° . And then he says that he has a letter from Sebastian Cabot in which he, Cabot, says he went as far north as $67\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$. Gomara says: "They went beyond, or above, the cape of Labrador," that is, Cape Chidley, or Chudleigh, and even went farther than that, to the sixty-seventh degree towards the pole"—into Hudson's Strait. (See map.) Sir Humphrey Gilbert, *Discovery of a New Passage to Cataia*, 1583, says: "Cabot entered this fret [Hudson's Strait], and sailed very far westward, with a quarter of the north [west by north] on the north side of the Terra di Librador, until he came to the septentrional latitude of $67\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$."

We have here a very great discrepancy of statements, ranging over twelve and a half degrees of latitude, or nearly seven hundred and fifty miles. This disagreement of early and even contemporary writers has been a source of insurmountable difficulty to all later commentators. I flatter myself to have discovered the key to the mystery, and the means of reconciling all these conflicting testimonies. It is the fact already alluded to, and overlooked hitherto by all historians, as far as I am aware, of Cabot's steering north along the coasts of Ireland and Scotland before turning westward. Keeping this fact in view, and examining carefully the statements of historians in connection with it, we have at once the clue to the whole riddle. The skein unravels smoothly; the fog which so long beset these voyages at once rises, and all is clear to our vision.

Let us now look at these statements. It is evident at once that not one of the writers is speaking of the actual site of the landfall. Those who mention 55° , 56° , 57° , 58° , and 60° are speaking of the point to which Cabot sailed northwardly along the coasts of Ireland and Scotland before turning westward toward Greenland and Labrador. This is no supposition. It is expressly stated by Gomara. "He took the route to Iceland," says that writer, "until he came beyond the latitude of the cape of Labrador, until he reached the fifty-eighth degree." That is to say, he steered northwardly on the well-known track to Iceland, until he came opposite to, or in the

same latitude as, the cape of Labrador. (See map.) He means by that, no doubt, Cape Chidley, the cusp of Labrador. He is slightly out in the latitude; he says: "until he reached the fifty-eighth degree." Now, Cape Chidley is a little beyond the sixtieth parallel of latitude, or about $60\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$. Not being a nautical writer, we cannot expect from Gomara that minute exactitude which we would have if we could only find Cabot's own map.*

Now, this statement of Gomara's agrees exactly with, and corroborates, Raimondo's account of the *first* voyage. "Having rounded the southwest coast of Ireland, he proceeded northwardly *for some days*, and then turned towards the west." On the other hand, those writers who mention 67° , $67\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$, $67\frac{1}{3}^{\circ}$, and 68° are speaking, *not of the site of the landfall*, or point of land first seen or touched at, but of the point to which Cabot reached before he turned back, after having made land and cruised along shore northerly and westerly. Raimondo says in his letter of December 13, 1497, writing of this second voyage, that it was Cabot's intention, having first made land at the place already occupied the previous year, to coast along westward in search of the passage to Cipango. This is exactly what he did. Having made land somewhere near the spot occupied last year, probably somewhat north of it, that is to say, on the coast of Labrador between 55° and 60° , he coasted northwardly as far as Cape Chidley, then entered the strait of Hudson, and steered, as Sir Humphrey Gilbert says, "west with a quarter of the north, and he sailed very far on the north side of the *Terra di Librador*, June 11, until he came to the septentrional latitude of $67\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$, and finding the sea still open, said that he might and could have gone to Cataia if the enmity of the master and mariners had not been." The men grew discontented on account of seeing the sea becoming more and more covered with vast masses of floating ice; as Peter Martyr says: *Vastas reperit glaciales moles pelago natantes*. He was, therefore, obliged to put about and return to Baccalaos, the place of landfall, either Labrador or Newfoundland. And thence he coasted along southwardly and westwardly as far as Cuba, until, as Peter Martyr says, he reached the latitude of the straits of Hercules (Gibraltar, 36° north), and he went so far as to have the island of Cuba on his left hand, whence he returned to England.†

The evidence hitherto produced seems to place, almost beyond reasonable doubt, the landfall, at least of the second voyage, on the Labrador

* In some copies of Gomara's work, after the words "fifty-eight degrees" is added, "and even beyond that," which is correct.

† This would imply that he entered the Gulf of Florida; if so, it is a slight mistake, as that would be as far as latitude 25° north.

coast, between 55° and 60° north latitude, or about Cape Mugford. My line of argument would also point to the conclusion that there also was the landfall of the first voyage. Still it is not absolutely conclusive on that point, and leaves the possibility that the landfall may have been a little farther southward; namely, on the east coast of Newfoundland. From the earliest dates an unbroken tradition has existed that Cape Bonavista was the veritable landfall, and while there remains a shadow of a probability in its favor, I do not wish to yield up my belief in this time-honored tradition. I shall now briefly show the reasons which induce me still to hold fast to this claim of Bonavista, which only of late years has been called into doubt.

The authorities for the first voyage make the distance either four hundred or seven hundred leagues. I have accounted for this discrepancy by supposing Cabot to have first sighted Greenland, which is exactly four hundred leagues from St. Kilda's, his starting point. If then he continued in the same course he would make Labrador coast, but it would not be at three hundred leagues farther, but at a little over two hundred and fifteen leagues; while if, after sighting Greenland, he had altered his course somewhat to the southwestward, either on account of ice, or if he had been blown to the southward, or drawn by the Arctic current, or for any other reason, he would then have made the Newfoundland coast in *exactly* three hundred leagues from Greenland, just about the site of the present Bonavista, or Baccalieu Island, or Cape St. John, between 48° and 50° north latitude. Pasquaglio says that on the first voyage, having made land, he coasted along for three hundred leagues. Unfortunately, he does not say whether northwardly or southwardly, but I believe it to have been southwardly and westwardly, and for this reason: We know that on the second voyage, after making land, he coasted northwardly, into the strait and bay of Hudson, in search of the passage to Cathay. Hence I conclude that on the first voyage he had not gone in that direction, and that he explored it for the first time on this second voyage. It follows, therefore, that on the voyage of the previous year he must have coasted in a southwardly direction from the point of landfall. In that case, remembering the object he had in view—the discovery of the passage to Cathay—he no doubt penetrated every inlet, bay, or fiord to satisfy himself as to whether they afforded the looked-for passage or not.

If, then, he had made land anywhere north of the straits of Belle Isle in coasting southward (as we have shown he did), as soon as he came to the said straits he would have entered them, and thus discovered the gulf of St. Lawrence. This, however, we have no evidence of his doing. It has

generally been supposed that the gulf of St. Lawrence and straits of Belle Isle were discovered by Jacques Cartier in 1534, but this is not correct. Although Jacques Cartier entered them in 1534, and explored the gulf, still it is evident that the straits and the Labrador coast as far as Old Fort (then called by the Bretons Brest), were well known. Cartier speaks of a large fishery being carried on at Blanc Sablon, and he met near Old Fort a large fishing vessel of La Rochelle. Still Cartier thought at that time that Newfoundland was part of the mainland. He was not aware of the southern entrance to the gulf of St. Lawrence between Cape Breton and Newfoundland. It was only on his return from his second voyage, 1536, that he discovered it. On all the maps extant between Cabot's and Cartier's time there is no hint of a knowledge of this passage, Newfoundland being always represented as a part of the mainland.* I conclude, then, that Cabot on his first voyage made land somewhere *south* of the straits of Belle Isle, about Bonavista or Cape St. John, and coasted around the eastern and southern shore of the island of Newfoundland, penetrating to the bottom of the vast bays of Notre Dame, Bonavista, Trinity, Conception, St. Mary's, Placentia, and Fortune Bay, Despair, etc., for three hundred leagues, and then returned home.

On the second voyage, however, as he had already scoured the coasts to the southward, he determined to steer more northerly, hence he struck Labrador, near Cape Chidley, and penetrated Hudson bay and Fox inlet, till he reached $67^{\circ}1'$, as before mentioned. Then he turned about and sailed direct for Baccalao (Newfoundland), keeping outside of Belle Isle, and thus missing the straits. Having touched at Baccalao, he steered away for Nova Scotia, southward and westward, towards Florida. It may be said that this opinion of mine supposes a change of course after having sighted Greenland, and that we have no mention of any such change. I fully agree with Mr. Howley in the remarks he makes as to the extent and accuracy of the nautical knowledge displayed by those early navigators, and that "we moderns are in the habit of greatly underestimating their qualifications as navigators." Nevertheless it must be remembered that we have not Cabot's own report of these voyages, and that the only accounts we have of them are from authors who, though contemporaries, are professing to state what they heard from Cabot's own lips, yet not being nautical men themselves, we cannot expect critical exactness from them as to a point, or half or quarter of a point, of the compass. Again, even allowing for the utmost exactness, we know that even in our own

* Abbé Beaudouin says: "The strait of Belle Isle is marked on the map of Reynel, 1505, and Kunstman 1620;" and Stevens seems to see an indication of it on the map of Juan de la Cosa, 1500.

times a sailing vessel is liable, for many causes, to be carried many, even some hundred miles out of her course in crossing the Atlantic.

Mr. Howley has a closely reasoned argument concerning the exact course taken by Cabot. He first gives the different statements made by various writers, and shows where, according to each one, Cabot ought to have struck land. "Herrera gives latitude 68° as the landfall; Eden, 58° ; Hackluyt, 56° ; Galvano, 45° . As to the courses taken, Fabian says northwest; Galvano, west; others, west by north." The point 68° north is rejected "because to reach that point he would require to sail around Cape Farewell, in Greenland, then alter his course to something east of north, so as to reach Davis' straits," which, being so unlikely, is declared inadmissible. But according to a principle laid down by Mr. Howley in another part of his article, we must not reject contemporary testimony unless we have some more authentic and undoubted fact to replace it. Now, we have the direct contemporary testimony of Ramusio, who says he has a letter from Cabot, in which he (Cabot) says he sailed as far north as $67\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$. We cannot reject this testimony, and if it appears inadmissible it is simply because we have not rightly understood it. According to the explanation given by me above, it not only can be admitted, but chimes in most harmoniously with the whole account. This statement of 68° refers to the *second* voyage only, and *not* to the landfall, but the turning point of the voyage northwestward, after having left the landfall. With regard to the courses, Mr. Howley says: "Northwest, the course given by Fabian would strike the land just midway between the two points [55° and 58°], or at about 57° on the coast of Labrador, allowing, of course, for variation. The course north-northwest would strike Nova Scotia at 45° north. A west-by-north course would strike the coast of America at about South Carolina, and a west course would take him to the island of Cuba." These latter courses are consequently rejected as out of the question.

This is only another example of trying to adjust facts to fit a preconceived theory. Raimondo tells us that Cabot sailed towards the west (or the *east*, as he calls it). Now he is a contemporary writer. He relates what he heard from Cabot's own mouth, and he is the *only* writer who mentions the course of the first voyage. Now, although, as I said, we must not pin our faith to him for a point or so of the compass, yet, on the principle mentioned, we cannot reject his authority. I will soon show that there is no occasion to do so. Mr. Howley, though reasoning well, sets out from a wrong starting point. He takes his courses from Bristol or Cape Clear, $51\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ north. We know that the starting point should be at St. Kilda's or Rockall, 58° to 60° north. Taking our courses from this point,

we find that the course of Fabian, northwest, instead of striking Labrador at 57° north, would strike Greenland at 63° north. The course north-northwest, instead of striking the coast of Nova Scotia at the parallel of 45° , would strike Labrador at about 54° north. A west-by-north course, instead of striking South Carolina, would take him to about the straits of Belle Isle; and finally a *west* course (and this is the *only* one mentioned of the first voyage), instead of bringing him to the island of Cuba, would bring him *exactly* to *Cape Bonavista* (Newfoundland). This is a new and startling revelation in favor of the old tradition.

CAPE NORTH.

What has been hitherto written ought to be sufficient to show that Cape North in Cape Breton island (latitude $47\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$) could not be the site of Cabot's landfall, yet I think it will be well to show the fallacy of the arguments upon which that theory is built.

The whole foundation of this opinion rests upon a false basis and involves its supporters in palpable difficulties and contradictions at every turn. This foundation is a map discovered only quite recently (1854) in Germany, and now preserved in the imperial library in Paris, and supposed to be the identical one drawn by Sebastian Cabot in 1544. That Cabot did at the time draw a map seems certain from the words of Hackluyt, who in producing in his voyages the map of Clement Adams, speaks of it as "the map of Sebastian Cabot cut by Clement Adams." There is a Latin inscription attached to this engraving of Adams, which bears intrinsic evidence of being composed and added to the map by Adams, who was a schoolmaster; and of not belonging to the original map of Cabot. It speaks of Cabot in the third person and as a stranger: "John Cabot, a Venetian, discovered this land, etc." It is altogether incredible that Sebastian Cabot would mention his father in that way. Copies of this engraving of Adams's were to be seen as late as 1583, when Sir Humphrey Gilbert saw it hanging in the royal gallery at Whitehall; and it was extant when Hackluyt published his *Voyages* (1600). "It is to be seen," he says, "in her majesty's privie gallery at Westminster, and in many other ancient merchants' houses." The Latin inscription on this map of Adams's states that Cabot called the land *terram primum visam*, because, says the author of the inscription, "I think [*credo*] being at sea he first cast eyes upon the land." This inscription being at the foot of the map does not designate any particular spot as the "land first seen," but it says that "an island which stood out from the land" (*insula quæ ex*

adverso sita est) he called St. John, because it was sighted by him (*ei aperta fuit*) on the festival of that saint, June 24, "as I believe" (*opinor*).

The map lately discovered and claimed to be the original of Cabot has the words *terra* (or *tierra*) *prima vista* as designating Cape North in Cape Breton, and an island near at hand marked *Y. S. Juan*, supposed to be the present Prince Edward island, though it has nothing of the shape of that island, nor is it in its proper position.

This supposed map contains also the inscription. I think that ought to be enough to deprive the map of being considered as Cabot's work. Again, if the words *prima vista* were on the original map at Cape North, how came they to be omitted by Adams or by the copyist from whom Adams took his map, if he did not copy from the original? Abbé Baudouin says: "We do not know from whom Adams copied his map. We know of two copies of that of Sebastian; one in the national library of Paris, and one due to *Chytheus (variorum in Europa itinerum deliciae Herborn 1594)*, but Clement Adams did not copy either of these. We must, therefore, admit a third copy of Sebastian which is not yet discovered." I would like to know if the point of Cape North is marked *Prima Vista* on these known copies, and if not, why not, if it is on the original.

Biddle, a lawyer of Pittsburg, wrote in 1831 a most exhaustive and excellent memoir of Sebastian Cabot. He was the first who attempted to shake the belief in the old tradition of Bonavista as the landfall. In studying the inscription on the map of Adams he noticed the mention of an island called St. John off the coast, and he could find no such island off the coast of Newfoundland near Bonavista. He saw on the said map an island marked St. John in the gulf of St. Lawrence; but he knew that Cabot could not have seen that island on the same day as that on which he sighted land, that is, in the supposition that he sighted land near Bonavista. Neither would the island of St. John as marked (now Prince Edward island) answer the description of "an island off the coast." Moreover, he says, this island was discovered and called St. John long after by Cartier in 1535. He then cast about for further data. "He finds," says Abbé Beaudouin, "on the map of Ortelius, 1570, an island of St. John off the coast of Labrador in latitude 56°. This he supposes to be the landfall." M. l'Abbé here refutes Biddle by saying his whole argument is built on a false basis. In the first place Cartier did not see Prince Edward island at all; it was a cape on the west shore of Newfoundland (now Cape Anguille) which he called St. John. Secondly, the map of Ortelius, which was not drawn from Cabot's but from Mercator's (1569), is his only authority. On

the first point M. l'Abbé is correct, that Cartier did not see Prince Edward island; but, as will appear hereafter, it does not strengthen his own argument. On the second point, however, he is not exact, as the isle of St. John appears on all the maps previous to Ortelius' time.

There can be no doubt that this island was put there to mark what was then believed to be the landfall of Cabot. They placed it in 56° because they believed that to be the latitude of the landfall. Such was the general belief some twenty-five or thirty years after Cabot's voyage. There is, as already remarked, no vestige of the southern entrance to the gulf, or of the island of Prince Edward, on any of the maps previous to Cartier's time. But if Biddle had pushed his argument farther he would say there is no island of St. John off the coast of Labrador in latitude 56° or 55° , nor anywhere off that coast. That is true, but it only tends to confirm my argument that the landfall was a little farther south; namely, on the east coast of Newfoundland. How, then, do I account for the absence of the isle St. John in this piece? As follows: In latitude 50° on the Newfoundland coast (a little more than one degree north of Bonavista) we have at the present day Cape St. John, off which is a small island called Gull island. It is quite possible that the name of St. John was given to the island by Cabot, and afterward it was transferred to the cape on the mainland. M. l'Abbé Beaudouin himself admits that the word "island" is often given to the mainland, and that of cape to an island. We have many examples of this. Labrador is constantly called an island; in fact, the whole new world was called the new-found isle, and the island of the Bretons is called Cape Breton,* and the little island of St. Paul's is called by Cartier Cape St. Paul.

L'Abbé Beaudouin justly corrects M. Biddle in regard to Prince Edward island. Biddle says that Cartier discovered and named this island St. John on the 24th of June, 1534. A study of Cartier's voyage, however, shows that it was a part of the Newfoundland coast which Cartier so named. It is shown on some old maps about four leagues northeast from the present Cape Anguille. Biddle relied upon Hackluyt, who speaks of it as the "island called St. John," but it is only another confusion of the words "island" and "cape." As a matter of fact, however, Cartier did not see Prince Edward island; but this fact, instead of helping, only completely breaks down the theory of Cape North as the landfall of Cabot.

Cabot is supposed to have sighted land at Cape North, and at the same time, or shortly after, to have seen this "island off the coast," *insula quæ ex adverso est*, an island just alongside, *en face* or *tout à côté*. Now

* From a town of that name in the Landes, France.

does Prince Edward island answer to this description? In the first place it is nearly one hundred and fifty miles long, and lies very low. At first sight it would not have been distinguished at all as an island. That fact could not be known without sailing between it and the mainland, through the straits of Northumberland. Much less can it be made to comply with the Latin inscription on Adams's map of "an island off the shore," or right alongside. It cannot be seen at all from Cape North.* Its nearest point, Cape East, is above seventy miles distant. Again, between Cape North and Prince Edward island arises an immense promontory, forming part of Inverness and Victoria counties of Cape Breton island, a mountain over one thousand feet high. To surmount or circumvent this difficulty M. Beaudouin is obliged to suppose that Cabot made the land for the first time at Cape North, "a little on the west side" *un peu vers l'ouest*, but this involves another difficulty. To arrive at the west coast of this peninsula of Cape Breton, coming as he did from the east, he would be obliged to coast along shore for a whole day without seeing land, across Aspey bay and bay St. Lawrence, to round Cape North and Cape St. Lawrence (with his eyes shut?) and then sail southwestward till he came to Cape Mabou, the nearest point to Prince Edward. But this would require nearly another day, as it is about eighty miles from Cape North; and he would be no better off, for Prince Edward island would be still nearly thirty miles distant, and would not be seen at all from the deck of his vessel, and, if seen from the lofty summit of the hills ashore, would only appear as a dark blue outline of land lying low on the distant horizon, but not at all as a small island "just alongside."

The only island near Cape North which would verify the title of "a small island off the shore" is St. Paul's, which Cabot could not have avoided seeing if he came to Cape North, yet there is no sign of it on his supposed map, and it has never been claimed that he saw it, which is strong proof that he never saw Cape North. How or when the island of Prince Edward came to be named St. John, and marked so conspicuously on this map, and placed so far out of its true position in the effort to make it comply with the Latin inscription, is a fact yet to be cleared up.†

M. Beaudouin, in refuting Biddle, rightly says that Cartier never saw the island of Prince Edward, and, consequently, did not name it St. John.

* I speak from experience, having spent the greater part of a day there last year. There was no glass aboard the ship powerful enough to enable us to descry this island, *tout à côté*, in fact it was far below the horizon.

† It received its present name after the visit of Prince Edward, Duke of Kent (father of Queen Victoria), in 1799.

This is true ; but I think it completely demolishes the theory that Cabot saw Prince Edward island from Cape North. Cartier was a most observant navigator and explorer ; his descriptions of harbors, islands, rocks, reefs, etc., are of the minutest and most exact nature. His soundings are so complete and correct that one can trace his course on any modern chart by following the description of his voyages. Yet what do we find ? In the year 1534 he spent three days, June 27, 28, and 29, exploring the Bird Rocks, the Bryon, and the Magdalen islands. These islands are about forty-five miles distant from Prince Edward island ; in other words, a little more than half the distance between Cape North and the said Prince Edward island, and yet he did not see this latter island. As a matter of fact, being so low, it cannot be seen from the Magdalens. What is more, Cartier must have passed much nearer to the western end of Prince Edward island on sailing from the Magdalens to the Miramichi river. He must have been at least within twenty miles of it. And this is also the highest part of the island, yet he did not see it. The reason is because he passed it during the night. He left Bryon or Magdalen on Monday, June 29, and sailed west all day and all night, and on the morning of Tuesday, last day of the month, *Mardi dernier jour du dit mois, sollail à l'est*, he saw the land at mouth of Miramichi river.

Again, in 1536, on his return voyage, he spent from the 21st to the 26th of May in the neighborhood of Bryon and Magdalen islands, and thence he sailed to Cape North, which he explored, together with Cape Lorraine (now Cape St. Lawrence) and St. Paul's island, which he discovered and named, *que nous nommasmes le Cap de Saint Paul* ; in all this time, and traversing back and forth "he never saw the island of Prince Edward." They are the words of the abbé himself: *Je ne vit pas l'île du Prince Eduard*. Yet we are asked to believe that this was an island "just alongside," *tout à côté*, seen by Cabot at the same time that he sighted land.

Finally, it is certain that up to Cartier's time the entrance to the gulf of St. Lawrence by the southeast, between Cape Ray, Newfoundland, and Cape North, in Cape Breton, was unknown. Cartier shrewdly suspected its existence when exploring the Magdalens in 1534. "I am greatly of opinion," he says, "from what I have seen, that there is a passage between the Newfound Land and the land of the Bretons." *Je présume mieulx que aultrement à ce que j'ay veu, qu'il luy aiet aulcun passaige entre la Terre Neuffue et la terre des Bretons* ; but it was not until he returned from his second voyage, 1536, that he actually discovered it and passed out through it. Now it is impossible to believe that this passage and the whole gulf should have been well known, as Abbé Beaudouin says, to Cabot, and yet

that Cartier should never have heard of it, and that it should not appear on some of the maps prior to Cartier's time. Any person studying the so-called Cabot map of Clement Adams in connection with Cartier's voyages will see that it is compiled chiefly from his description, the only addition being this island of St. John. If Cabot made a map anything like this it must be that he availed himself of the knowledge given to the world by Cartier's voyage. M. Beaudouin denies this and says Cabot could not have learned anything from Cartier, whose voyages were first published by Ramusio in Italian in 1555, or eleven years after the publication of Cabot's map. The argument has no force. We have at present no original French account of Cartier's voyages; Ramusio's is only a translation. The original is now lost, but it does not follow that it was not in existence when Cabot made his map, and that the contents of it were little known to the learned men of the time, such as Cabot. Again, M. Beaudouin says Cabot put on his map only such places as he had himself seen or believed he had seen; and yet we find on this map places and names undoubtedly explored and named by Cartier for the first time, and places which, even according to M. l'Abbé himself, Cabot could not have seen, as, for instance, Brest, Saguenay, Stadacona, Hongedo, and Cape Thiennot. In fact, the river is given almost as far up as Hochelaga or Montreal. Now how could Cabot have seen these places when, even according to M. Beaudouin's theory, he did not penetrate beyond Bic or Trois Pistoles? One difficulty produces another in this theory. We learn from De Ayala that after sighting land Cabot coasted three hundred leagues. L'Abbé Beaudouin shows it was not southward along the coast of America, because Cabot did not take that course till the following summer (1498). He is obliged, therefore, to say that he entered the gulf and coasted around, going out by the straits of Belle Isle. In order to sail three hundred leagues between Prince Edward island and Belle Isle he would have to ascend the river St. Lawrence as far as Trois Pistoles or the river Saguenay. Cabot was in search of the passage to Cathay and Cipango. M. Beaudouin says that, having entered the mouth of the St. Lawrence, it is natural to suppose, in ascending the river as far as Bic, he concluded the passage was not there, seeing the banks of the river began to approach each other.

I think nothing could be more unnatural than to suppose any such thing. On the contrary, he would undoubtedly have concluded that he had for a certainty found the long-looked-for passage, just as Cartier did really think some few years after when he found himself in the same spot, and as he was told by his guides: "Our savages told us that this was the

way, and the commencement of the great gulf of Hochelaga, which goes so far that no man had ever been to the end of it as far as they had ever heard." The river St. Lawrence is at least thirty miles wide at this point mentioned, and if Cabot had gone there I feel confident he would have explored the river as far as Montreal or Hochelaga, as Cartier did.

I will mention one more example of the difficulties caused by this theory, and show how they vanish in view of the truth. M. Beaudouin says: "On the map of Sebastian Cabot we find in the river St. Lawrence a group of islands called *Ys S. Juan* at about 53°. This group corresponds to the spot where we place Bic islands or Trois Pistoles. Cabot is the only map-maker who marks the isles of St. John in this place. There is, then, a strong presumption that John Cabot ascended the river as far as Bic or thereabouts, and gave his own name to the isles on the south coast, the terminus or end of his course." Thus far M. Beaudouin. Now let us hear what Jacques Cartier says about those same islands: "On the 24th day of the month (August, 1535), we arrived at a harbor on the south side of the river, nearly eighty leagues from the said seven isles, which is behind three flat islands. The harbor where we anchored, which is on the south side of the river, is a harbor difficult of entry, and of very little value as a harbor." He is describing the isles and harbor of *Bic* most accurately. Now let us mark what follows: "We named these isles the islets of St. John, *Yleaux de Sainet Jehan*, because we entered there on the feast of the beheading or decapitation of that saint" (August 29). This seems to me one of the most convincing proofs that this pretended Cabot map was made in pursuance of Cartier's exploration of the gulf, and hence it cannot be of any weight in deciding Cabot's landing place.

As to the two islands which Cabot saw to *starboard* (on his right hand) on returning, and which M. Beaudouin suggests may have been Anticosti and Newfoundland, the statement concerning them is so vague as scarcely to need consideration. They are first mentioned in a very passing way by Pasquaglio. "On his [Cabot's] return," he writes, "he saw two islands to starboard, but he did not land, time being too precious." Next, we find Raimondo Soncini magnifying them into "two isles very large and very fertile," and speaking of them as if they were the sole object and result of the voyage. "After having discovered two isles, . . . he has returned safe." In the supposition that Labrador was the landfall, these isles may have been the two Belle Isles mentioned by Cartier afterward, or the Groais islands (*Iles de Grois*), or the Horse islands (St. Barbes), or any of the isles on the east coast of Newfoundland. In case of Cape St. John or Cape Bonavista being the landfall, these islands may have been St.

Pierre and Miquelon, or Brunette, or the Rameas, or any others, but it is useless with the present data to make any suggestion.

I think we may now safely conclude that this pretended Cabot map is an imposition. It is simply a copy of Clement Adams's map, on which some one inserted at Cape North the words, *terra prima vista*; and it has been done, too, in a very bungling manner. Besides the reasons given in my *Eccelesiastical History*, p. 52, I may add that the words appear in a variety of forms. First in Latin, *terra primum visa*. Then *tierra prima vista*, which is no language at all; then *tierra primum vista*, which is a frightful mixture of Spanish, Latin, and Italian.

M. Beaudouin says: "John Cabot probably called the point of landfall 'first seen' in English; then Sebastian, in making his map of 1544, translated it into Spanish; and, finally, Adams, in engraving the map in 1549, translated it into Latin." To me all this supposition seems far-fetched, unnatural, and altogether unfounded. We have no account of John Cabot's having called the land "first seen," and any one who knows English will at once understand that such an expression is a barbarism; nor is it likely John Cabot, an Italian, would have used such an unmusical and ineuphonious compound. It is far more natural to suppose him to have cried out with joy in his own *dolce favella*, his sweet Italian: "*Oh, Buona Vista!*" "happy sight!" And while there is not at the present day, and never has been, any vestige of such a barbarous name as *first seen* or *prima vista*, we have, as early as 1527, on Majollo's map, the beautiful name *Buonavista*, which is found on all the earliest maps, and survives to-day in Newfoundland as the bay, cape, and settlement of Bonavista. If Cabot did not give this name, who did? and from whom did those early cosmographers learn it?

Again, M. Beaudouin supposes Cabot to have translated the words "first seen" or "land first seen," into Spanish; but such is not the case. On some copies of the map I have seen *terra prima vista*; on others, *tierra prima vista*. But neither of these forms is correct Spanish or Italian. They are an awkward and ungrammatical attempt to translate into Italian or Spanish the English phrase "land first seen."

In the phrase "land first seen" the word *first* is used as an adverb, but the word *prima*, by which it is supposed to be translated, is an adjective only both in Spanish and Italian. Hence the form *terra* or *tierra prima vista* is nonsense. It is equivalent to saying in English "land first sight." The true translation of the English "land first seen" would be, in Italian, *terra primieramente vista*, and in Spanish *tierra primeramente vista*.

I therefore reverse entirely the supposition of M. l'Abbé. I think

that the first indication of this *prima vista* was the Latin inscription on Clement Adams's map of 1549, in which he says: "I believe Cabot called the land *terram primum visam*." Then some person who had a copy of the map, and reading the inscription about the isle of St. John, took the liberty of inserting the words *terra prima vista* near Cape North. Whoever did this had, as we have seen, but a very poor knowledge of Spanish or Italian. I presume it to have been a Frenchman, from the fact that he translates another word of the inscription, *Bacalios*, by the well-known French word *Morue*. Some other person, equally audacious, marked on the map near the same spot (at least on some copies I have seen) an anchor with the figure "1st" in English, the only English word on the map. This supposed Cabot map has on it, then, English, Spanish, Italian, French, and Latin. And this garbled map, lately (1854) discovered somewhere in Germany, is brought forward as the authentic map of Cabot.

In conclusion I still emphasize the proposition that Cabot's first landfall was somewhere on the east coast of Newfoundland, about latitude 49° or 50°. There exist at the present day on the east coast of Newfoundland a great number of names occurring in the exact order that is given on the earliest maps; as, for example, Labrador, Fortune, Cortereal (Cotterel's island), Fuego (Fogo island), Aves, or Bird island (*Isola degli ucelli*), Bonavista, Bonaventure, Baccalaos (Baccalieu), Bay of Conception, St. Francis, Cape Spear, Fermeuse, Renouse, Cape Race (or De Rasso), St. Mary's, Cape Pine, Bay Désespoir; and after these, coming to the island of Cape Breton, we have St. Paul's, Cape Smoky (*Fumoso*), Cape Breton, etc. As these names occur on those early maps shortly after Cabot's discovery, so do they exist to-day. There is no vestige of *Prima Vista*, no suspicion of a knowledge of the gulf of St. Lawrence, or the island of St. John (Prince Edward island), so that until stronger proof be forthcoming it would be unreasonable, on such a doubtful one as this supposed map of Cabot, to upset the traditions which have been held unbroken for so many centuries, and which are founded on the most authentic records in our possession.

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