

continents, but only the meeting of the Atlantic and the South Sea, in a vast and free space."¹ In North America Drake reconnoitred a country, till then unexplored, on the western coast, from Cape Mendocino (in lat. $41\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ N.) northwards to near lat. 48° N., not far from the Vancouver archipelago, now called the Oregon coast.

The search after a north-east passage from Europe to Asia must have been suggested by the form given to the northern part of the Asiatic continent in Ptolemy's map. Sebastian Cabot was one of the promoters of Willoughby's Expedition, which went in search of this passage in 1553. This expedition was a repetition of the periplus of Scandinavia formerly accomplished by Ohthere. One of the three vessels commanded by Chancellor reached the White Sea, and anchored in the harbour of Archangel, whence Chancellor proceeded to Moscow and concluded a commercial treaty with the Russians. In 1556 Stephen Burrough continued the discoveries of the preceding expedition, and reached the Strait of Kara, but proceeded no further. The attempts of the Dutch to pass around Asia by the north-east were not more successful. The fruitless expeditions of the Dutch have, however, left their trace on the history of navigation. To them we owe the discovery of the two largest islands in the boreal seas—Nova Zembla and Spitzbergen; on reaching the northern extremity of Spitzbergen, in 1596, in latitude $80^{\circ} 11' N.$, Barents had penetrated further north than any former navigator.

SEARCH FOR
NORTH-EAST AND
NORTH-WEST
PASSAGES.

The idea of a north-west passage was revived twelve or fifteen years after Chancellor's voyage, but we need not follow the endeavours made in that direction by Frobisher, John Davis and Hudson, between the years 1576 and 1610, although their voyages furnished much information on the morphology of the northern seas.

At the time of Magellan the only coasts of America known were those laved by the Atlantic; of the western coasts only a very small part had as yet been seen, but on the coasts of Africa, Asia, and Oceania the work of discovery was continued and largely completed. The maps drawn in the last quarter of the sixteenth century show at a glance the degree of knowledge arrived at regarding the New World. The general contour is as exact as could be expected from nautical surveys aided by the compass only, and based on determinations of latitude correct to within one-third of a degree, but without any astronomical longitudes. Two parts were still vague, viz., both extremities of the new continent. In the south the cartographers connected the unexplored lands about the Strait of Magellan with the vague conception of an austral continent of vast extent,² and this idea was long held. The nautical knowledge of the north did not extend beyond the latitude of $41^{\circ} N.$ on the north-west coast and $65^{\circ} N.$ on the north-east. The voyages of Mendaña, Queiros, and Torres added much to our knowledge of the Pacific Ocean. Many of the islands situated in the great Asiatic archipelago, as far as New Guinea, were

CHARTS OF THE
SIXTEENTH
CENTURY.

¹ Drake's World Encompassed, Hakluyt Society, p. 87.

² See Dalrymple, An Historical Collection of Voyages in the South Pacific Ocean, London, 1770; Major, Early Voyages to Terra Australis; Rainaud, Le Continent Austral, 1893.