

in this Map something like the idea of Asia that the Traveller himself would have presented, had he bequeathed a Map to us.

[Some years ago, I made a special study of the Far East in the Catalan Map. (*L'Extrême-Orient dans l'Atlas catalan de Charles V.*, Paris, 1895), and I have come to the conclusion that the cartographer's knowledge of Eastern Asia is drawn almost entirely from Marco Polo. We give a reproduction of part of the Catalan Map.—H. C.]

85. In the following age we find more frequent indications that Polo's book was diffused and read. And now that the spirit of discovery began to stir, it was apparently regarded in a juster light as a Book of Facts, and not as a mere *Romman du Grant Kaan*.\* But in fact this age produced new supplies of crude information in greater abundance than the knowledge of geographers was prepared to digest or co-ordinate, and the consequence is that the magnificent Work of Fra Mauro (1459), though the result of immense labour in the collection of facts and the endeavour to combine them, really gives a considerably less accurate idea of Asia than that which the Catalan Map had afforded.†

Confusions  
in Carto-  
graphy of  
the 16th  
century,  
from the  
endeavour  
to combine  
new and old  
information.

And when at a still later date the great burst of discovery eastward and westward took effect, the results of all attempts to combine the new knowledge with the old was most unhappy. The first and crudest forms of such combinations attempted to realise the ideas of Columbus regarding the identity of his discoveries with the regions of the Great Kaan's dominion;‡ but even after AMERICA had vindicated its independent position on the surface of the globe, and the new

\* I see it stated by competent authority that *Romman* is often applied to any prose composition in a Romance language.

In or about 1426, Prince Pedro of Portugal, the elder brother of the illustrious Prince Henry, being on a visit to Venice, was presented by the Signory with a copy of Marco Polo's book, together with a map already alluded to. (*Major's P. Henry*, pp. 61, 62.)

† This is partly due also to Fra Mauro's reversion to the fancy of the circular disk limiting the inhabited portion of the earth.

‡ An early graphic instance of this is Ruysch's famous map (1508). The following extract of a work printed as late as 1533 is an example of the like confusion in verbal description: "The Territories which are beyond the limits of Ptolemy's Tables have not yet been described on certain authority. Behind the Sinae and the Seres, and beyond 180° of East Longitude, many countries were discovered by one [*quendam*] Marco