

of their early date is, that the calculations of Easter day begin in 1375. I will merely remark, that at least it was not unusual to make those calculations backward as well as forward, a practice of which I can show instances in the fifteenth century, and which is common at the present day. An error which tends to strengthen my doubts, occurs in all the statements of the three writers whom I have named, viz.—that only two charts of earlier date are known; one by Visconti in 1318, (three years prior to Marino Sanuto!) another by Benincasa in 1370,—both in the Library at Vienna. Now of this last geographer I know of eight charts, all dated between 1466 and 1489; three of them are in the British Museum, two at Paris, two at Venice, and one in the Vatican. Here is a palpable error of a century in date. It is only within a few days that I have seen M. Buchon's lithographed copy of these charts; it is difficult to judge, with exactness, of the age of MSS. by mere outline fac-similes, but my opinion of the writing is, that 1440 is about the real date. The "Christian flag" over Cyprus, is evidently intended either for the arms of Jerusalem, borne by the Lusignan family, or for that of the Emperors of the East: the fact is not of much importance, but the MS. itself would probably show whether cross crosslets or Beta's are meant. The best test was a comparison of the N.W. coast of Africa with the chart of Andrea Bianco, of the undoubted date of 1436. The outlines of that coast, the Canary Isles and Madeira, so closely agree, that it might be supposed they were taken from some common original, the names being changed according to the language of the copyist. Would such close agreement exist between charts of 1375 and 1436, when we consider what had been done in those sixty years? But, putting all details aside, could the discoveries of "The Catalans," thus reduced into writing in 1375, have remained unknown to Don Henry, and those of his Academy, with whom even M. Buchon not only allows that "the Catalans" were in relation, but he also quotes Andres to prove that a native of Majorca was chosen to superintend the Nautical Academy of Sagres, at its first foundation by Don Henry in 1415, a period of forty years after the supposed date of these charts! Again, is the evidence of the early date of these charts, whether according to Malte-Brun in 1346, or according to Buchon, Huot, and Paulin-Paris, in 1375, sufficiently clear and decisive to overcome the united testimony of all authors who have written on the subject? M. Paulin-Paris, whose book was published in 1836, says that M. Jomard, "Directeur du Cabinet des Cartes et Plans de la Bibliothèque du Roi," was then engaged in researches upon these charts, and that he purposed to publish the results. I cannot find that such has been the case: he may have resolved the doubts which I have expressed. The charts are, however, mentioned in the report just made by M. Sabin Berthelot to the Geographical Society of Paris, on the geographical collections of the Bibliothèque Royale, where they are called "a remarkable work of the fourteenth century, (1375,)" and are enumerated amongst the early monuments of geography, indeed, as the earliest originals which the Bibliothèque du Roi possesses, those previously described in the Report being printed or manuscript copies from other libraries: one is the copy of the early rectangular map in the Cottonian Library, which was made in 1830, by Mr. Walker of the Admiralty, under the direction of Sir John Barrow, for M. Jomard. It has since been engraved in the *Penny Magazine*.—I am, &c.

To Capt. Washington, R.N.

JOHN HOLMES.

6. From Dr. Grant, dated Urumiyah, January 3; communicated by Col. Shiel.—In my journey through this part of Kurdistan, says the writer, I found Akereh by my bearings to lie north-east, about thirty miles from Mosul, and from the former place, Amadiyah bore a little to the west of north, twenty-two hours distant. From the castle of Amadiyah the Zab is distinctly visible, distant about ten miles to the east-north-east. The Zab and the Hakarî rivers are the same. The Khabur is distant from Amadiyah twelve hours; it rises one day's journey east-north-east of Julamerik. The Zab is an exceedingly rapid river, and runs over a rocky bed. I followed its course to Julamerik, and then to near its source west of Selmas. I never felt so much the value of my medical character as in my trip across

the mountains, a journey, which, with the time I spent with the patriarch, &c., occupied just two months; during all this time I received the kindest assistance from Christians and Kurds, a circumstance which I attribute mainly to the fact that I was well known by reputation in that region. I met with some of my old patients in the extreme western limit of Tiyrî, and through the whole of the Hakarî country, so that I was welcomed as a friend and benefactor. I found the country of the Nestorian Christians as rough and difficult as I could well have conceived, but I did not mind walking a few days in such an interesting region, and I soon found that I could walk over the long bare poles, which in many cases serve as bridges, almost as well as a native. The people of Tiyrî are of a noble race; but as wild and independent as the mountains they inhabit. They have no tradition of their country ever having been invaded, and they say that the armies of Mohammed and Omar could not reach them. Their dialect differs considerably from that of the people of Urumiyah, and the intonations of voice are much deeper and stronger. At the same time, there is an independence in their whole deportment, such as I have seen among no other native Christians in the East. Their principal wealth consists in their flocks, but they cultivate rice, millet, and grapes in abundance, and the land is almost literally flowing with milk and honey, which I ate twice every day, regularly, for more than a month while with the patriarch. Political and other changes will probably open this region to the traveller ere long. At present the apprehension of change makes the Kurds much on the alert, while the Christians are desirous that the whole country should come under a Christian government, and would readily co-operate with any foreign power for this object, and most efficient auxiliaries they would be in such a country.

7. 'Notes on a Journey from Saucedá, near Zacatecas, in Mexico, to the mining district of Catorce,' by Major Charters, R.A.—Journeying in an east direction for forty miles, over a barren plain, where a few stunted palms and the cactus are the only traces of vegetable life, the traveller reaches the mining town of Ramos. The mines here are in one principal vein; there are eight shafts, the deepest 390 yards, and consist of argentiferous copper pyrites and copper glance, chiefly in clay slate; with a surface coating twelve yards thick of compact lava: this covers a small extent of country around Ramos, of which the volcanic hill of Zamora, half a mile to the south-east, would seem to have been the centre. There are two other hills of the same nature near Ramos, one of which, to the east-north-east, is named La Cantera, from the building material thence obtained. It is worthy of remark that the volcanic mass covers the metalliferous veins, which has been worked to a considerable depth—the plain between Saucedá and Ramos is covered with a thin deposit of calcareous tufa, which, in the dry season is easily reduced to powder, and is very disagreeable to the traveller. Major Charters had remarked a similar calcareous deposit in many parts of the South African plains, and asks what may be the origin of these widely extended deposits far removed from any mountain of a similar nature? From Ramos the road turns N.E. to Cornejo, at 10 leagues distance, a few huts on the edge of a freshwater lake, about two miles long, which has neither inlet nor outlet; the water is extremely good, and a valuable treasure on these arid plains. The same calcareous deposit extends thus far, and here covers a beautiful breccia. Continuing in the same direction, the traveller passes the lone house called San Juan de Tusál, near the base of Mount Venado; then the farm of Mingale, and some leagues beyond the gorge in a mountain ridge, called El Puerto de Mingale, on debouching from which, the whole range of the Catorce group becomes visible in the distance. Seven leagues farther over the plain brings you to the small town of Catorce, situated at the foot of the mountains, while higher up, at an elevation of 8,575 feet above the sea, is the mining town of Real de los Alamos, containing 10,000 inhabitants. This group of mountains so far resembles that of Zacatecas, that it is unconnected with any other range, and rises directly from the surrounding plains, and this seems to be the distinguishing character of the metalliferous mountains of Mexico, with the exception of Bolaños,

which belongs to an extensive chain. It is, however, unlike the Zacatecas group both in external appearance and formation; it is on a much bolder scale, and some sections of the limestone strata are here extremely magnificent. The mineral wealth which has been produced by it has been very great, so much so as to give it the third if not the second rank amongst the mineral districts of Mexico. The limestone, which forms the principal character of this group, appears to rest on clay slate, and the miners have taken full advantage as well of its deep ravines as of the nature of the rock, to drain great adits; that of the principal mine called La Luz, is six yards high, six wide, and 1,100 yards in length, and cost about 30,000*l.*; the principal workings are above this, so that the stuff is let down from above, and carried out in horse carts at a brisk trot through the adit. In this group of mountains there is also a volcanic mountain, similar in appearance to that at Ramos, although on a larger scale than the Zamora.

Among the donations on the table, besides the Topographic Atlas and model in relief of Bavaria, was a detailed map and memoir upon the environs of Khiva, by M. Zimmerman, of Berlin, presented by Baron Humboldt; a map of the duchy of Salzburg, in 15 sheets, and of Austria proper, in 30 sheets, by the Bureau Topographique, presented by M. Löwenstern of Vienna; and an Atlas of Tuscany in 20 sheets, by Zuccagni Orlandini, presented by M. Berardi in the name of the author.

MEETINGS FOR THE ENSUING WEEK.

SAT.	Westminster Medical Society	Eight, P.M.
MON.	Statistical Society	Eight.
TUES.	Horticultural Society	Three.
	Architectural Society	Eight.
	Linnean Society	Eight.
WED.	Society of Arts	4 p. Seven.

FINE ARTS

NEW SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER COLOURS.

Sixth Exhibition.

THIS is, by common consent, recognized as the best display made by the New Society of Painters in Water Colours. Indeed, we doubt whether many works will be exhibited this year more excellent after their kind than the gems in this small collection; and we were glad to see that most encouraging of monosyllables, "sold," attached to so large a number.

The most elaborate drawing is Mr. Edward Corbould's *Canterbury Pilgrims* (No. 198). The artist's ambition, however, has not taken the vain-glorious form of competition with Stothard, as some may possibly augur, from the announcement of the subject. The cheerful and motley party immortalized by Chaucer, are not on the road, but assembled in the court-yard of the Tabard hostelry, and preparing for their departure. The knight is already on horseback, attended by his "Yeman," with the "peacock arwes"—while the "lover and lusty bachelor," his son, still dallies to divide parting words and parting smiles between the pretty maid of the inn and the other dainty lady (which among the pilgrims?), whose graceful figure, and hands listlessly clasped behind her, while she listens to his courtesy, suggest a face so arch and beautiful, that perhaps Mr. Corbould did well not to attempt it. Other of the personages are distributed in animated and carefully-finished groups—the fault being, as our note of interrogation intimates, that the story is not clearly told. Moreover, though the drawing bears a degree of finish laudable, because not inclining towards pettiness, there is, nevertheless, a confusion in the general effect, arising from a feeble arrangement of colour, and a tendency towards the gay and pretty. The same faults and the same merits are observable in Mr. Corbould's smaller composition—the beggar group of olden times entering the portal (244). Both drawings, however, are infinitely superior to the sickly coxcombs exhibited in the *Annals*, by which Mr. E. Corbould's name has been hitherto too extensively known.

Mr. Haghe's *Gate of the Convent of San Geronymo, at Belem* (122), will probably be the favourite work in the Exhibition—and a very beautiful drawing it is. The spectator stands within a cloister receiving light from the left:—opposite to him is the enriched