

Sketch of the Progress of Geographical Discovery during the past year, (addressed to the General Assembly of the Geographical Society of Paris, 10th Dec. 1830.)
By M. JOUANNIN, General Secretary of the Central Commission.

[From the Edinburgh Journal of Natural and Geographical Science.]

GENTLEMEN,—We have arrived at the termination of a year which will be memorable in the history of nations. The great events which have marked its course, present a character of which it does not belong to me to speak before an assembly, whose concern is with facts of a different nature from those supplied by politics; though they, at the same time, must have their share of consideration. But, whilst I forbid myself from entering upon the stormy field of politics, which absorbs universal attention at the present day, I cannot avoid saying, that this general occupation of the public mind has probably affected the proceedings of our society; at which, indeed, no one can be surprised. And I may add, that less fortunate than my three predecessors,* in the account which I have to give of those proceedings, which always require your approbation and encouragement, I shall have to traverse a more limited and less fruitful field.

General Notice of the present state of the Geographical Society.
—I have not to speak to you of any modification in the laws of our society. Eight years of an existence, honoured by the most distinguished support, and very recently (Aug. 15, 1830,) confirmed by the august protection of a Prince, who, before the voice of France had named him the “king of a free people,” had already signified his approval of your labours;—these eight years, I say, have allowed of all the improvements being made in the regulations which experience has successively suggested. However, if the results do not yet answer your wishes,—if we have not yet commenced to collect materials which may sooner or later be employed in the preparation of an indispensable work,—I speak of a *true and conscientious Geographical Dictionary*, which is wanted by the civilized world,—we would hope that the instructions lately addressed to our correspondents in the different parts of the globe, will direct their attention towards our important design; and that the leisure of

* MM. Malte-Brun, Roux de Rochelle, and De Larcnaudière, who have so ably traced the route to be followed by their successors.

the numerous members of this society* will be devoted to the accomplishment of this work. But such happy results can only be expected, when the disquiet, which at present harasses the social body, giving place to the security afforded by the establishment of peace, shall no longer turn the mind from that progressive movement, which has, for some years, so successfully extended the limits of useful knowledge.

The idea which presided at the foundation of the Geographical Society, is itself but a corollary of this proper direction of the mind. It tends to associate the illustrious men of all countries, admitting them to its bosom, and leading them, by this fraternal bond, to communicate, from all points of the earth, their projects, their observations, and their discoveries. This society, of which Paris is the centre, and which is the elder brother of a young and splendid rival, recently established on the banks of the Thames, cannot behold, without a lively satisfaction, coadjutors of a royal race assisting by their endeavours the advancement of its labours; and it is rejoiced to number amongst its correspondents a Prince who will eventually inherit one of the most ancient crowns of the north.†

Our relations with the learned societies and academies of the old and new world, are not diminished; they continue to be reciprocally useful. In exchange for the memoirs and other publications of the society, their transactions enrich our library; and we thus, in our turn, obtain important information on countries distant from France. The banks of the Ganges, of the Delaware, and the St. Lawrence, as well as those of the Thames, the Spree, and the Neva, Copenhagen and Turin, Mexico and the Havannah, contribute to form this bond of intellectual union; and, when we consider these marks of goodwill amongst learned men, and even amongst the mass of the people, we may throw off the fear, that the hatred and antipathies which once seemed to take pleasure in national distinctions, will for ever continue their fatal influence, and arrest the general progress of true civilization.

An act which you performed in the month of March last, and which was eminently dictated by a spirit of justice, of which our country has often set the example, is a striking and glorious proof of my remark. You have done honour to the modest perseverance and final success of efforts, for a long time useless, in one of our countrymen, who, *the first to return from Timbuctoo*, is able to say, that he has seen with his own eyes, the

* From its foundation to the present day, the Geographical Society of Paris has enrolled the names of 650 members on its list.

† Prince Christian Frederick of Denmark.

central mart of Africa, with all the traces of the demi-civilization of the middle age. But, at the same time, you have offered to the manes of Major Laing a tribute of regret, without taking notice of the clamors raised by a pitiable jealousy, against the fortunate rival of the courageous English traveller, who had preceded him at Timbuctoo; and you have thus again proved, in the eyes of Europe, the nobleness and generosity of your sentiments.

You have regretted, at the same meeting, that you have only accorded to Captain Dumont d'Urville an incomplete testimony of your esteem for his labours during the voyage, from which he has brought us some melancholy relics of a shipwreck, which will never be forgotten. Entirely occupied at present with the publication of his work, M. d'Urville, when he again takes a share in the duties of the central commission, will soon give us occasion to speak of him with merited eulogiums.

I must not forget, gentlemen, to tell you, that the prize relative to a journey in ancient Babylonia and Chaldea has been withdrawn from competition, after having appeared for many years in the programmes of the Society. A memoir, however, has been sent in, and was laid before the committee of the *concours*; but as it did not come under the conditions, it was necessarily given up.

The prize offered for a description of the monuments of *Palenqua* is suspended till the year 1833. M. Baradère, who, during his stay in Mexico, formed a rich collection of Mexican antiquities, was a candidate. But the society, not finding the solution of the question proposed by them, in the drawings and manuscripts of M. Baradère, can, at this time, only make honourable mention of the researches of this traveller.

On the proposition of M. Jomard, a new prize has been offered, which will be adjudged to the best memoir on the *Origin of the Asiatic Negroes*. This question, difficult to be solved by the French, seems, in some degree, to belong peculiarly to the present masters of India; they alone appear to be in a situation favourable for the execution of this investigation, and for the collection of such documents as may throw light on a subject of this nature.

The society has reserved, for competition, two prizes for discoveries in Africa; a prize for travels in Caramania; a prize for travels in Guiana; and several prizes for the geography of France.

The third volume of the *Memoirs* of the Society was published at the beginning of the year. It contains very detailed researches, the result of the long continued labours of M. Bru-

guières, on the *Orography of Europe*. This excellent work fully justifies, by its geographical importance, the determination of the society to be at the expense of its publication.

The fourth volume is composed of different historical and geographical works, amongst others, of a translation of *Jordanus*, by Baron Coquebert de Montbret. We trust that the scientific world will soon possess it.

The fifth volume will contain a translation of the *Geography of Edrisi*, by M. A. Jaubert, whose absence for two years in the Ottoman empire, in the service of France, will sufficiently explain the delay which this publication has experienced.

The society has not neglected to maintain its connections with the French and foreign travellers, who visit the different countries of the globe, and who are anxious to seek for, and accept its patronage. It follows their path with an earnest solicitude; and I am now about to detain you, for a short time, with the relation of their efforts to render themselves worthy of your honourable encouragement.

Africa, so near to us, but whose interior was so little known, has for some time past been an object of more general attention than formerly. The political movements, which for more than thirty years have led so many Europeans to the land of Egypt, now under the influence of a foreign civilization, imposed by a hand, which it is difficult to characterize; the recent expedition, which has transported the conquerors of Algiers to the foot of the Atlas; the numerous, and frequently unfortunate attempts to penetrate into the heart of those latitudes, which have hitherto been represented upon our best maps but as vast deserts; and, lastly, the restlessness which agitates our times, and the noble ambition of attaching one's name to something new, and to the glory of having overcome obstacles which are unknown in countries where the European has established his customs and his laws;—all these circumstances suffice to explain the preference which our travellers give to the exploration of Africa. We shall, therefore, commence with Africa, in our review of their labours.

Africa.—The Geographical Society has, with pleasure, observed a Frenchman (M. Douville) directing his steps towards Portuguese Africa; and has received a letter from him, dated Rio Janeiro, June 1, 1830. A short time after his return from Angola, this traveller announced that he was in possession of many curious documents connected with this country, which he appeared to have surveyed in the character of a philosopher, an artist, and an observer of manners. We are exceedingly anxious to have him amongst us, and this wish will, no doubt,

soon be accomplished, if his health permit him to return to his country.

The African Society of London has sent travellers to Egypt, with the commission to follow the course of the Bahr-el Abiad as far as Bornou. Frenchmen have also gone in the same direction, and it is to be hoped that the most successful results will arise from this concurrence.

On the other hand, M. Lauder, one of the companions of Captain Clapperton during his last journey, is gone with his brother to Badagry, on the coast of Guinea. They will explore the course of the great river of Central Africa, especially towards the point where it is pretended that the river takes a southern direction, to empty its waters into the Gulf of Guinea.

Mr. Cooper Rose has ably and faithfully painted the manners and scenery of those parts of Southern Africa which he has visited. His journey entitles him to the esteem of a public enemy for all that is exact and true.

Geographical science is indebted to Captain Owen for the best works which have yet appeared on the eastern and western coasts of Africa. His maps have rectified the laying down of the banks so fruitful in shipwrecks, and where civilization is extending under the protection of the present possessors of the Cape of Good Hope.

The conquest of the capital of Algiers by our troops has brought this State into great notice; and numerous publications would have been supplied to the desires of the public, had not the important occurrences which have recently called our attention to other matters, caused us for a time to forget this conquest, and absorbed the attention of the whole world. We may, however, hope that the year 1831 will not pass away without bringing to light a portion of those documents which must, doubtless, have been prepared at the leisure of several very able men, independently of those which are already possessed, and are still being collected, by a government friendly to science, and a protector of her works.

America.—This continent has also been traversed in different directions by many travellers. I shall first mention one of our countrymen, M. Dessalines d'Orbigny, who has visited Patagonia, and those American tribes where the nomadic life of the Arab is found in perfection, with all their disdainful fierceness, their passion for independence, and their hatred of the manners and religion of strangers. M. d'Orbigny has lived amongst three races of natives occupying the vast and barren district between Rio de Plata and Terra Magellanica. He has also collected entirely new details on natural history, and on the

language of the Araucanas, the Puelches, and the Patagonians.

Messrs. Hardy and Thompson were engaged, during their excursions in Mexico and Guatemala, in adding to our previous information with regard to the soil and inhabitants of these new republics. M. Franck, introduced to you some time ago by M. Poinsett, one of your most esteemed correspondents, has also recently brought to Paris numerous drawings which he collected during a residence of several years in Mexico, and an account of which will shortly be laid before the society.

MM. Yosy, Lhotski, Le Prieur, and d'Acosta, to whom the central commission has presented instruments and instructions, are on their road to visit several parts of the New World. We have every reason to believe that these travellers will not neglect any thing which can make the time they devote to the advancement of geography profitable to that science.

I may besides mention the labours of Mr. Pentland in the Republic of Bolivia; those now being carried on in California by Dr. Coulter, an excellent English naturalist, who, provided with good instruments, himself a good astronomer and full of ardour, will certainly deduce useful results from his voyage, which he has undertaken solely for the interest of science.

M. Henri Ternaux, a member of this society, has returned a short time ago from America, and will soon give you an account of all that he has observed in the countries through which he has passed.

We owe to His Royal Highness Prince Christian Frederick of Denmark, the communication of the journal of Captain Graah of the royal navy, employed by the Danish government in exploring the east coast of Greenland. This extract leads us to expect, that, at his return from so perilous a duty crowned with success, M. Graah will have reached, in this third attempt, the most northern point of that coast of iron and ice, where, it is said, he has even found human inhabitants. Let us hope, gentlemen, that this intrepid navigator, when returned safe and sound to his country, may receive testimony of the esteem due to so much devotion, and that he may publish the materials which he shall have collected, in order to extend our knowledge of the geography of those northern lands.

Western Asia.—The Ottoman empire, which the colossus of the North threatened with total destruction in 1828 and 1829. continues still to attract into the vast provinces under her sway a great number of travellers, desirous perhaps of being witnesses of a great catastrophe, which the events of the last four months, and those to which we still look forward, may put off

for an indefinite period. I shall say little to you of Mr. M'Farlane, the author of two volumes, which in reality tell us nothing new, and in which there predominates a narrow spirit and inveterate prejudices against every thing that is not born or used in Great Britain. I call your attention with more pleasure to several of our countrymen who have set out, during the course of this year, to explore Asia Minor, Syria, and Greece, which for nine years has been endeavouring to extricate itself from its ruins, and to assume a situation among civilized nations. M. Michaud, the author of the *History of the Crusades*, accompanied by two geographical engineers, (MM. Caillé and Stamaty,) and M. Carcel, a naturalist, has, notwithstanding his age and weak state of health, gone to visit the places where the greatest achievements of the middle age were performed, and where the contest of the Christians and Mussulmans, after having caused unheard-of evils to the contemporary people, had nevertheless the effect of restoring the arts and sciences in Europe, at that time in a state of barbarism. To the names I have just mentioned, must be added those of MM. Fontanier, Guys. Vidal, Boita, Pallegoix, Gourmelen, Le Turc, a Belgian, Raiffe. and Royer, who are at present travelling in different countries of Asia, and are provided with instructions from the society. We also hope that the members of the scientific commission sent to the Morea in 1828, will bring their tribute of discovery. Already some of them, MM. Puillon Boblaye, and Peytier, M. Gauthier d'Arc, vice-consul attached to the French mission in Greece, and recently nominated member of the central commission, have addressed to the society interesting details of their excursions.

We shall soon be indebted to this commission and its director, Colonel Bory de Saint Vincent, for a good map of the countries which are to compose the new Greek state. M. Bory de Saint Vincent and his collaborateurs have not confined themselves to researches in antiquities or natural history,—the geographical and topographical part of their labours will have claims to our special attention.

Russia in Asia, China, Polynesia.—Every scientific person is acquainted with the recent successes of the most illustrious of modern travellers, Baron Alexander de Humboldt, who is still residing in our capital. Accompanied by MM. Rose and Ehrenberg, and under the high protection of the Emperor Nicolas, M. de Humboldt has found, in the northern climate of Asia, subject to the grandson of Catherine, every facility for exploring Ural, and eastern Siberia. I shall not dwell on a subject with which the daily journals have entertained their readers, and which has occupied, during their sittings, the academies of

Petersburg, and Berlin, and the Institute of France, confident in the predilection of M. de Humboldt for our glorious country.

MM. Ledebour, Meyer, and Bunge, had preceded M. de Humboldt in Siberia. Their travels have furnished us with precious information, as have also those of MM. Hoffmann and Helmerssen in the south of the Ural mountains, and of MM. Erman, Hansteen, and Dove, intrusted with a magnetic expedition in the same countries.

We have yet to mention M. Dobell, author of *Travels in Kamtschatka and Siberia*, who had been previously for some years in China. There are some interesting observations in his works concerning that vast empire, which has frequently been an object of attention with the Asiatic Society of Paris, not only in a philological, but also under a geographical point of view.

I had almost forgotten to mention M. Parrot, who has visited Mount Ararat, and whose observations have been published in several scientific works.

I now come to the consideration of the voyages of circumnavigation; and, without recurring to those of MM. Freycinet, Duperrey, and Dumont d'Urville, who are occupied in publishing the accounts of their labours, and who have found in the public approbation the recompense of their fatigues, I shall only remark, that France has at present no navigator employed on a mission similar to that which these officers have accomplished. M. Mathieu, captain of a frigate, was, however, intended for an expedition of this nature, when the attack of Algiers was resolved on. The services of France called him before that place, and he was compelled to give up the navigation of distant seas to face dangers of another kind.

But among the foreigners navigating the vast seas which separate the American continent from Asia and New Holland, and in which exist thousands and thousands of groups of islands, a great number of which have as yet been but partially visited by Europeans, and which Mr. Ellis has endeavoured to make better known by his researches into the natural history, mythology, traditions, and manners, of the native inhabitants, I shall mention Captain Litke, who has made many observations in the Carolines, and discovered several unknown islands; and Captain Kolff, a Dutchman, who has traversed the southern archipelago of the Moluccas, and the south-west coast of New Guinea. We may also hope to obtain valuable information from the American navigators, who, although much devoted to their commercial speculations, do not, however, neglect scientific researches. We owe the same eulogy to two Frenchmen, Captain Darlue of Marseilles, who, after having

sailed along the coasts of South America, touched at the Sandwich Isles, and traversed the Marians and the Chinese archipelago; and M. Dussumier of Bordeaux, member of the society, who, in a voyage to Cochin China, made numerous collections in natural history, since presented to the Museum of Paris, and who, at the same time, appears to have collected useful geographical information.

It still remains for me, gentlemen to call your attention to a project worthy of the consideration of the scientific world, and of which the author, whose recent departure has deprived us of seeing him in this assembly, has submitted the vast plan to your central commission. You will immediately perceive, that I allude to Mr. Buckingham, a most indefatigable traveller in the prime of life, and who, after having explored a great part of the globe, wishes to make a voyage round the world, which is to last five years at the least. This interesting navigator, whom numerous auditors have heard speak in public on new subjects, with a facility so rare in a foreign language, has found in M. Dumont d'Urville a conscientious and enlightened judge of his project, which at once embraces the interests of science and of civilization, and the advantages of commerce so essentially important to England.

It is not necessary for me to speak here of M. d'Urville's report in detail, nor of the plan, with the examination of which he was intrusted. The monthly bulletin of the Society will supersede an analysis of these observations, otherwise too complete and extensive to be presented in an abridged form in this report.

It still remains for me, gentlemen, to recapitulate to you briefly the labours of the central commission, to which several among you have privately devoted yourselves. First, we should address our thanks to those members and correspondents who have furnished us with useful documents; amongst whom I may be allowed here to mention the communications of Mr. Warden, on America; of M. Jomard, on Africa; of M. Bianchi, on the East; of M. Cadet of Metz, on the voyages to the North Pole; and the reports of MM. Brué, Corabœuf, Coquebert-Montbret, Girard, d'Urville, and Theologue.

Among the individual labours of the members of the society, it is my duty to mention the beautiful maps of Colonel Lapie, (Egypt and Arabia Petrea, and the States of Barbary;) he is engaged at present in the publication of a map of the Roman empire, in which he has traced the itineraries of Antoninus and of Peutinger. He is also continuing the publication of his *Universal Atlas*, but the late events have retarded its execution.

The expedition to Algiers has elicited useful works from several of our coadjutors. Independently of what we have received from Colonel Lapie on that part of Africa, I may mention the map of M. Barbié du Bocage, and the plans and lithographs which M. Bianchi has added to the translation of the *Essays of Shaler*, a work eminently useful at the period of its publication, (the departure of the expedition in May and June last,) and justly esteemed the best which we yet possess, on the regency of Algiers. M. Bianchi, on the return of a mission, in the prosecution of which he nearly perished, laboured diligently at this work, and has, in some degree, made it complete, by giving to the public an interesting relation of the mission, in which he accompanied Admiral de la Brétouillère, and of the insult offered by the Algerines to the vessel *La Provence*, in August 1829. M. Bianchi has deposited in the Society, a second edition of his plan of *Algiers*, and its fortifications and environs, with the numerous improvements and changes already effected or projected by the French, since the conquest. Our colleague is indebted to Captain Gibou for these corrections.*

During the year 1830, the geodesic operations for the new map of France have been continued on several parts of the kingdom, with the same degree of exactness which the corps of geographical engineers has extended to every thing belonging to the execution of that great enterprize, which will really be the topographical masterpiece of our time. The first sheets, which will soon be published, completely justify our praises.

It is known, that the geodesic operations carried on in the Pyrenees by one of our colleagues, (Lieutenant Colonel Corabœuf,) have established with much precision, the difference in the level of the ocean and of the Mediterranean. The results of these trigonometrical measurements, afterwards subjected to the calculation of probabilities, shew that the two seas affect the same level, contrary to the conjectures which seem to have hitherto prevailed.

In the course of last October, one of the vice presidents of the central commission, Colonel Bonne, was engaged in the astronomical verification of the western part of the arc of the parallel which is already measured from Brest, as far as Rude, in Hungary, and will be extended to the river Volga and to the Ural. This is the most extensive operation of the kind which has yet been undertaken; for the extent of the arc exceeds 50

* In a short time, M. Bianchi will publish his *French and Turkish Dictionary, for the use of Navigators, Merchants, and other travellers in the Levant*. This work, which was much wanted, will be of real service to orientlists and travellers.

degrees. France ought to claim a fair share in this glorious enterprize, the continuation of which she has prolonged, after foreign governments had relinquished it. The execution of the new map of France will thus add new and important information to what we already possess on the figure of the earth.

I fear I encroach on your time, gentlemen; but I cannot neglect to render justice to M. Dufour, a new member of the central commission, and author of an Atlas, executed with taste, and accompanied with a well written text, which will very advantageously supersede those heretofore put into the hands of young students. M. Denaix pursues with zeal and perseverance the continuation of his *Essais de Géographie Méthodique*; M. Brué, whose health has been for years declining, has never omitted taking part in the sittings of the central commission, and has not yet given up his labours, although he has at present remitted the publication of the results. I shall also mention M. Balbi, who is diligently engaged in statistics and geography; Baron Walckenaer, who continues the publication of his *Histoire Générale des Voyages*; M. de la Renaudière, who is diligently working at his *Géographie*, and who furnishes for the *Annales des Voyages*, in conjunction with his scientific friend, M. Eyriès, one of our most honourable collaborateurs, a valuable collection of articles, translated from foreign languages, or the fruits of their own researches; and, lastly, M. Rifand, whose zeal you have often appreciated, and M. Bald, the Irish engineer, who superintends with so much care the engraving of his beautiful *Atlas of Ireland*, intrusted to our colleague, M. Tardieu.

Such is the sketch, in which I fear I have underrated, but in every case quite involuntarily, the title which our fellow-labourers have acquired to your esteem. It would be unjust not to mention the names of several foreign members and correspondents. The bulletins of the Society repeat them so often that you will remember them all with pleasure, and several of whom you will remember to have seen among you. The Chevalier d'Abrahamson, a Dane, full of love for his country, and for all the sciences which may enlighten man; M. Rafn, who enriches our library with all the literary productions which he thinks worthy the attention of the Society; Baron Hammer, one of our most learned correspondents, so well acquainted with Eastern affairs, that all his labours are for the advantage of history and literature; MM. Berghaus and Reinganum, of Berlin; M. Graberg de Hemsö, of Florence; the Barons de Capellen and de Derfelden, of Utrecht; Messrs. Stanhope, Franklin, and Captain Sabine, of London; and in America, General Bernard, M. Poinsett, already mentioned, and Messrs. Mease, Tanner, and Woodbridge.

I have now finished my task, gentlemen; and in begging you still to give me your attention for a few moments, I shall employ that favour in calling to your remembrance the distinguished members we have lost during the course of the past year; and, first, I shall mention the name of Baron Fourier, perpetual secretary of the Academy of Sciences, whose eulogy has been pronounced by our honourable colleagues, MM. Girard and Jomard. Count d'Hauterive, after having so long pursued a diplomatic career, died the day after that on which the calamitous ordinances plunged our fine country in a kind of stupor, soon, however, to be substituted for a terrible *réveille*! I shall add to these two names, illustrious in the sciences and in public affairs, that of a good man, of a wise and moderate administrator, who knew how to govern an ardent population,—I speak of M. le Comte de Villeneuve, who died prefect of Bouches-du-Rhône, after an administration of fifteen years.

(Signed) J. M. JOUANNIN.