

rently no foundation for the assertion that the navigator explored the country by order of Louis XII., as it is constantly admitted in our history that our kings paid no attention to America before the year 1523.¹ Then Francis I., wishing to excite the emulation of his subjects in regard to navigation and commerce, as he had already so successfully in regard to the sciences and fine arts, ordered John Verazani, who was in his service, to go and explore the New Lands, which began to be much talked of in France.² And here I cannot refrain from remarking incidentally how glorious it is for Italy that the three powers which now divide among them almost all America, owe their first discoveries to Italians: namely, the Spaniards, to Columbus, a Genoese; the English, to John Gabot and his sons, Venetians; and the French, to Verazani, a Florentine. I would add to these illustrious men another Florentine (Americus Vesputius), who rendered great services to the Spanish and Portuguese in the New World, if he owed to his merit, and not to a trick unworthy of an honest man, the glory he has had of giving his name to the greatest of the four quarters of the known world.³

Verazani was accordingly sent, in 1523, with four ships to discover North America; but our historians have not spoken of his first expedition,⁴ and we should be in

¹ Charlevoix does not mention in his Chronology, nor notice here, de Leri's attempt to colonize Sable Island in 1508, although he refers to it when speaking of the Marquis de la Roche. Lescarbot seems the only authority for it (*Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, 1618, p. 21). With his usual fondness for titles, he gives those of this ignored colonizer as "Le Sieur Baron de Leri et de St. Just, Vicomte de Gueu. Champlain makes no allusion to the Baron's attempt. The anonymous great captain in Ramusio (iii., 359) says that the Pensée, of which Aubert was

master, belonged to "Giovan Ango, padre del Monsignor lo Capitano, & Visconte di Dieppi."

² For a discussion as to the authenticity of Verazzano's voyage, see Buckingham Smith, "An Inquiry into the Authenticity of Documents," etc., New York, 1864; *Historical Magazine*, ix. p. 169.

³ Vesputius was in all probability ignorant of the use of his name in the work of Hylacomylus, printed at Lorraine in 1507.

⁴ The earliest French allusion to Verazzano is in Thevet's *Cosmographie Universelle*, 1575.