

# PUTS COLUMBUS IN DR. COOK CLASS AND SAYS ANOTHER FOUND AMERICA

**Henry Vignaud, After Fifty Years of Research, Issues Historical Work in Which Famous Explorer is Branded as Impostor and Humbug.**

SPECIAL CABLE TO PLAIN DEALER.

PARIS, March 20.—Simultaneously with the erection of a colossal statue in honor of Christopher Columbus at Buenos Ayres, will be published here on Saturday two volumes of a work by Henry Vignaud, first secretary of the American embassy, in which the discoverer of America is branded an impostor and humbug and placed in a class with explorers like Dr. Cook.

Mr. Vignaud retired from the American embassy two years ago and has since devoted his entire time to the completion of a study of Columbus, which has consumed in all fifty years. The author is now 81 years of age. He is celebrated as a historian and was recently consulted by the pope when it was proposed to canonize Columbus. At that time, Mr. Vignaud showed that the explorer was anything but a saintly man.

In his study of Columbus, Mr. Vignaud undertakes to prove that the explorer's discovery of America was not the result of his own genius, that

the expedition was not based upon scientific data, but that Columbus actually learned of the existence of America from an ignorant sailor who had been there ahead of him. In a word, he claims that America was discovered long before Columbus ever organized his expedition, and that he merely took the credit from another man unknown to history.

The story that Toscanelli wrote a letter to Columbus, inclosing a chart showing the route across the Atlantic and that it was with this in hand that Columbus started out to find the new world, is disposed of by Mr. Vignaud. He declares that the Toscanelli letter was a forgery perpetrated possibly by Columbus himself, but more probably by the explorer's brother, Bartholomew Columbus. Mr. Vignaud further undertakes to prove that the map used by Columbus could not have come from Toscanelli because it contained exact information which no amount of scientific thinking could have adduced, but which could only have been learned from actual experience.