

the Arabian and Jewish physicians, and through the account of Rubruquis and the Italian travelers, he also examined with the greatest attention the roots, fruits, and leaves of the different plants. In drawing attention to the influence exercised by this great age of nautical discoverers on the extension of natural views, we impart more animation to our descriptions, by associating them with the individuality of one great man. In the journal of his voyage, and in his reports, which were first published from 1825 to 1829, we find almost all those circumstances touched upon to which scientific enterprise was directed in the latter half of the fifteenth and throughout the whole of the sixteenth centuries.

We need only revert generally and cursorily to the extension imparted to the geography of Western nations from the period when the Infante Dom Henrique the navigator, at his country seat of Terça Naval, on the lovely bay of Sagres, sketched his first plan of discovery, to the expeditions of Gaetano and Cabrillo to the South Sea. The daring expeditions of the Portuguese, Spaniards, and English evince the suddenness with which a new sense, as it were, was opened for the appreciation of the grand and the boundless. The advance of nautical science and the application of astronomical methods to the correction of the ship's reckoning favored the efforts which gave to this age its peculiar character, and revealed to men the image of the earth in all its completeness of form. The discovery of the main-land of tropical America (on the 1st of August, 1498) occurred seventeen months after Cabot reached the Labrador coast of North America. Columbus did not see the terra firma of South America on the mountainous shores of Paria, as has generally been supposed, but at the Delta of the Orinoco, to the east of Caño Macareo.* Sebastian Cabot† landed on the 24th of June, 1497, on the coast of Labrador, between 56° and 58° north latitude. It has already been noticed that this inhospitable region had been visited by the Icelander Leif Ericksson, five hundred years earlier.

Columbus attached more importance on his third voyage to the circumstance of finding pearls in the islands of Margarita and Cabagua than to the discovery of the *tierra firme*, for he continued firmly persuaded to the day of his death that he had

* See the results of my investigations, in the *Relation Hist. du Voyage aux Régions Equinoxiales du Nouveau Continent*, t. ii., p. 702; and in the *Examen Crit. de l'Hist. de la Géographie*, t. i., p. 309.

† Biddle, *Memoir of Sebastian Cabot*, 1831, p. 52-61; *Examen Crit.*, t. iv., p. 231.