

Six years after Balboa, sword in hand, and wading to his knees through the waves, claimed the possession of the Pacific for Castile, and two years after his head had fallen by the hand of the executioner in the revolt against the tyrannical Pedrarias Davila,* Magellan appeared in the Pacific (27th of November, 1520), and, traversing the vast ocean from south-

bus naturally preferred this result to that of Ptolemy, according to which Quinsay should have been found in the meridian of the eastern part of the archipelago of the Carolinas. Ptolemy, in the *Almagest* (II., 1), places the coast of Sinæ at 180° , and in his *Geography* (lib. i., cap. 12) at $177\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$. As Columbus estimated the navigation from Iberia to Sinæ at 120° , and Toscanelli at only 52° , they might certainly, estimating the length of the Mediterranean at about 40° , have called this apparently hazardous enterprise a "brevissimo camino." Martin Behaim, also, on his "*World Apple*," the celebrated globe which he completed in 1492, and which is still preserved in the Behaim house at Nuremberg, places the coast of China (or the throne of the King of Mango, Cambalu, and Cathai) at only 100° west of the Azores—*i. e.*, as Behaim lived four years at Fayal, and probably calculated the distance from that point— $119^{\circ} 40'$ west of Cape St. Vincent. Columbus was probably acquainted with Behaim at Lisbon, where both lived from 1480 to 1484. (See my *Examen Crit. de l'Hist. de la Géographie*, t. ii., p. 357-369.) The many wholly erroneous numbers which we find in all the writings on the discovery of America, and the then supposed extent of Eastern Asia, have induced me more carefully to compare the opinions of the Middle Ages with those of classical antiquity.

* The eastern portion of the Pacific was first navigated by white men in a boat, when Alonso Martin de Don Benito (who had seen the sea horizon with Vasco Nuñez de Balboa on the 25th of September, 1513, from the little Sierra de Quarequa) descended a few days afterward to the Gulf de San Miguel, before Balboa enacted the strange ceremony of taking possession of the ocean. Seven months before, in the month of January, 1513, Balboa had announced to his court that the South Sea, of which he had heard from the natives, was very easy to navigate: "mar muy mansa y que nunca anda brava como la mar de nuestra banda" (de las Antillas). The name *Oceano Pacifico* was, however, as Pigafetta tells us, first given by Magellan to the Mar del Sur (Balboa). Before Magellan's expedition (in August, 1519), the Spanish government, which was not wanting in watchful activity, had given secret orders, in November, 1514, to Pedrarias Davila, governor of the province of Castilla del Oro (the most northwestern part of South America), and to the great navigator Juan Diaz de Solis, for the former to have four caravels built in the Golfo de San Miguel, "to make discoveries in the newly-discovered South Sea;" and to the latter, to seek for an opening ("abertura de la tierra") from the eastern coast of America, with the view of arriving at the back ("á espel das") of the new country, *i. e.*, of the western portion of Castilla del Oro, which was surrounded by the sea. The expedition of Solis (October, 1515, to August, 1516) led him far to the south, and to the discovery of the Rio de la Plata, long called the Rio de Solis. (Compare, on the little known first discovery of the Pacific, Petrus Martyr, *Epist.*, dxl., p. 296, with the documents of 1513-1515, in Navarrete, t. iii., p. 134 and 357; also my *Examen Crit.*, t. i., p. 320 and 350.)