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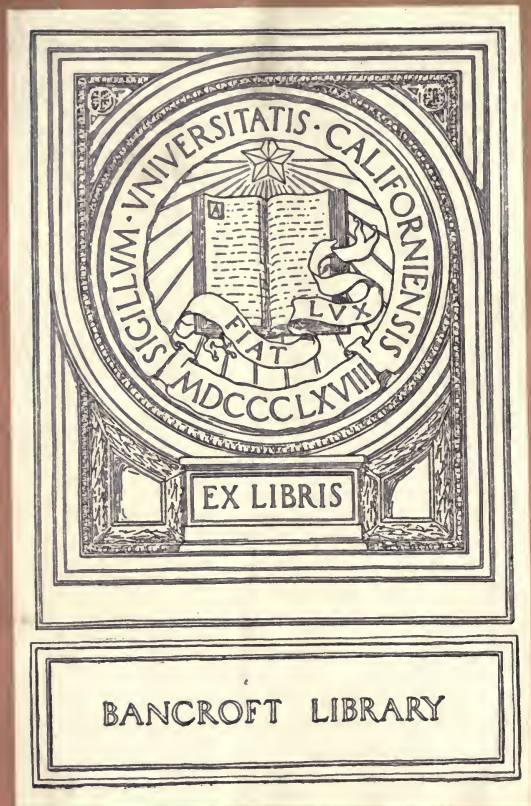
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SOME PRE-COLUMBIAN
Discoveries of America.

BY GEORGE ROGERS HOWELL. 1633-1849

READ BEFORE THE
ALBANY INSTITUTE,

June, 1893.



SOME PRE-COLUMBIAN DISCOVERIES OF AMERICA.

BY GEORGE ROGERS HOWELL.

[Read before the Albany Institute, June, 1893.]

Was America known to the ancients? That is a question often asked, but one so vague as to be incapable of a single categorical answer. The form of the question embraces all nations and all time to the fall of the Roman Empire in A. D. 476. The existence of this continent may have been known to one nation or a part of its inhabitants while the rest of the world were entirely ignorant of it. Or it might have been known to some at one period and afterward all definite knowledge of its existence may have perished. Supposing the question were asked one thousand years hence, if the existence of Terra del Fuego or the Victoria Nyanza was known to the world in the 19th Century. As a matter of fact more than one half of the adult inhabitants of the globe to-day never heard of these names. But we have books, maps, schools, big trading vessels visiting every land, scientists searching every corner of the earth, and newspapers eager to record the last geographical discovery. Many of the nations of antiquity, and all of them in their earlier history had no schools, and none of them at any time had what we call books or newspapers; no printing press to diffuse intelligence, no railroads for swift transportation over long distances, no telegraph to cause the world to throb at one impulse or fire at one spark. Wealthy nobles had magnificent palaces, rich garments and dainty foods and works of art, and all of these equal to the best that exist on earth to-day. But Rome with her three millions in Augustan days on a moonless night was enshrouded in a darkness, save for the torchlights of a company of revellers, as dense as that of an Indian village in the wilds of Dakotah. In such a world geographical knowledge was necessarily confined primarily to merchants and traders by the sea. The sailor was the first discoverer. His employer, the merchant or trader was the next to learn of a new discovery as a field of private speculation in trade. If these people kept their secrets to themselves, as they sometimes did, the geographer, and consequently his readers, who were at best but a small fraction of the inhabitants, were none the wiser for the discovery. Thus it happens that the *real* question at issue, whether the American continent was ever visited in ancient times, even that is not so easily answered by the first investigation of the works of an ancient geographer.

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Let us continue our elimination. Discovery of new trans-oceanic lands could be made by those nations only that dwelt by the sea. The first great empires in Central Asia whose splendor is still the wonder of the world are therefore ruled entirely out of our consideration. Egypt the next to arrive to prominence in wealth, power and learning was never a maritime power. Her vessels of trade and war were mostly confined to the Nile. Neither Greek nor Roman vessels are known to have sailed beyond the Canary Isles, and even there made but few visits. Their fleets for the most part were limited to the navigation of the Mediterranean. Both nations were and have ever been essentially landmen. Perhaps their sunny climes have always furnished too many attractions to permit the growth of desires for new lands or to stimulate the courage to brave the perils and discomforts of robust storms at sea. The Germans of Cæsar and Tacitus rarely passed the limits of the North or the Zuyder seas. Of the Tuscans but few traces have come to us of the high civilization and wealth that they probably attained. The Roman Empire seems to have trampled almost every vestige of them out of existence. But we mention them later. There remains but one other nation of all antiquity in the west of Europe for consideration and that is the Phœnician. But in the history of that little busy, bustling, tumultuous nation, we shall find the first discoverers of this Continent, — Phœnicia and her Colonies, especially that at Carthage on the northern coast of Africa, and if, as it is claimed, the Phœnicians also colonized the western coast of Ireland, why they have been coming here ever since.

Now that we have narrowed down the possibility of the discovery to one or possibly two nations, it seems proper to take notice of two objections to any theory of any nation of antiquity accomplishing this mighty deed of crossing the Atlantic.

The first thought which naturally arises in one's mind on considering this question is, that if the ancient writers did have a knowledge of the existence of this continent, it would certainly appear in their works. Geographers would have described it, historians have narrated voyages hither, poets would have sung of it as they did of Scythia, Ethiopia and Ultima Thule. To this it may be answered that those who visited had reasons for not writing of it, and even for carefully concealing their knowledge of it from the rest of the world. This observation is made in reference to the Phœnicians and Carthaginians, and the evidence of their discoveries will be given hereafter. The point now is, how they managed to prevent the diffusion of their knowledge of trans-oceanic lands through the other nations of the earth. On this Aristotle, or whoever wrote the treatise ascribed to him, entitled "the Book of Wonders," says: "When the Cartha-

ginians, who were masters of the western ocean, observed that many traders and other men, attracted by the fertility of the soil and the pleasant climate, had fixed there their homes, they feared that the knowledge of this island [i. e., some distant land, perhaps the American continent] should reach other nations, a great concourse to it of men from the various lands of the earth would follow; that the conditions of life, then so happy, on that island would not only be unfavorably affected, but the Carthaginian empire itself suffer injury, and the dominion of the sea be wrested from their hands. And so they issued a decree that no one under penalty of death should thereafter sail thither; and lest the peril so much to be feared should be brought upon them by those already in occupation of this land, they either expelled or put to death all such as they could lay hold of." However, as this discovery was too great an acquisition to human knowledge, and too grand an element in human destiny to be entirely suppressed, the report of it did somehow transpire, and find its way to Greek schools of philosophy and the pages of the poet. If Herodotus, Aristotle, Strabo and Pliny say so little or nothing on so important a portion of the earth's surface, ignorance may not have been the sole motive for their reticence. To tell the Greeks who dare scarcely venture out of sight of land, of a country at the distance of forty days' sail from their homes, across an ocean overshadowed with darkness and whelmed with storms, as their mariners reported and their poets sung, would have been a useless waste of learning. But then these writers were not altogether silent on the subject; their testimony will be introduced after we notice another objection that may be offered.

This is, that if the knowledge of so great a fact once existed among men who wrote books, it would not have been lost. So far as this knowledge was committed to the books it has not been lost, excepting what may have been destroyed in the burning of the Alexandrian library. But that oral or traditional knowledge, when not used in daily employment, may readily be lost, we have already seen in its summary suppression by the Carthaginian Senate. Another notable instance is the discovery of New England by the Northmen in the tenth century 987, under Biarn, or if his voyage is discredited, then under Leif in the year 1000 A. D.* These sea kings of Norway thereafter for several years made frequent voyages and repeated attempts at a settlement, and all record of them was buried in oblivion for eight hundred years until Rafn, scholar and antiquarian, discovered the narrative of the event in long forgotten manuscripts.

* Gaffarel 2: 304. Humboldt, Vol. I, Hist. du Nouveau Monde.

The visit of the Welsh under Madoc in the twelfth century, 1170,* appears too well established also to doubt its authenticity, but it was generally forgotten until the close of the last century. The same fate attended the Irish discoveries, which were at no time known far outside of the Irish nation. Time was when malleable glass was manufactured, when bronze was hardened so as to rival the best steel of Sheffield, when painters knew how to make their pigments almost imperishable, but the knowledge of these processes was lost in the vicissitudes of wars and dying out of nations. Is it any more wonderful that the traditions of trans-oceanic countries (for it was only tradition among the Greeks) should be remanded to the realm of myth and fable?

Another objection may occur to some minds: it is that there were then no vessels of sufficient size to survive the storms of the Atlantic passage. There is no real ground, however, to doubt the capacity or strength of the vessels of Tyre, Carthage, Greece or Rome to do this. Their track in any case would not be that of our ocean steamers in the North Atlantic, but first southwesterly, touching at the Madeiras and the Azores, and then across the gulf stream by the trade winds and mild weather to the West Indies. Besides, as a matter of fact, as we learn from the Periplus of Scylax, the Carthaginians carried their trading voyages by the Atlantic around the Cape of Good Hope, and brought back the spices of Borneo and Sumatra and the riches of India. In the north they loaded their vessels with tin from the mines of Cornwall. And the same may be said, and more emphatically, perhaps, of Tyre. "The Tyrian flag floated simultaneously in the British and the Indian seas." † For navigators so enterprising the only wonder would be if neither accident nor design led them some time in their wanderings to our shores.

The Phœnicians occupied a narrow strip of land in what is now Palestine. They were an active enterprising people. They could not expand on the east, north or south, for the land was already occupied by warlike peoples. They were driven to find an outlet for trade and colonizing by the sea, and this course was well adapted to their adventurous spirit. Tyre was their great city and the center of their marine expeditions. The colony at Carthage was soon a rival in maritime trade and exploration. Strabo 17: 3, 8, says they pushed through the straits of Gibraltar and in time had three hundred flourishing cities on the west coast of Africa. Another colony is found on the northwest coast of Spain at Gades, now Cadiz, and from this port, a few miles from Palos whence Columbus sailed in 1492, probably

* Humboldt Hist. du Nouveau Monde, Vol. I; Powell's Hist. of Wales; London Chronicle, 1777; Williams' Enquiry.

† Humboldt, Cosmos, Vol. II.

sailed Phœnician ships to visit and perhaps colonize North and South America. It is well known that they worked the tin mines of the Azores (then called the Cassiterides or tin islands) and on one of these midocean islands have been found in modern times Phœnician coins.

In the high court of historical investigation even America may be summoned to the witness stand. The Spanish conquerors of Mexico and Central America were told by the natives that their ancestors also were white people who came in ships across the ocean from the east and burned their vessels that none should return. They even said that the tradition had been handed down that in the fullness of time other people were to come there from the lands of their forefathers in the east. Further evidence of these voyages will be given in citing various authorities as we proceed.

Now let us summon our witnesses and decide if their testimony will not warrant more than a Scotch verdict upon the question.

1, 2. Homer and his commentator Crates. Had Homer the opportunity of knowing or learning anything of this event? He lived about 900 B. C. and at that time Egypt had enjoyed a high civilization for at least a thousand years, and the great pyramid of Cheops had then been standing probably a still longer period. Phœnicia had existed as a nation for five or six hundred years. Whatever they achieved by dint of discovery the Egyptians some how found out, for they sooner or later learned the secrets of all other nations whether of mechanics, science or art. From Greece it was a short journey to Egypt and communication frequent. Now, Homer says in the *Odyssey* :* “But he (Neptune) had gone to the Ethiopians who dwell afar off (the Ethiopians who are divided into two parts, the most distant of men, some at the setting of the sun, others at its rising) in order to obtain a hecatomb of bulls and lambs.” A frequent explanation of this is, that Homer referred to the Ethiopians as dwelling on the east and west banks of the Nile. All of the African continent known to Homer, however, was the two divisions of Egypt and Lybia, embracing all the northern portion from the Red Sea to the Atlantic, and south of these lay an Ethiopia the topography of which was then utterly unknown. To say that the two divisions of the Ethiopians occupied simply the Nile basin south of the twenty-fifth parallel of latitude hardly answers the description above given, setting them apart as far as the rising is from the setting sun. The grammarian and philosopher Crates, so often cited as high authority by Strabo,† interprets Homer to mean that it was the ocean which separated the two great divisions of the Ethiopians, the eastern in Africa and the western in

* Book 1: 22-25.

† Strabo 1.

Atlantis, or the Hesperides, as the unknown world to the west was variously called. Pliny* also locates the western Ethiopians somewhere in the Atlantic. All this is vague enough, but the fact remains that nine hundred years before the Christian era the Greek poet, in the opinion of the learned Crates believed in the existence of a continent on the western shore of the Atlantic.

3, 4. Solon the great legislator of Athens, born about 638 B. C., and Plato, born 429 B. C. These are grouped together because all we have of Solon on this subject was transmitted to us in the writings of Plato. Plato says in his *Timæus*, (chapter VI): "That sea (the Atlantic ocean) was indeed navigable and had an island fronting the mouth which you in your tongue call the Pillars of Hercules [i. e. the Strait of Gibraltar]; and this island was larger than Libya and Asia put together; and there was a passage hence for travellers of that day to the rest of the islands, as well as from those islands to the *whole opposite continent that surrounds the real sea.*" This statement was the communication of one of the priests of Sais in Egypt to Solon and by Plato put into the mouth of Critias in the dialogue. The statement thus sets forth that there was a large island called the Atlantis opposite the Straits of Gibraltar and other islands about it, and beyond all to the westward a great continent. The priest goes on to say that 9000 years before that time (of about 600 B. C.) the men of Athens resisted an immense incursion of the allied kings of Atlantis and their armies that had come to subdue Europe, and put them to flight. That most of the Greeks and all of their enemies were immediately after the victory swallowed up by deluge and earthquake and simultaneously Atlantis disappeared beneath the ocean. The whole story of this Atlantis is probably a myth invented by the Egyptian priest to flatter Solon and his countrymen. At the same time there might well have been an Atlantis occupying the vast interoceanic space in which are included the Canary, Madeira, Cape Verde, and Azores islands as well as innumerable islets and rock ledges scattered all through that space to-day. And these islands all bear traces of cataclysms and of sinking in some former ages. They contain active volcanos and volcanic rocks and basaltic formations, while they also contain layers of primary rock such as form the structure of other mountains. In case of a submergence of such a vast territory the mountain tops would remain as islands to mark the course of former mountain chains. But the weak point in the story is the time — 9000 years before 600 B. C. and Athens even then a large and powerful city. We *know* that is impossible. And the ocean and its islands are all the same now as when the Tyrian keel plowed the waves and touched at one group after

* Pliny 6 : 31-36

another of these islands on their way across the sea. But sifting out the mythical we come back to that great continent bordering the ocean to the west. Or perhaps after all the Phœnicians had reported that the land they visited had sunk, so as to prevent others going there.

5. Coming down the stream of time we find another statement from Anaxagoras (Humboldt Hist. Vol. I) born B. C. 500, in a fragment preserved by Simplicius. In this he speaks of another grand division of the world beyond the ocean, as if he believed in its real existence and not as a poetic myth or a fancy of the imagination. He was one of the most eminent of the Greek philosophers and had among his pupils Pericles, Euripides and Socrates.

6. Theopompus an eminent Greek historian whose works have been lost, was born about 380 B. C. Ælian, however, in his *Variæ Historiæ* (lib. 3, cap. 18), cites from this writer a statement that the Meropians inhabit a large continent beyond the ocean, in comparison with which the known world was but an island. As Ælian tells the story, other things fabulous or mythical are mingled with it, so much as to lead many to discredit the whole. But human experience teaches us that in former times and even to within two hundred years, writers were often inclined to add something marvellous to a substratum of truth. There is many a strange, not to say impossible wild beast credited to our shores by its first explorers, in text and picture, whose existence subsequent exploration failed to confirm.

7. There are two passages from Aristotle which may be introduced here. The first is from his treatise on the world (chap. 3) where he says: "The whole habitable world consists of an island surrounded by an ocean called the Atlantic. It is probable, however, that many other lands exist opposite to this, across the ocean, some less, some greater than this, but all except this invisible to us." The second quotation is from his treatise on wonders (a work attributed to him but may be by another): He says (chaps. 84, 85): "Beyond the pillars of Hercules they say that an uninhabited island was discovered by the Carthaginians, which abounded in forests and navigable rivers and fruits of all kinds, distant from the continent many days' sail; and while the Carthaginians were engaged in making voyages to this land, and some had even settled there on account of the fertility of the soil, the senate decreed that no one thereafter, under penalty of death, should voyage thither, and they caused to be put to death all of the settlers lest they should reveal its existence to other nations." Aristotle was born 384 B. C., and we all know his words are worthy of a respectful consideration.

8. Diodorus of Sicily, who lived in the century preceding the Christian era, agrees with Aristotle in these statements in the main, but he

says that it was the Phœnicians instead of the Carthaginians (Book 5: 19, 20) who were cast upon a most fertile island opposite Africa, where the climate was that of perpetual spring, and that the land was the proper habitation for gods rather than for men. He speaks of the continent, however at length and with great detail, enumerating its fertile valleys and many navigable rivers, its rich and abundant fruits and supply of game, and its valuable forests and genial climate. This must have referred to Mexico or Central America. After mentioning its discovery by the Phœnicians, who, in one of their voyages, were accidentally driven to the shores of the new continent by a storm of several days' duration, he says: "Being the first who were acquainted with its beauty and fertility, they published them to other nations. The Tuscans when they were masters of the sea, designed to send a colony thither, but the Carthaginians found means to prevent them; on the one hand they were afraid lest their own citizens tempted by the charms of that island, should pass over thither in too great numbers and desert their own country; on the other hand they looked upon it as a secure asylum for themselves, if ever any terrible disaster should befall their republic." This account of Diodorus differs from that of Solon enough to lead us to believe his sources of information were also different. If the Tuscan or Etrurian or Tyrrhenian people (as they were variously called) in the west and central portions of Italy were such navigators as is here intimated by Diodorus, we may well suppose the information came to the Sicilian historian from this nation through channels now unknown to us.

9. Statius Sebosus, as cited by Pliny (Vol. II, p. 106, Bohn), says that the two Hesperides are forty-two days sail from the coast of Africa. But little is known of this writer, save that he was a Roman and a geographer, who lived probably in the first century before the Christian era. The passage in Pliny referred to is somewhat obscure in other points, but the statement above given is sufficiently clear. It is probable that the two Hesperides here mentioned were Cuba and Santo Domingo.

10. The next citation is the famous one of Seneca in his *Medea*, where the chorus closes the second act, and begins with celebrating the daring of the earliest voyagers who sailed out into the unknown seas before even they had learned to direct their course by the stars; then, when the Argonauts returned in triumph, the ocean lost its terrors, and men had no need to ask Minerva to construct another *Argo*. Thenceforth they built their own ships, and sailed them whither they would. Then the chorus ends with the following prediction: "In later years an age shall come, when the ocean shall relax its bonds and a great continent (*tellus*) shall be laid open, and new lands

revealed; and Thule shall not then be the remotest land known on earth." Seneca was born a few years before the Christian era, and was familiar with Greek literature, as well as a traveller in Greece and Egypt. The formal and dignified manner in which this passage was introduced, and its lofty tone give it a weight and importance it would not possess, as Humboldt observes (*Hist. etc.*, Vol. I: 165) had it been uttered as a mere geographical conjecture. The language is surely bold enough to warrant us in believing that the poet here utters a prophecy, not of a first discovery, but of a re-discovery of a lost continent.

11. Plutarch born about 40 A. D. was distinguished not only as a historian but as a man versed in all the philosophy and science of his day. In his book of *Morals* he runs through the scale of human knowledge and speculation in all things material, moral and intellectual. In the treatise on the moon in this work he speaks with knowledge that can only have been derived from the experience of some one who had actually witnessed the scenes he describes. The story with all the accessories no one pretends to believe. As I understand it, he weaves a story about a substratum of fact — much the same as Gen. Lew Wallace relates the Spanish Conquest of Mexico in his charming story of "The Fair God." Stripping the account of the mythological, he states that there was an island at a distance of five day's sail westward from Britain; beyond that also to the west lay three other islands with about the same distance between them, and beyond the most remote at the distance of 5000 stadia or about 575 miles lay a great continent bordering the Atlantic ocean on the west. Furthermore, the visitors of that region observed that for thirty days the daily disappearance of the sun lasted only about one hour. That is a phenomenon so far beyond ordinary reasoning that it could have been known only by experience. It also locates the coast visited to be that of Labrador. It is not essential to Plutarch's knowledge of these facts that it was the Greeks, as he narrates, who visited those regions. The point is, that some ships from the eastern continent went there, and for my part, I do not quite believe that they were from Greece. Now, can we identify these islands with their distances? About 600 miles northwest of Scotland lie the Faroe Islands, and this distance could have been made in five days by the ships of antiquity. Still northwest at about the same distance from the Faroe Islands lies Iceland, and beyond that at the same distance is Greenland. But Plutarch says that beyond the first island reached in the westward course lie *three* islands. What is the third? I am inclined to think it was simply the southern extremity of Greenland itself, which puts out as a long extended cape to the south. We do not look for the exactness

of modern scientific work in the science of antiquity—or if we do, we do not find it. Still to the westward at a distance varying from 500 to 600 miles, according to location, we come to the coast of Labrador where the same phenomenon is witnessed of the summer sun for thirty days remaining but an hour below the horizon. Now all this is too strange for invention and too true to be dismissed with a shrug. We are compelled to acknowledge that Plutarch was here detailing the actual experience of seaman from Europe, Asia or Africa in their adventurous voyages across the sea to the American continent.

12. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, born in the first century B. C. is justly regarded as high authority in the province of history. Twenty-two years of his life were spent in study at Rome. In his comment on the so-called myth of Theopompus before mentioned, he gives his belief that the land of the Meropians is a great continent across the Atlantic (Humboldt Hist. 1: 205), while the land he himself inhabited was but an island in comparison. Perizonius, an eminent Dutch scholar of the seventeenth century, in a note on this story, says: "I do not doubt that the ancients knew something of America somewhat as through cloud and smoke, in part from reasoning on the form of the earth and location of the different lands. Ælian, Var. Hist. Ed. Ludg., 1701, p. 217.

13. The next witness to a general feeling pervading the writers and thinkers of antiquity that an extensive continent lay westward of the Atlantic, is Strabo, born in Cappadocia just before the Christian era, as one of his books was written A. D. 18. He says, Book 1: 4: 6: "But it is quite possible that in the temperate zone there may be two or even more habitable earths, especially near the circle which is drawn through Thinaë (*i.e.* Athens) and the Atlantic ocean." And again in Book 2, chapter 5, sect. 13, he says: "It belongs to another science to give an exact description of the whole earth, and of the entire vertebra of either zone, and as to whether the vertebra in the opposite quarter of the earth is inhabited. That such is the case is most probable, but not that it is inhabited by the same race of men as dwell with us. And it must be regarded as another habitable earth."

By the term vertebra here he means a zone or belt of the earth passing around it east and west between the parallels perhaps of 24° and 54° north latitude. Strabo does not here narrate an explorer's experience, but as a scientist he says virtually, "you may hear of personal visits to the antipodes,—do not look upon it as absurd—it is all right, gentlemen—science and analogy both accord with this and make it probable that there are other lands beyond the ocean, whether you have heard of them or not."

14, 15. Pomponius Mela, the Roman geographer, born in Spain about

the middle of the first century A. D., at the close of his fifth chapter of his third book, "De Situ Orbis," has the following language: "What was beyond the Caspian Sea in former times was unknown; whether the same ocean, or a land of perpetual winter (*infesta frigoribus*) extending onward without end. But besides the geographers (*physicos*) and Homer, who said the whole earth was surrounded by water, Cornelius Nepos, a later writer, and therefore more accurate, produces Q. Metellus Celer as a witness, and states that the latter related the following incident: that when he (Metellus) was proconsul in Gaul (in B. C. 63), certain Indians were sent to him as a gift from the King of the Batavi; upon inquiring from whence they had come, they answered that they had been driven by storms from the shores of India, over the intervening ocean until they had landed on the coast of Germany." Of course the name India counts for nothing in this story, as all territory east of Central Asia was India to the geographers of that day. The probability is, however, that these accidental visitors of Europe were driven thither from the northeastern coast of America. It is one of those incidents that show the continual possibility of passage from one continent to the other whenever men ventured out upon the ocean. At a museum in Aberdeen there is yet preserved a canoe which was picked up near the coast of Scotland by a passing ship. When found it contained an Esquiman still alive and surrounded by his fishing gear.*

In his History of the Canary Islands, Captain Glass relates that a small bark bound from Lancerota to Teneriffe was forced out of her course and obliged to run before the wind until she came within two days' sail of Caraccas, where she met with an English cruiser, which relieved her distresses and directed her to the port of Laguayra, on that coast. Another instance is mentioned by Gumilla, a Spanish missionary to South America. He says that in December, 1731, while he was in the town of St. Joseph, Trinidad, a small vessel belonging to Teneriffe, with six seamen, was driven westward across the ocean to that island by stress of weather. All these establish the possibility of communication between the two continents, and relieve the question of all *a priori* presumptions against such an oceanic passage by ancient vessels.

16. There is but one more passage we propose to introduce, and that is from the Bible. Not that it is absolutely of certain application to the question in discussion, but at least there is a very curious coincidence. At the very time our secular histories lead us to believe the Tyrians were trafficking with America, the vessels of Hiram (1 Kings, 9: 28, and 10: 22, and 2 Chron., 3: 6) are said to bring four hundred and fifty talents of gold from Parvaim. Here is a word which is not

* Southall's Recent "Origin of Man," and other authorities.

of Semitic origin, so entirely foreign to the Hebrew language that Gesenius finds no root for it, nor any congeners in that tongue, and is obliged to make a guess at a Sanscrit derivation. The pointing of the Hebrew Bible, or supplying the consonants with the proper vowel points, is, as is generally known, of comparatively modern date. And a slight change in this respect, while preserving all the consonants, will give a striking result. Instead of reading Parvaim פֶּרְוַיִּם, if we take a reading quite as regular and natural פְּרִימִים, Pruum, we have the regular plural of Peru, a form consistent with our theory, and also with Hebrew usage, as in that language the names of countries are frequently found in the plural.

There is no reason whatever why the second reading is not quite as likely to be the true one as the first. If the word were a verb or an ordinary adjective, the pointing would be fixed by the adjective or verbal form, and what all scholars would assent to at once. But that of a proper name, and of one too that is used but once in the Bible, is not beyond the possibility of rearrangement. These vessels of Hiram are said to have occupied three years on a voyage, or to have come once in three years, and there is no impossibility in their reaching Peru by sailing around the Cape of Good Hope and then eastward to the American coast. As to the origin of the name of Peru the early Spanish writers generally receive it as the native name of the country.

There is another portion of South America which may be designated by Parvaim.* There are two gold-bearing rivers, the Paru and the Apu Paru, or in the plural the Paruim, which form the Ucayali and another Paru also flowing from the mountains of Guiana, all of which send their waters into the Amazon. By another curious coincidence the Amazon in a portion of its course is called the River of Solomon. So that there is a fair basis for the theory that South America, either on the western or eastern coast furnished Solomon with gold for the temple. If this continent was not the source of the precious mineral, it would be difficult to fix upon any other portion of the earth abounding in gold that would require three years for completing the voyage of the ships of Tyre.

Here I would introduce a side-light from a modern traveller. There is one very singular monument pictured in Squier's work on ancient Peru. Over an archway or a flat lintel of an old temple or on one of the door-posts on one side (I cite from memory), there is a sculptured figure of a winged globe. Now that figure is never found in the sculptures of Central America nor of any other nation on the American continent. Nor is it a Greek, Roman, or Assyrian symbol. It is

* Gaffarel. *Découverte d'Amérique*, 1: 98.

Egyptian pure and simple. But the ancient Egyptians never carried it there; they never dared to venture out of sight of land. But the Phœnicians went every where. They might have seen it in Egypt, and one of their workmen must have reproduced it, in the remote lands of Peru, with or without understanding its significance.

Here then is the testimony of sixteen witnesses, not as to what they saw, but to what they learned from all their sources of information, and all agreeing on one point. It is true that so far as the written testimony is concerned, it may come chiefly from one source, and that is Egypt, but for centuries Egypt was the center of all learning—the schoolmaster of the world. Perhaps it is not too much to expect that monuments will yet be found in Asia Minor or America that may reveal mysteries that now surround the transatlantic voyages of the Phœnician fleets. At all events, the evidence of such voyages is of good authority and cumulative—the strongest that can be offered in support of historical events. The universal tradition of a deluge accompanied with the salvation of the occupants of an ark, makes it highly probable, if there were no other reasons, that all the present inhabitants of the earth are descended from Noah. In that case America must have been peopled from the eastern continent. It would appear from other sources that one or more streams of emigration came hither by way of Behring's strait, and at least two, at different eras, across the Atlantic. But this question is too large a one to discuss at this time, as well as beyond its scope.

SECOND PAPER.

LATER PRE-COLUMBIAN DISCOVERIES OF AMERICA. IRISH,
NORTHMEN, WELSH, ITALIAN AND FRENCH.

BY GEORGE ROGERS HOWELL.

[Read before the Albany Institute, October, 1893.]

A secret wrested from the domain of nature if not published and utilized may soon drop into oblivion to be discovered again by accident or enterprise in after ages. We often speak of the stream of life—for the last four hundred years it has been a torrent that has swept into almost oblivion many a fact in human history. The records of the struggle of man with the forces of nature are now often only to be found buried in books rarely seen except in the largest libraries, written in a language long dead or in one spoken by a small remnant of a once powerful nation. We in this day live at a high pressure. It is the age of steam and in transition to the age of electricity. We seek to subdue and control all known forces, to create new forces, and to dominate nature in every field, first for self, and secondarily for the world. We care little for the story of the missionary labors of the Culdees of Ireland or for the fine-spun discussions of Greek philosophy. We care most to learn of a new scheme to convert to-day a five dollar bill into a ten to-morrow. We live also in the age of gold as well as in the golden age in its broadest sense as compared with any other period of human history. But I wish this evening to go back into the past and ascertain what men have done on the ocean with frail structures, small mechanical skill and less science, but with an irresistible fervor and daring, and spurred on by religious zeal or political outlawry.

I mention first the Irish discovery of America. Some of the accounts of Irish voyages to lands lying to the west of their native islands in the Atlantic are so shot through and through with the fabulous as to be rejected altogether. Indeed in order to believe that they ever came to this continent it must be shown that they were a race of sufficient enterprise and ability, and had the means to cross the ocean and a motive that led them to the attempt.

*As to the race, they are described to have been a thousand years ago, a restless, energetic people, proud of their independence and quite ready to brave the perils of the sea in their enterprises. If, as

*Gaffarel. *Découverte d'Amérique* 1: 233 and following.

probable, there was a mixture of Phœnician blood in their veins, these traits of character were honestly inherited. As to the means of navigation, they had the half decked vessels of the period, propelled by sails or oars as the weather served, and reinforced by an extra sheathing of ox hide. They at least could float even if they lacked the speed of the modern ocean steamer. After Christianity pervaded the island, Irish missionaries went through all Europe in their zeal to convert the world. And when schisms in the church brought upon them persecution from their brethren in England and Scotland, they fled to the islands to the north. From there still later they were driven by the Northmen to the Faroe Islands, and when their new enemies reached this refuge also, they pushed out to sea until they found a new home in Iceland. These navigations include a period from the sixth to the ninth century. Both the Irish historian Dicuil and the old Icelandic *Landnamabok*, or book of land acquisitions, relate that when in the latter part of the ninth century the Northmen first visited Iceland, they found living there a Christian people called the Papas, a name well known to have been synonymous with the Culdees of Ireland. Dicuil says that some monks who had lived in Iceland told him that for some days both before and after the summer solstice the sun disappeared for only a very short time below the horizon, and that if a man were on a mountain he would not lose it from view at all. This establishes the fact that they were at least in the latitude of Iceland. Furthermore the accounts always mention a westward direction in all their departures from one discovered point to another.

But the Papas still retreated before the invasions of the Northmen. They left their Thule or Iceland, as they had left the Faroe Islands. Where could they go now? Behind them to the east were their persecutors. To the north they had already explored, and at the distance of a day and a half sail they had found a frozen sea. They could only turn their prows once more to the westward and commend themselves to the care of Providence. And in that direction they found a new land which on account of its extent they called Ireland the Great (*Irland it Mikla*), and this time they endeavored to keep the secret of its existence to themselves. But the Northmen hung on their tracks, and it is from the Sagas that we first learn of their settlement in the new world. Gaffarel 1 : 273, says of this account as follows : "Three Icelandic works speak of Ireland the Great. The first is the *Landnamabok* or book of the taking possession of Iceland. It is a genealogical history, accurate and positive, of the principal Icelandic families from the tenth to the thirteenth century. It was composed by Aré Thorgilsson, surnamed Frodhé or the Wise, and completed by five other historians or genealogists. Aré Frodhé lived from 1067 to 1148. Here

is what he says of his great grandfather, Aré Mårsson:* Aré son of Mår and Torkatla, was driven by a storm to Hvitramannaland [or Whitemans land, or land of men in white] which some call Irland it Mikla. This country is situated westward in the sea, near Vinland the Good, and, it is said at six days sail from Ireland. This report was first made by Hrafn Hlymreksfaré, who had for a long time dwelt in Limerick, Ireland. Torkell Gellisson reported also that some Icelanders said that they had learned from Thorfinn, Earl of the Orkneys, that Aré was recognized in Hvitramannaland, and that he was not permitted to leave there but that he was treated with honor." "Here now," Gaffarel goes on to say, "An Icelander Aré Mårsson was driven by a tempest to a country where he was well treated, but forbidden to return to his native land. The report of his adventures however was spread abroad, and it was two Icelanders, Hrafn and Torkell Gellisson who transmit it to the compiler of the Landnamabok. Furthermore this Hrafn who lived a long time in Limerick in Ireland, received his account from Irish voyagers returned from Hvitramannaland; as to Torkill Gellison, he was the paternal uncle of Aré Frodhé. He had travelled much, learned much, and imparted much to his nephew. In fine he relied much on the testimony of the Earl or Duke of the Orkneys, that is to say, of a country colonized by the Irish Papas, and who doubtless had preserved some relations with the other colonies founded by these same Papas. From this earliest testimony it seems therefore to be settled that the Irish colonists had occupied an extensive country situated to the west, and that they prevented all voyagers whom chance or storm had driven there from returning to their own country."

Further on Gaffarel goes on to say : † "A third Saga, that of Thorfinn Karlsefne, compiled from one or more of the narratives of the Northmen who discovered Vinland, includes a passage of the highest importance in regard to the settlement of the Irish in the new world. It is there stated, that some years after the year 1000, Thorfinn and his companions, after they had passed three years in Vinland, that is to say, as we shall prove later on, in America, as they were returning to Greenland, they found on their way five Skróellings or Esquimaux. ‡ 'One of them was bearded and there were two women and two children. Karlsefne's men carried off the children while the rest escaped and disappeared under ground (that is, in the usual snow huts of that region). These children learned the language of the Northmen and were baptized. They said the name of their mother was Vetthilde and their father Uvaege. They stated that two kings governed the

* Landnamabok, pt. 2, § 22, *Islandina Sage*, pp. 129, 130.

† Gaffarel. *Découverte d'Amérique*, 1 : 277.

‡ Rafn. *Antiquitates Americanae*, p. 182.

Skrœlings, one named Avalldama and the other Valldidida; that there were no houses in their country, and the inhabitants passed the night in caves or tunnels; that another great country situated opposite theirs was inhabited by a people who marched clothed in white with uplifted voices and bearing before them standards to which banners were affixed. It is thought that this land was Hvitramannaland or Ireland the great.'” After this quotation, Gaffarel goes on to say: “Who are these people clothed in white unless the Papas, or their descendants who had remained faithful to the costume of Columba? * As to the standards with their banners, and the loud chants that had struck the imagination of the little Skrœlings, is it not easy to recognize here a sacerdotal procession and churchly chants which the Papas had continued in their new possessions?”

These accounts seem to make it quite certain, with their incidental details of climate and geographical descriptions, that the Irish monks with their attendants of laymen and women, actually formed a settlement on the northern coast of America in the tenth century. Never very strong in numbers and not reinforced by accessions from the mother country, they probably at last succumbed to the attacks of the Esquimaux who at that time appear to have had occupation of lands perhaps down to the latitude of Nova Scotia.

The next discovery chronologically was that by the Northmen. In the year 861 a Northman pirate, Naddod by name, on a voyage to the Faroe Islands was driven northwest by a storm until he found himself by an unknown land. This was Iceland. The Northmen had already established themselves successively on the Orkneys, the Shetland and the Faroe Islands. In 874 a strong colony was settled in Iceland and it was soon made the basis for further discoveries. In 877 the snow-capped peaks of the eastern shores of Greenland were seen by Gunnbjorn from his vessel, but he did not stop to explore, and on his return to Iceland mentioned his discovery, but the new land remained but a tradition for a hundred years. In 983, Eric the Red then living in Iceland, on account of man-slaughter was compelled to flee and turned his prow to the traditional islands to the west. He was so well pleased with his examination of the region that he returned to Iceland, and in 985 he again sailed westward with thirty-five vessels of colonists for Greenland, only fourteen of which however reached their destination. They formed there a little independent republic. It is probable that at that time a milder climate prevailed there than that of our day. It is well known that the land of Greenland has been rising for centuries, and this is amply sufficient to account for the

* This Columba adopted for himself and his associate Monks white flowing garments and was the pioneer of all the voyages of the Irish.

greater severity of the cold and the consequent barrenness of the island at the present time. But the first Northman discoverer of the continent of America, Bjarn in 986 sailed from Norway to join his father Hariulf in Greenland. Violent winds carried him far out of his course to the southwest until he saw before him a low and well wooded coast, on which he did not land, inasmuch as he saw it bore no resemblance to that of Greenland. He skirted along this coast for a day and a half and then put to sea in a northeast direction for the residence of his father. After three days sail he discovered an elevated land thick with glaciers. He at length arrived in the bay adjoining the settlement where he was sharply criticised for not making a full exploration of the new lands. Here we have the narrative of land discovered at seven days sail southwest of Greenland, low and well wooded. This description could in no wise apply to Iceland. The narrative says that after they had turned their prow northward, the land they skirted for three days was on their larboard or to the left of them. Can we believe the narrative? All that we can say is, that such is the story written before the birth of Columbus, and so far as we can judge, as credible as any other narrative of events of the distant part.

The next voyage was from the west coast of Greenland in the year 1000, undertaken by Leif, the son of Eric, to visit and explore the new lands of Bjarn. In a single ship and with thirty-five men he set sail for the southwest, and in four days the land appeared. On examination they found it barren and stony, and Leif named it Helluland or the land of stones. This may have been either the coast of Labrador or of Newfoundland, both of which correspond to the description. As it offered no inducement for a settlement or trade they resumed their voyage southward, until another coast rose before them abounding in trees extending near the shore line. This he called Markland or the wooded land. This was probably Nova Scotia. Out on the open sea again for two days when the Northmen again made land, and skirted along the coast, landing and exploring the bays and the forests along the shores. They were now on the coast of Massachusetts and Rhode Island where abundance of wild grapes were found. A German who was exploring the forests was the first to find these and reported the discovery to Leif. "Is that true, my foster-father?" said Leif. "Certainly," said Tyrker the German, "for I was born where there was no scarcity of grapes." This little incident is narrated here to show that it was grapes and not juniper berries as some authorities have suggested. From this fact of the abundance of the grape the country was called Vinland or the land of the vine. I have told an old story but the details were needed to establish a dis-

covery. The scene of these discoveries could not have been Greenland or any other land than one of the latitude of Massachusetts. The recognition of the grape by a German familiar with the fruit was enough to settle that question. But in addition to this the sagas relate that in the shortest day of the year they had nine hours of daylight. This is true of the latitude of Massachusetts and Rhode Island, but not true of any section of the coast farther north. There was no chance for mistake in these two points. There was no motive for deception. They were recorded at least before 1395 when the Codex Flatöicus containing accounts of the various visits to Vinland was finished. There was no rival claim as against a Spanish discovery, for Columbus was not then born. There was no great glory even in the discovery in the minds of the Northmen, for they were not strong enough in numbers to colonize and subdue it. In short there is a plain commonplace narrative of this discovery, attempts carried on for ten to fifteen years for settlement, and then abandoned. The Icelandic annals however, as Prof. Rafn has cited, show that voyages were made from time to time down to the middle of the 14th century from Iceland and Greenland to the continent to the south for timber, for fishing or for carrying the Christian religion to the natives. They left no permanent remains of dwellings for, as the Sagas relate, these were constructed of timber that were either burned by the Indians or suffered a natural decay before the landing of the Pilgrims. These sea rovers were as familiar with the northern seas almost as we are to day. They live in Iceland and they live in Greenland and they explore the circumjacent waters until an ice barrier to the north confronts them. They sail away — out on the ocean — they know the points of the compass as well as our modern sailors — and they know the Faroe Islands and all Europe, but they find another continent, and a part of it they call Hellu^uland, another part Markland, and a third Vinland. Where is this continuous shore which they skirt day after day and explore and visit for 250 years, unless it is America? We must either reject the Sagas entirely or accepted a discovery by the Northmen.

Now in this narrative I have followed one set of commentators on these voyages of the Northmen and not another, because all the facts seem better to harmonize with that theory. The other theories place the visits of the Northmen much farther to the north and regard Nova Scotia or Labrador as the Vinland of Eric and Thorfinn, while one authority [Mr. A. J. Weise] locates Vinland on the coast of Greenland. To this it is in my mind a conclusive objection that the Northmen were quite familiar with the northern ocean and the whole eastern and western coast of South Greenland and could not possibly have made

so gross a mistake. One fact alone shows their knowledge of the northern seas. In 1007 a considerable number of Northmen under Thorfiun Karlsefne sailed from Southwest Greenland in three ships to establish another colony in Vinland. Soon after leaving port a strong current carried them northward until they came to what is now known as Davis Straits. Did they search for Vinland there? No more than would a modern explorer. As soon as the wind arose they turned their ships to the southward until they found successively Helluland and Markland.

There is another obscure point and that a very important one; it is the proper interpretation of the phrase which Rafn and his followers translate so as to understand the statement to signify a period of nine hours of daylight on the shortest day of the year. It is by some claimed to be capable of another interpretation which leaves the period uncertain as to the number of hours of daylight. In regard to this I prefer that interpretation which good Icelandic scholars give it and which is in harmony with every thing else in the narrative.

We come now to a second discovery of America from the British Isles. On the death of Owen Gwyned, king of North Wales, his sons disputed for the inheritance of the crown. Rather than take part in this contention, Madoc, one of these sons, in the year 1170 prepared several ships and sailed away to the southwest, leaving Ireland far to the north, as the record says, until he came to a vast and fertile uninhabited country. He was so well pleased with the discovery that he left some of his men in occupation and returned with the tidings to Wales. There he told his countrymen of the advantages of the new land across the ocean, contrasting its fertility and genial climate with the barrenness and vigors of Wales. He persuaded many of his people to accompany him, both men and women, and again set sail with ten ships for the western continent. One writer says he took back with him on this voyage 120 colonists. Where did these people make a settlement? Hakluyt thinks in Yucatan because the Spaniards found great numbers of crosses in that region. Horn in his treatise on the origin of the American aborigines, p. 136, believes it was in Virginia on account of the indigenous traditions there current of a certain Madeczunga in which he finds the name of Madoc, and further from a resemblance of many Indian words there used to those of the Welsh language. Gafferal 1: 299 maintains that it was Ireland the Great, or that region between Labrador and Canada. If the latter is correct we should expect some mention by Madoc in his reports of the discovery of the Irish there, or at least traces of a previous occupation, supposing them at this time to have somehow disappeared. But he reports an uninhabited country. I think myself it was the coast of Virginia

to which he came and that they expanded the settlement to the Carolinas. He is reported to have sailed to the southwest, leaving Ireland far to the north. The following affidavit published in the London Chronicle of Aug. 2, 1777, taken from a work by Rev. N. Owen entitled, "British Remains, etc.," and published in the same year confirms this view. It is made by the Rev. Morgan Jones, a minister in the church of England.

"These presents may certify all persons whatsoever, that in the year 1669, I being then an inhabitant in Virginia, and chaplain to Major-General Bennett, Sir William Berkeley sent two ships to search the place which then was called Port Royal, but now South Carolina, which is sixty leagues to the southward of Cape Fear; and I was sent thither with them to be their minister.

Upon the 8th day of April we set out from Virginia and arrived at the harbour's mouth of Port Royal the 19th of the same month; where we waited for the rest of the fleet that was to come from Barbadoes and Bermudas with one Mr. West, who was to be deputy-governor of the said place. As soon as the fleet came in, the small vessels that were with us went up the river to a place called the Oyster-point for we durst not go up with the great ships because of the bar of sand that was before the harbour's mouth.

After we were seated [i. e. settled], I staid there between seven and eight months till the 10th of November following; at which time, being almost starved for want of provisions, I and five more took our flight from thence, and travelled through the wilderness till we came to the Tuscarora country, where the Tuscarora Indians took us prisoners, because we told them we were bound for Roanoake, for they then had wars with the English at Roanoake; and they carried us into their town that night, and shut us up in a house by ourselves, and the next day held a Macchcomoco about us, which after it was over, their interpreter came to us and told us that we must fit ourselves to die next morning; whereupon being something cast down, and speaking to this effect in the British (Welsh) tongue, "Have I escaped so many dangers, and must I now be knocked on the head like a dog?" An Indian came to me, who afterwards appeared to be a war-captain belonging to the Sachem of the Doegs (whose original I found must needs be from the Welsh) and took me up, and told me in the British (Welsh) tongue I should not die; and thereupon went to the emperor of the Tuscaroras, and agreed for my ransom and the men that were with me, and paid it the next day. Afterward they carried us to their town, and entertained us civilly for four months; and I did converse with them of many things in the British (Welsh) tongue, and did preach to them three times a week in the British tongue, and they

would usually confer with me about anything that was difficult to them; and when we came from them they showed themselves very civil and courteous to us.

They are seated upon Pantigo river, not far from Cape Atros. [Hatteras.] This is a recital of my travels among the Doeg [Madog] Indians.

Signed,

MORGAN JONES,

the son of John Jones of Barsleg near Newport in Monmouthshire.

NEW YORK, *March 10, 1685-6.*

This is a case not of a few Indian words bearing a resemblance to some in the Welsh language, but of a Welshman having daily converse for months with these Indians and preaching to them in his native language many discourses which they perfectly understood. Other Welshmen have testified substantially to the same facts of hearing their own native language spoken by the Indians on the coast of Virginia and the Carolinas as their vernacular, and there appears to be no good reason for rejecting this concurrent evidence from both sides of the ocean.

These Indians are reported to have been of a lighter color than others found in America. In the general migration of the tribes westward these people shared the common fate, and even now occasionally the newspapers report that white Indians are met with in the west, and their presence is a matter of surprise to those who are ignorant of the Welsh settlements. Of course these Welsh colonists as they sooner or later mingled and intermarried with the Indian races with whom they came in contact in the woods, away from civilization, and they had none too much when they came, gradually lost their European ways and were assimilated to their dusky neighbors. The mighty forces of nature in its wildest state took them to herself. Now have we any pre-Columbian records of this Welsh discovery? Most assuredly. It was no after thought to rob Columbus of his laurels. The story is told at length by David Powel in 1584 in his history of Wales. But still earlier Meredith ap Rees in 1477 mentions the voyage of Madoc across the ocean. But the earliest account of this voyage is in the Welsh triads, a collection of poetry written in the twelfth century. These make mention of "Madoc the son of Owen Gwyned, who put out to sea with three hundred men in ten ships and who went no one knows where." I do not see any reason to doubt this narrative handed down in the Welsh histories and national ballads which date back to a pre-Columbian era, supported as it is by reliable testimony of corroborating circumstances in American history.

We come now to the last pre-Columbian discovery of the western continent that has substantial evidence of support. It is that by the

Venetian brother Nicolo and Antonio Zeno. The whole question of this discovery turns on the point of the veracity of three men, the two brothers I have mentioned and Nicolo Zeno, Jr., a descendant.

In the year 1388 Nicolo Zeno to gratify a passion for adventure and sight-seeing, equipped a vessel and sailed from Venice northward, along the European coast, until after passing Scotland he arrived at the island of what he called Frisland, and which for reasons too long to be recited here was unquestionably one of the Faroe Islands. Here he entered into service or an alliance with the ruler of the islands and was made admiral of his fleet and received generous compensation for his assistance in the wars of conquest then in progress—(doubtless some of the proceeds of robbery of conquered enemies). From this island he wrote to his brother Antonio, giving him an account of his successes and urging him to come there also, to see the world and augment his fame and fortune. Antonio accepted the opportunity. For four years the brothers were engaged in trade or wars in the service of Zichmni or Sinclair the ruler of Frisland. While on a visit to Greenland Nicolo died and Antonio succeeded to the honors and office of Nicolo and remained ten years longer in the service of the ruler of Frisland. Nicolo left a map of the lands he had visited and notes of his several voyages, which came into the possession of Antonio. And now the news of still other lands to the west came to Frisland. A Frisland fisherman reported that four fishing vessels were driven by a storm to an island called Estotiland over a thousand miles to the west of Frisland. After a residence of thirteen years on that island and a still larger one to the south of Estotiland called Drogeo he had returned to his native island with the riches he had there acquired. Fired by this report the ruler of Frisland at once prepared an expedition, and with Antonio set sail for the west. They apparently did not on this voyage go farther south than Estotiland or Labrador where they met with numbers of the Esquimaux as we infer from Antonio's description of the appearance of the natives.

Antonio sent an account of this voyage as well as many other letters to his elder brother Carlo. These letters with a chart of the northern Atlantic and adjacent countries and islands are the only surviving original narratives of the Zeno brothers. They were preserved but lay neglected for generations until a descendant, Nicolo Zeno, Jr., discovered their importance, and in 1558 published what was left of them with the map of Nicolo and Antonio. The country named in the letters as Estotiland can be no other than Labrador, and Drogeo mentioned by the Frisland fisherman as lying to the south of it, whether Nova Scotia or the United States or both, it is very difficult to decide. It is in any case said in the letters to be a vast continent. This voyage

of Antonio was made in a year between 1396 and 1400. As I said before, the whole question of this discovery depends on the truth of the letters of the Zenó brothers, and whether the descendant Nicolo Zenó, Jr., published them as he found them, with no additions or falsifications. They are generally regarded as authentic. The family was noble and wealthy—and though sometimes even such people have been known to strain the truth, still there is always force in the old adage, "*noblesse oblige*." The letters bear every mark of genuineness and that is much in their support—for it is seldom a fiction of this kind does not somewhere betray itself.

FRENCH DISCOVERY.

There is one other account of a pre-Columbian discovery which I have some hesitation to mention, but on which a possible side-light is thrown from an unexpected source. A Norman chronicler Desmarquets in 1788 published two small volumes entitled "*Mémoires de Dieppe*," in which he mentions a voyage in 1488 of a Capt. Cousin from Dieppe for the west coast of Africa who was driven far out of his course until he found himself in the mouth of a large river of a continent to the westward of the Atlantic ocean. This was either the Amazon or the Oronoco. The narrative is not an original document cotemporary with the alleged discovery and therefore not entirely satisfactory evidence, and the original archives of Dieppe which would have contained mention of this voyage were burned with the City Hall in the 18th century. But Cousin's mate was named Pinzon, an able seaman but unscrupulous and treacherous, and on charges preferred and proved was cashiered and dismissed from the French service. It is known that he went immediately into Spain and is supposed to be the same Martin Alonzo Pinzon who commanded one of the caravels of the fleet of Columbus. This man showed the same traits of character in his attempt to leave Columbus when nearing the coast of America, and again when he evaded his commander on the return voyage in a storm, and attempted to reach the port of Palos in advance of Columbus. But his stopping to land a messenger with despatches of the discovery to the King of Spain with the claim of success through his own efforts, caused him to arrive at Palos two hours after the triumphal entry of the admiral. And then his unflinching confidence in the expectation of finding land when all but the leader were despondent, his conferences with Columbus and encouragement of his almost mutinous crew, look more like the expectation of a re-discovery than of a first discovery. That is exactly the conduct we should expect of such a man, if, as conjectured, he was the same one who four years before with the Dieppe captain was on the coast of

Brazil. So far as Norman and Breton sailors and maritime enterprise is concerned, there is no reason to doubt their ability to have visited this continent as they traded with Africa and made voyages far out to sea in search of whales.

Here then are four, and possibly five, nations whose vessels solved the problem of the ocean and its unknown and mysterious western borders—solved the problem of the ages and knew not what they had done and the world was no wiser or richer for their deeds. The discoveries did not fail to be recorded, but the records became archives and as such were safely stowed away out of human sight for generations. Did the echo of these discoveries reach the ear of Columbus? Who can doubt it? His journey to Iceland would have led his inquisitive spirit to the bishop's library at Ryckavick and the story of the Northmen's visit to the western world would inevitably be learned. Did he mention this, or the report of a pilot or captain, or both, whose adventures on the ocean led them to know of the existence of a land to the west, when he undertook to convince monks, nobles, and sovereigns of a short route to India? Not at all. He reasoned before them on the high plane of logic and mathematical geography—that the earth was a globe and that the riches of the Indies were nearer to Europe by way of the west than around the African continent. He at least never realized the extent of his discovery, for he died in the belief that the lands he had laid open to the world were but the eastern shores of Asia. But these futile discoveries I have mentioned in no wise detract from the glory of Columbus. His persuasive eloquence, his superior knowledge, and above all his tact, will-power and ability to manage men, carried him triumphantly over every obstacle to the gates of a new continent and to all intents and purposes so far as adding to the sum of human knowledge he was its discoverer.



