


THE  
TRAVELS  
OF  
MARCO POLO,  
A VENETIAN,  
*IN THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY:*

BEING A  
DESCRIPTION, BY THAT EARLY TRAVELLER,  
OF  
REMARKABLE PLACES AND THINGS,  
IN  
THE EASTERN PARTS OF THE WORLD.



TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN,

WITH  
NOTES,  
BY WILLIAM MARSDEN, F.R.S. &c.

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WITH A MAP.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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Marco Polo.

PREVIOUSLY to entering upon a consideration of the particular motives that have led to the publication of a new English version of the Travels of MARCO POLO, it may prove satisfactory to the reader that he should be furnished with such information as the existing materials will allow, of the distinguished person by whom, and the circumstances under which they were achieved and afterwards communicated to the world. It is true that for the most interesting portion of his life, or that which passed abroad, in the service of the Tartar conqueror of China, reference might be made to the account which he himself has given of it, in the preliminary chapter of his work; but as some few facts have been recorded of him and his family, subsequent to his return to his own country, and as the travels themselves, by separating them from the descriptions of places and narrative of public events, may be rendered more properly the subject of biography, the whole of what is known to us respecting the house of POLO shall here be succinctly stated in that form.

We are told that Andrea Polo da S. Felice, a patrician or nobleman of Venice,\* but of Dalmatian extraction, had three sons, who were named Marco, Maffio, and Nicolo; of whom the second, who was the  
a uncle,

\* The members of this family are repeatedly styled "nobles viri," which might be understood to mean "eminent persons," rather than as belonging to the class of hereditary nobility; but in the Annotazioni

of Apostolo Zeno (t. ii, p. 186) I find mention of a manuscript work by Marco Barbano, intitled "Alberi delle Famiglie patrizie Veneziane," which includes the Polo family.

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assured them of meeting a favourable reception and an ample compensation for the trouble of their journey. To a compliance with this they were decided as much by the difficulties that presented themselves in their means of returning, as by the spirit of enterprise, or the prospect of wealth. Recommending themselves therefore to the divine protection, they prosecuted their journey towards what they considered to be the extremity of the East, and after travelling twelve months reached the imperial residence. The manner in which they were received by the Grand khan was gracious and encouraging. He made various inquiries respecting the state of affairs in the western world, the relative consequence of the several Christian powers, and particularly concerning the Pope, whose influence in promoting the crusades must have given importance to his political character. To these questions our discreet and well-informed travellers gave appropriate answers, in the language of the court, and in terms suited to the personage to whom they were addressed. Satisfied with the correctness of their statements and of their sufficiency as men of business, he determined upon sending them back to Italy, accompanied by one of his own officers, as his ambassadors to the see of Rome: professedly with the view of persuading his Holiness to supply him with a number of preachers of the Gospel, who should communicate religious instruction to the unenlightened people of his dominions. That such might have been in part the subject of his mission, is probable from the known latitude of his opinions with regard to modes of faith; but there is reason to suppose that the encouragement of a hostile spirit amongst the princes of Christendom against the soldan of Egypt and the Saracens, the natural enemies of his family, was the predominant object. They accordingly set out on their return; but in the early part of their journey, their Tartar companion fell sick, and was left behind. With the assistance, however,

of



of the imperial tablet or passport with which they were provided, and which commanded respect and insured them accommodation in all the places through which their route lay, they proceeded towards the shores of the Mediterranean, and at the expiration of three years reached the port of *Giazza* or *Ayas*, in the kingdom of the Lesser Armenia. At this place they embarked for Acre, then in the possession of the Christians, where they arrived in the month of April 1269.

Upon landing there they received the first intelligence of the death of Pope Clement IV. which happened in November 1268, and it was recommended to them by the Legate on the spot to take no further steps in the business of their embassy until the election of a new Pope. This interval they thought would be most properly employed in a visit to their family, and for that purpose they engaged a passage on a ship bound to Negropont and Venice. Upon their arrival Nicolo Polo found that his wife, whom he had left with child, was dead, after producing a son, to whom she had given the name of Marco, in respect for the memory of her husband's eldest brother, and who was now advancing towards the age of manhood.\* Such were the circumstances under which the author of the Travels first makes his appearance.

In consequence of the factions that prevailed in the Sacred College, the election was so much protracted, that our Venetian travellers became impatient of the delay and apprehensive of incurring the displeasure of their august benefactor and employer. After having resided two years in Italy they adopted therefore the resolution of returning directly to the Legate in Palestine; and on this occasion they were accompanied by young Marco, then in his seventeenth or eighteenth year. Having upon their arrival at Acre prevailed on his Eminence to furnish

\* In different versions his age is stated at fifteen, seventeen, and nineteen years. It has elsewhere been shown to be probable that his birth did not take place

at an earlier period than the year 1254, and consequently about the latter part of 1269 he was in his sixteenth year.

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furnish them with letters to the Tartar emperor, they embarked for Ayas; but scarcely had they got under weigh, when advice was received at the former place of the choice of the Cardinals having at length fallen upon the Legate himself, M. Tebaldo di Vicenza, who assumed the name of Gregory X.\* He lost no time in recalling our Venetians, and in preparing for them letters papal in a more ample and dignified form, to which he added his benediction, and once more dispatched them, along with two friars of the order of Preachers, who were to be the bearers of his presents.

These transactions took place about the end of the year 1271, at which period the northern parts of Syria were invaded by the soldan of Egypt, and such was the alarm caused by his approach to the borders of Armenia minor, that the two friars were deterred from proceeding, and returned for safety to the coast. The Polo family in the mean time prosecuted their journey to the interior of Asia, in a north-easterly direction, undismayed by the prospect of dangers they might have to encounter. Their difficulties appear to have been only such as arose from natural causes, and no mention is made of their being exposed to any hostile attack. It may indeed be presumed that they availed themselves of the protection of the first caravan that presented itself in their route. Of their particular course few indications are given, but it must evidently have been through the Greater Armenia, Persian Irak, Khorasan and by the city of Balkh into the country of *Badakhshan*, amongst the sources of the Oxus, where they remained twelve months. This long detention might have been occasioned by the necessity of waiting for a large assemblage of travelling merchants, under an adequate escort, preparatory to crossing the great ranges of mountains called in our maps the *Belut-tag* and *Muz-tag*; but it may also be accounted for by the circumstance

\* See Note 35, p. 21

circumstance of Marco's illness at this place, which, he tells us, was cured by removing his residence from the valley to the summit of an adjoining hill. They here acquired a knowledge of *Kashmir* and other countries on the borders of India, but they did not themselves proceed in that direction. Their road now lay through the valley named *Vokhan*, from whence they ascended to the elevated and wild regions of *Pamer* and *Belôr*, on their way to the city of *Kashghar*, which belonged to the extensive dominions of the Grand khan, and is known to have been a principal place of resort for caravans. After speaking incidently of Samarkand, which lay far to the westward of their route, mention is also made of *Yerhen*; but they proceeded directly to *Khoten*, a town of much celebrity, and afterwards through places little known to geographers till they reached the desert of *Lop* or *Kobi*, which is circumstantially described. This being traversed in a tedious journey of thirty days, they entered the comprehensive district of Tangut, and passed through the country of those whom the Chinese call *Si-fan* or *Tu-fan*, as well as the strong place named *Sha-cheu* or the town of the sands. From thence the direct road is to *So-cheu*, at the western extremity of the province of *Shen-si*. This place is within the boundary of what is now China proper, but was then, as well as the city of *Kan-cheu*, considered as belonging to Tangut.

At *Kan-cheu* they experienced another long delay, which our author briefly says, was occasioned by the state of their concerns; and such may have truly been the case; but it must be observed that this is one of the established halting places for strangers from the western countries, from whence it was then, and is now, the usage to transmit information to the court, and to require its instructions with respect to their further progress. It might indeed have been expected that the advance of these peculiar travellers, who were to be regarded as the servants of the emperor, would have been facilitated by every possible means, and that

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that no pretence for delay would have been allowed, however convenient to their health or to their mercantile interests, which it is to be presumed they had not neglected; but it must be considered that the importance or the reality of their mission, after a lapse of so many years, might not have been at all understood by the mandarins of a frontier station, and that at the time of their arrival, if in summer, the emperor might have been engaged on one of his periodical hunting expeditions in the north-eastern part of Tartary. From *Kan-cheu* it would seem that they took the road of *Si-ning* (just within the nominal line of the Great Wall, which on that side was built of sandy earth, and had mostly fallen to decay) leading through the heart of the province of *Shen-si*, and directly into that of *Shan-si*. In the capital city of this latter, named *Tai-yuen-fu*, it was that the Grand khan, who in the early part of his reign is known to have made it his winter residence, received notice of their arrival in his dominions; and as their account says, that at the distance of forty days journey from that place, he sent forward directions for preparing every thing necessary for their accommodation, we may understand this to mean, that upon his coming to the western part of China, and hearing of the detention of his Italian messengers at *Kan-cheu*, he commanded that they should be immediately forwarded to his presence, at his expense, and with the attentions usually shewn to foreign ambassadors.

The reception given to them by the emperor was as favourable as they were justified in expecting. After the customary prostrations and delivery of the letters, they were desired to relate all the circumstances that had taken place in the business of their mission, to which he condescendingly listened. He commended their zeal, and accepted with complacency the presents from the Pope, and with reverence, a vessel of the holy oil from the sepulchre of Our Lord, that had been brought from Jerusalem at his desire, and which he concluded, from the value set upon

upon it by Christians, might possess extraordinary properties. Observing young Marco in the assemblage, he made inquiries respecting him, and being informed that he was the son of Nicolo, he honoured him with his particular notice, took him under his protection, and gave him an appointment in his household.\* In this situation he soon became distinguished for his talents and respected by the court. He adopted the manners of the country, and acquired a competent knowledge of the four languages most in use; which might probably have been the *Munggal*,† that of Turkistan (including the *Ighúr*), the *Manchú* of eastern Tartary, and the Chinese. Thus accomplished he became a favourite with and highly useful to his master, who employed him on services of importance in various parts of the empire, even to the distance of six months journey. On these missions he availed himself of every opportunity of examining into the circumstances of the countries he visited and the customs of their inhabitants, and made notes of what he observed, for the information of the Grand khan, whose curiosity on such subjects appears to have been insatiable: and to these notes it is that we are indebted for the substance of that account of his Travels which, after his return, he was induced to give to the world, but which was certainly not in his contemplation at the time. It cannot be doubted that in recompense for these exertions he experienced many flattering marks of royal favour, but the most distinguished, or rather the only one of his honours that is recorded, arose out of the occasion of a member of one of the great tribunals being nominated *fu-yuen* or governor of the city of *Yang-cheu-fu*, in the province of *Kiang-nan*, who not being able to

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proceed

\* It is impossible for those who have read the account of Lord Macartney's Embassy not to be struck with the resemblance between this scene and that which passed at *Johol* in 1793, when Sir George Staunton presented his son, the present Sir George Thomas Staunton, to the venerable *Kien Long*.

† The name which the Persians write *Moghul* is by the more eastern people of Asia pronounced *Munggal* or *Mongal*. In the writings of the early travellers, Rubruquis and Carpini, we find the guttural or the nasal omitted, and the word softened to *Moul*.

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proceed to his charge, our young Venetian was appointed to act as his deputy, and held this high office during the usual period of three years. Of the correctness of this fact, in which there is nothing improbable, as *Kublai* is known to have made use of Arabians, Persians, and many other foreigners as his political instruments, no stronger evidence is necessary than the modest, incidental manner in which he connects it with his description of the place.

That his father and uncle were also partakers of the monarch's regards is shewn by his subsequent unwillingness to be deprived of their services. In one instance at least, and that immediately after their arrival at his court, they were eminently useful to him, in suggesting to his officers the employment of certain projectile machines or *catapultæ*, and superintending their construction; thereby contributing in an essential manner to the fall of the strong and important Chinese city of *Siang-yang-fu*, which had resisted the efforts of his besieging army for upwards of three years. It is true that by some of the native historians, the merit of this military expedient is attributed to an *Ighâr* officer who had served in the western parts of Asia, but the reader will find, in Note 970, strong reasons, grounded on the ignorance as well as the illiberality of the Chinese with respect to foreigners, for giving credit, in preference, to the story as told by the Venetians, who must at all events have been on the spot about the time; as our author could not otherwise have been acquainted with the circumstance. It may further be observed, that if the *Ighârs* were, as is generally asserted, Nestorian Christians, the Chinese writers might be led to confound all Christians with *Ighârs*.

When about seventeen years had elapsed since the arrival of our travellers within the territories of the Grand khan, the natural desire of revisiting their native land, notwithstanding the splendid advantages of their situation, began to work upon their minds with considerable force; and the great age and precarious life of their protector, weighed strongly



strongly in determining them to effect their purpose with as little delay as possible, being well aware that in the event of his death, their difficulties might become insurmountable. Their endeavours, however, to prevail on the emperor to consent to their separating themselves from him were ineffectual, and drew from him some expressions of reproach. "If the motive of their projected journey," he concluded with saying, "was the pursuit of gain, he was ready to gratify them to the utmost extent of their wishes; but with the subject of their request he could not comply." From this state of impatience and disappointment it was their good fortune to be relieved in a manner wholly unexpected, which shall here be explained. An embassy happened about that time to arrive at the court of *Kublai*, from a Moghul-Tartar prince named *Arghun*, the grandson of *Hulagu* (and consequently the grand-nephew of the emperor) who ruled in Persia. Having lost his principal wife, who was a princess of the imperial stock, and who on her death-bed had entreated that he would not disgrace her memory by forming an alliance with any inferior house, he sent this deputation to his sovereign and the head of his family, to solicit from him a wife of their own lineage. The request was readily complied with, and a princess was selected from amongst his grandchildren, who had attained her seventeenth year. The ambassadors being satisfied as to her beauty and accomplishments, set out with her on their journey to Persia, with a numerous suite to do honour to the betrothed queen; but after several months travelling, found themselves obstructed from proceeding, by the disturbed state of the country through which their route lay, and were under the necessity of returning to the capital. Whilst they were in this embarrassed situation, Marco Polo, who had been on a voyage to some of the East Indian islands, came into port, and laid before his master the observations he had made respecting the safe navigation of those seas; circumstances which reaching their ears, induced them to have a com-

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munication with the Venetian family. Upon its being understood that they had all a common interest, each party being anxiously desirous of effecting their return to their own country, it was arranged between them that the Persians should urgently represent to the Grand khan the expediency of their availing themselves of the experience of the Christians in maritime affairs, to convey their precious charge by sea, to the gulf of Persia; as they were debarred from returning thither by land. Dissatisfactory as we may suppose the proposition to have been to him, he could not, in such a dilemma, refuse to give his consent. Preparations were accordingly made on a grand scale for this important expedition. Fourteen ships of four masts, and some of them with crews of two hundred and fifty men, were equipped and provisioned for two years. When the period of their departure was at hand, the benevolent monarch addressed the Polo family in terms of kind regard, and required from them a promise that after having visited their own country and kindred they would return to his service. He at the same time gave them authority to act as his ambassadors to the principal courts of Europe, furnished them with the passports necessary for their protection and accommodation in the countries acknowledging his sovereignty, and made them presents of many valuable jewels. Thus honourably dismissed they embarked, together with the Persian noblemen and the young queen, with her attendants, in the *Pe-ho* river, as may be presumed from its vicinity to the capital, in order to proceed to the place of their remote destination.

In the details that are given of the voyage, there is but little that personally regards our author, and the relation shall here be stated as succinctly as possible. The first place at which they appear to have touched (if the expedition did not in fact proceed from thence in the first instance) was the port of *Zaitun*, in the province of *Fo-kien*, supposed to be either *Tsuen-cheu* or the neighbouring port of *Hia-muen*,  
by



by us called *Amoy*. Passing by the island of *Hai-nan*, they kept along the coast of *Anan* or Kochin-china, to the adjoining country of *Tsiampa*, which Marco Polo informs us he had previously visited in the year 1280. Mention is next made of the island of *Java*, although it is evident from the circumstances, that they did not touch there, and also of two uninhabited islands near the coast of *Kamboja*. From the latter they steered for the island of *Bintan*, near the eastern entrance of the straits of Malacca. From this place, where they seem to have acquired some knowledge of the kingdom of the Malays, at the extremity of the peninsula, they made a short run to the north-eastern coast of *Java* minor, by which is meant *Sumatra*. This island becomes the subject of more particular description than almost any other place visited. In one of its ports they are stated to have been detained five months, waiting for a favourable season to pursue their voyage across the bay of Bengal; and on this occasion we have an indirect proof of the influence which Marco's superior talents gave him amongst those to whom the conduct of the expedition was entrusted, as he informs us of his having established himself on shore with a body of two thousand men, and constructed defences to secure them against any hostile attempts on the part of the savage inhabitants; whom at the same time he so much conciliated as to ensure from them regular supplies of provisions. He tells us that he visited six out of the eight kingdoms (as they are termed) into which the country is divided. Upon leaving this port, mention is made of one of the Nicobar islands, and of those called the Andamans, the natives of which are represented as brutish in their manners and in their appearance scarcely human.

The fine island of Ceylon is next visited, and its celebrated peak particularly noticed. From thence they cross the narrow strait, to the southern part of the coast of the peninsula, called by our author, in imitation of the Arabian and Persian writers, the country of *Maabar*; which

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which must not be confounded with *Malabar*. On this occasion he gives a circumstantial account of the famous pearl-fishery. He also relates the traditions of the people respecting the martyrdom of St. Thomas the Apostle, and the miracles wrought at his tomb. Other places within the ancient kingdom of *Narsinga*, although perhaps not actually visited by himself, and particularly Masulipatam, with the diamond mines of *Golconda*, are then mentioned. Of these last, on the faith of the natives, some extraordinary tales are related. Cape Comorin and several towns and districts on the south-western coast are then spoken of; the produce of pepper is noticed, and also the natural strength of the country from its mountainous barrier. The pirate coast, which he calls by the name of Malabar, although that belongs in strictness to the more southern part, is next described, and afterwards, in succession, Guzzerat, Kambaia, Sumenat, and the country of Makran, which he terms the last, as being the most western province of his greater division of India, beginning with Maabar already mentioned. Which of these places they really touched at, and which of them were known only by the accounts received from the Arabian and other navigators of the Indian seas, does not distinctly appear, and can only be inferred from the greater or less degree of precision with which they are noticed. Of the islands of Socotra, Madagascar, and Zenzibar, or the southern part of the *peninsula* of Africa, he professedly speaks upon the authority of persons with whom he had conversed and who had shewn him maps of those parts. The same may be said of Abyssinia and the cities of Aden, Sheher, Dabar, and Kelhat, on the Arabian coast. At Ormuz, in the Persian gulf, the course of his description (for after the first long chapter of the work, the form of a narrative is not observed) may be considered as brought to a close; and there is every reason to infer that the Chinese expedition, after a navigation of eighteen months in the Indian seas, terminated at that place. Of the return

return of the ships and surviving part of the crews (six hundred of whom, with two of the Persian noblemen, having died on the passage) we have not any record whatever; and it is most probable that, deprived of the energy of the Europeans, the fleet never found its way back to China, although many of the individuals may have effected their passage by the trading ships. An event, however, had in the mean time occurred, which rendered the fate of this hazardous undertaking a subject of less interest at the court of Peking than it would otherwise have been. This was the death of the venerable emperor *Kublai*, which took place in the beginning of the year 1294.

Upon the arrival of the expedition in Persia, information was received by our travellers that the Moghul king *Arghun*, for whose consort the princess had been intended, had died some time before (1291); that the country was then governed by a regent or protector who was supposed to have views to the sovereignty; and that the son of the late king, named *Ghazan*, who afterwards became much celebrated, was encamped, with a large army under his command, on the north-eastern frontier of the kingdom, towards *Khorasan*; waiting, as it appeared, for a favourable opportunity of asserting his rights to the throne, for which his extremely diminutive figure was thought to have rendered him unfit. To this prince they were directed to deliver their royal charge. Of her reception and subsequent fortunes we know nothing; but as *Ghazan* distinguished himself so much by his virtues as to make the world forget the defects of his person, we may presume that she was treated with the respect and kindness that belong to the character of a brave man. This object of their mission being accomplished, they repaired to the court of the protector, at Tauris, where for nine months they reposed themselves from the fatigue of their long travels, and perhaps employed themselves in realising or investing more conveniently some part of the property they had

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had brought with them. Having received from him the customary passports, which they found the more necessary, as the unpopularity of his government occasioned tumults in the country and rendered strong escorts indispensable, they proceeded on their journey homewards, taking the road of *Arjis* on the lake of Van, *Arzerrúm*, and the castle of *Bailurt*, and reached the city of Trebizond on the coast of the Euxine; from whence, by the way of Constantinople and of Negropont or Eubœa, they finally by the blessing of God (as they piously acknowledged), in the full possession of health and riches, arrived safely in their native city of Venice. This consummation of their memorable labours took place in 1295 (a date in which all the copies agree), after an absence of twenty-four years.

Up to this period our narrative of the adventures of the Polo family has been framed from the materials, however scanty, which Marco himself had directly or indirectly furnished. For what is to follow, we must principally rely upon the traditionary stories prevalent amongst his fellow citizens, and collected by his industrious editor Ramusio, who wrote nearly two centuries and a half after his time. Upon their first arrival, he says, they experienced the reception that attended Ulysses when he returned to Ithaca. They were not recognised even by their nearest relations; and especially as rumours of their death had been current and were confidently believed. By the length of time they had been absent, the fatigues they had undergone in journies of such extent, and the anxieties of mind they had suffered, their appearance was quite changed, and they seemed to have acquired something of the Tartar both in countenance and speech, their native language being mixed with foreign idioms and barbarous terms. In their garments also, which were mean and of coarse texture, there was nothing that resembled those of Italians. The situation of their family dwelling house, a handsome and lofty palace, was in the street of S. Giovanni Chrisostomo, and  
still

still existed in the days of Ramusio, when, for a reason that will hereafter appear, it went by the appellation of "*la corte del Milioni*." Of this house possession had been taken by some persons of their kindred, and when our travellers demanded admittance, it was with much difficulty that they could obtain it by making the occupiers comprehend who they were, or persuading them that persons so changed and disfigured by their dress, could really be those members of the house of Polo who for so many years had been numbered with the dead. In order therefore to render themselves generally known to their connexions, and at the same time to impress the whole city of Venice with an adequate idea of their importance, they devised a singular expedient, the circumstances of which, Ramusio says, had been repeatedly told to him when a youth, by his friend M. Gasparo Malipiero, an elderly senator of unimpeachable veracity, whose house stood near that of the Polo family, and who had himself heard them from his father and his grandfather, as well as from other ancient persons of that neighbourhood.

With these objects in view, they caused a magnificent entertainment to be prepared, in their own house, to which their numerous relatives were invited. When the hour for assembling at table was arrived, the three travellers came forth from an inner apartment, clothed in long robes of crimson satin reaching to the floor; such as it was customary to wear upon occasions of ceremony in those days. When water had been carried round for washing hands and the guests desired to take their places, they stripped themselves of these vestments, and putting on similar dresses of crimson damask, the former were taken to pieces and divided amongst the attendants. Again when the first course of victuals had been removed, they put on robes of crimson velvet, and seated themselves at table, when the preceding dresses were in like manner distributed; and at the conclusion of the feast, those of velvet were disposed of in the same way, and the hosts then appeared in plain suits resembling such as were

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worn by the rest of the company. All were astonished at what they saw, and curious to know what was to follow this scene. As soon, however, as the cloth was removed and the domestics had been ordered to withdraw, Marco Polo, as being the youngest, rose from table, went into an adjoining room, and presently returned with the three coarse, threadbare garments in which they had first made their appearance at the house. With the assistance of knives they proceeded to rip the seams and to strip off the linings and patches with which these rags were doubled, and by this operation brought to view a large quantity of most costly jewels, such as rubies, sapphires, carbuncles, diamonds, and emeralds,\* which had been sewn into them, and with so much art and contrivance, as not to be at all liable to the suspicion of containing such treasures. At the time of their taking their departure from the court of the Grand khan, all the riches that his bounty had bestowed upon them were by them converted into the most valuable precious stones, for the facility of conveyance; being well aware that in a journey of extraordinary length and difficulty, it would have been impossible to transport a sum of that magnitude, in gold. The display of wealth, so incalculable in its amount, which then lay exposed on the table before them, appeared something miraculous, and filled the minds of all who were spectators of it with such wonder, that for a time they remained motionless; but upon recovering from their ecstasy, they felt entirely convinced that these were in truth the honourable and valiant gentlemen of the house of Polo, of which at first they had entertained doubts, and they accordingly exhibited every mark of profound respect for their hosts.

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\* Our modern scientific lapidaries assert that all true emeralds come from South America, and that oriental emeralds are things unknown to the trade, or should bear another name. What then were the *zamrdd* of the Persians, the *amaragdoi* of the Greeks, and the *smeraldi* of our author? It is remarkable that pearls, although so easily concealed, are not amongst the costly jewels here enumerated.



Of the degree of credit due to this anecdote, vouched as it is, the reader will form his own judgment ; but as it betrays a mixture of vanity and folly quite inconsistent with the character of grave and prudent men, which in the preceding part of their lives they appear to have uniformly sustained, I am disposed to be incredulous, and to attribute the story to the fertile invention of their cotemporaries or perhaps the succeeding generation, who seem to have regarded our travellers as heroes of romance, and not unfrequently made them the subject of ridicule.\* Be this as it may, Ramusio proceeds to acquaint us, that as soon as an account of the scene just described was spread about the city of Venice, great numbers of the inhabitants of all ranks, from the nobles down to the mechanics, hastened to their dwelling, in order to have an opportunity of embracing them and of testifying their good will. Maffio, the elder brother, was honoured with an office of much importance in the magistracy. To Marco the young men resorted, to enjoy the pleasure of his conversation. Finding him polite and communicative, they paid him daily visits, making inquiries respecting Kataia and the Grand khan ; and to all of them his answers were so courteous, that each considered himself as personally obliged. In consequence, however, of their persevering curiosity, which occasioned frequent repetitions of the amount of the imperial revenues, estimated at ten or fifteen millions of gold ducats, as well as of other computations regarding the wealth and population of the empire, which were necessarily expressed in millions also, he at length acquired amongst them the surname of Messer Marco *Millioni* or, in the modern orthography, *Milione*.

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\* “ Après sa mort ” says C. Amoretti, on the authority of F. Jacopo de Aquì “ on se moqua encore de lui, de manière que dans les masquerades il y avoit toujours quelqu’un qui prenoit son nom et le représentoit pour amuser le peuple, en racontant tout ce qui lui venoit dans la tête de plus extrava-

gant. Ensuite on en usa de même envers Piga-fetta (Pignoria Prefaz. all’Opera degli Dei Antichi) ; mais les voyages faits après eux les ont assez justifiés.” Voyage de la mer Atlantique à l’Océan Pacifique par le Capitain Maldonado, traduit d’un manuscrit Espagnol ; note, p. 67.

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“ By this appellation” Ramusio (who was himself high in office) adds, “ I have seen him mentioned in the public records of this republic, and “ the house in which he lived, has, from that time to the present, been “ commonly termed “ *la corte del Millioni.*” It must at the same time be remarked that Sansovino, in his “ *Venetia descritta,*” attributes the popular application of this surname, to the immense riches possessed by the Polo family at the period of their return to their own country. In this sense the French apply the term “ millionaire” to a great capitalist.

Not many months after their arrival in Venice, intelligence was received that a Genoese fleet, commanded by Lampa Doria, had made its appearance off the island of Curzola, on the coast of Dalmatia ; in consequence of which a Venetian fleet, consisting of a superior number of galleys, immediately put to sea under the orders of Andrea Dandolo. To the command of one of these, Marco Polo, as an experienced sea-officer was appointed. The fleets soon came in sight of each other, and an engagement ensued, in which the latter were defeated with great loss.\* Amongst the prisoners taken by the Genoese, besides Dandolo himself, was our traveller, who belonged to the advanced division, and bravely pushing forward to attack the enemy, but not being properly supported, was compelled to surrender, after receiving a wound. From the scene of action he was conveyed to a prison in Genoa, where his personal qualities and his surprising history becoming soon known, he was visited by all the principal inhabitants, who did every thing in their power to soften the rigours of his captivity ; treating him with kindness

as

\* This event is said by some writers to have happened on the 8th of September 1296. The following extract from the “ *Cronico Veneto* ” of Sansovino, annexed to his “ *Venetia descritta,*” will shew the strange uncertainty of the Venetian annals.

“ 1295. Giornata à *Curzola* co Genovesi, con perdita  
“ dell’armata Veneta e con la presa d’Andrea Dan-  
“ dolo, il quale per non esser condotto à Genova  
“ prigionie s’occide per via. Altri scrivono 1296.”



as a friend, and liberally supplying him with every thing necessary for his subsistence and accommodation. His rare adventures were, as in his own country, the subject of general curiosity, and the accounts he gave, especially of Kataia, and its sovereign, the Grand khan, were listened to with eager attention. The frequent necessity he was under of repeating the same story, unavoidably became irksome to him, and (fortunately for the promotion of geographical science, to which it gave the first impulse) he was at length induced to follow the advice of those who recommended his committing it to writing. With this view he procured from Venice the original notes he had made in the course of his travels, and had left in the hands of his father. Assisted by these documents (of which he speaks on more than one occasion) and from his verbal communications, the narrative is said to have been drawn up, in the prison, by a person named Rustighello or Rustigielo, who, according to Ramusio, was a Genoese gentleman with whom he had formed an intimacy, and who, from an ardent desire to obtain information respecting distant parts of the world, was in the daily habit of passing many hours with him, in his place of confinement; or according to the Sorenzo manuscript, of which Apostolo Zeno has given some extracts, a native of Pisa and his fellow prisoner.\* This work is said to have been accomplished, and the manuscript circulated, in 1298.

The imprisonment of Marco was the occasion of much affliction to his father and his uncle, and the more particularly as it had long been their

\* The former of these two accounts is supported by the authority of a manuscript in the Ambrosian library at Milan, referred to by C. Amietti, in his translation of Maldonado's voyage, mentioned in a preceding note, where he says. "Tout ce que nous dit Ramusio du lieu, de la circonstance et de la manière dont ce célèbre voyageur, Marc Pole, écrivit

son histoire et ses observations, se trouve à quelques différences près, dans la Part. II. de la Chronique manuscrite de F. Jacopo de Aquil, que nous avons dans notre Bibliothèque." P. 67. It may indeed have happened that this chronicle of Aquil was one of the sources from whence Ramusio drew his information.

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their intention that he should form a suitable matrimonial alliance, upon their return to Venice. Their plans were now frustrated, and it became daily more uncertain what the duration of his captivity might prove, as all attempts to procure his liberation by the offer of money had failed, and even doubtful whether it might not terminate only with his life. Under these circumstances, finding themselves cut off from the prospect of having heirs to their vast wealth, they deliberated upon what was most proper to be done for the establishment of the family, and it was agreed that Nicolo, although an old man, but of a hale constitution, should take to himself a second wife.

It happened at length, after a lapse of four years, that Marco, in consequence of the interest taken in his favour amongst the leading people in Genoa, and indeed by the whole city, was released from his captivity. Upon returning home he found that his father had by that time added three sons to the family, whose names were Stefano, Maffio, and Giovanni. Being a man of good sense and discretion, he did not take umbrage at this change of circumstances, but resolved upon marrying also, and effected it as soon as he found a suitable match. By his marriage, however, he had not any male descendant, but only two daughters; one of whom is said to have been called Moretta, and the other Fantina; which, from their signification, may be thought to have been rather familiar terms of endearment, than baptismal names. Upon the death of his father, as became an affectionate and pious son, he erected a monument to his memory of hewn stone; which Ramusio says, was still to be seen, in his days, under the portico in front of the church of St. Lorenzo, upon the right hand side as you enter; with an inscription denoting it to be the tomb of Nicolo Polo, who resided in the street beforementioned. Respecting the age to which our author himself attained, or the year in which his death took place, his countrymen have not given us any information, nor, as it would seem, was  
any

any endeavour made at an early period, to ascertain the facts. San-  
sovino, the most elaborate historian of their city, observes only, that  
“ under the passage to the church of S. Lorenzo, which stands on one  
“ of the islets named Gemelle, lies buried Marco Polo, surnamed  
“ Milione, who wrote the account of *travels in the new world*, and was  
“ the first, before Colombus, who discovered new countries.” \* On  
which expressions we may remark, that independently of the geographi-  
cal ignorance displayed, there is room to conjecture (if Ramusio be  
correct) that he has confounded the tomb of the father with that of the  
son. At all events, the indifference he has shewn, as an antiquary, to  
the investigation of circumstances connected with the life of a man of  
whom his country has so much reason to be proud, cannot be too strong-  
ly reprehended. In the chronicle of Jacopo de Aquì it is reported that  
when upon his death-bed he was exhorted by his friends, as matter of  
conscience, to retract what he had published, or at least to disavow those  
parts which the world regarded as fictitious, he scorned their advice, de-  
claring at the same time, that so far from having exaggerated, he had  
not told one half of the extraordinary things of which he had been an  
eye-witness. His Will is said to have been dated in the year 1323; in  
which case his life may be supposed (without pretending to accuracy,  
but also without the chance of material error) to have embraced the  
period between 1254 and 1324, or about seventy years.†

With

\* “ Sotto l'angiporto e sepolto quel Marco Polo  
“ cognominato Milione, il quale scrisse i viaggi del  
“ mondo nuovo, e che fu il primo avanti Christoforo  
“ Colombo, che ritrovassè nuovi paesi: al quale non  
“ si dando fede per le cose stravaganti che egli rac-  
“ conta, il Colombo aggiunse credulità ne tempi de  
“ nostri padri, con lo haver ritrovata quella parte, per  
“ inanzi giudicata da huomini singolari non punto  
“ habitata.” *Venetia descritta*, p. 80, ed. 1663.

† In order to convey more distinctly to the mind of  
the reader, the historical period at which Marco Polo

flourished, the reigns of cotemporary kings, and lives  
of some other eminent persons, shall here be noticed.  
Edward I. of England reigned from 1272 to 1307 :  
Philip III. and Philip IV. of France, from 1270 to  
1314 : Alphonso X., Sancho IV., and Ferdinand IV.  
of Spain, from 1252 to 1312 : Affonso III. and Diniz  
or Dionis, of Portugal, from 1246 to 1325 : Pope  
Gregory X. was chosen in 1271, and Clement V.  
died in 1314 : Rodolphus, Count of Hapsburg, an-  
cestor of the present house of Austria, was, under  
the influence of Gregory, elected king of the Romans

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With regard to the other members of the family, Marco, the eldest of the three brothers, appears to have died before the departure of Nicolo and Maffio for Constantinople; and it was with the intention of doing honour to his memory, that the wife of the former, in the absence of her husband, gave to her son, our author, the name of his deceased uncle. Of the three children of Nicolo by the second marriage, one only, Maffio, lived to have a family. This consisted of five sons and one daughter, named Maria; and as all the sons died without leaving issue, she, upon the death of her last surviving brother, who likewise bore the name of Marco, inherited all the possessions of their father. With this event, which took place in 1417, the family became extinct in the male line, and the illustrious name of Polo was lost. The heiress married into the noble house of Trivisino, eminently distinguished in the *fasti* of the Venetian republic.

The arms borne by the Polo family, as Ramusio found them blazoned in ancient books of heraldry, were azure; on a bend, argent, three *poles* (graculi or jackdaws), sable.

General view of  
the work.

It is well known that for a long period after the close of the thirteenth century, when an account of the Travels of Marco Polo of Venice first made its appearance and was circulated, in manuscript, the information it gave of countries till that time unheard of, and manners incompatible with every idea that had been entertained of the barbarians of Tartary,

in 1273, and died in 1291. Baldwin II. Latin emperor of Constantinople, was driven from thence in 1261, by Michael Palæologus, the Greek emperor, who died in 1284, as did Andronicus II. in 1332. Matthew Paris, the historian, died in 1259; Thomas Aquinas in 1274; the massacre called the Sicilian Vespers took place in 1282; Acre was finally conquered by the Saracens in 1291; Roger Bacon died in

1292; Duns Scotus in 1308; and Dante Alighieri, in 1321; the mariner's compass is said to have been invented in 1303, (on which subject see an able dissertation by Tiraboschi, *Storia della Letteratura Italiana*, t. iv, p. 180-190, where he endeavours to shew that it was not introduced from China by the Polo family); and cannon, not until the year 1380.

General view of  
the work.

Tartary, was treated with levity or ridicule by the generality of his countrymen, and read with suspicion by the best instructed persons in every part of Europe. It was thought by them a paradox, that whilst the western world was overrun and desolated by tribes whom animosity and terror painted as still more savage than they actually were, other tribes of the same nomadic race, and professing submission to one common head, should be found not only to live under a regular government, but to have become the constituent part of a splendid and highly civilised empire, filled with magnificent cities, abounding in rich manufactures, and the scene of a commerce of such magnitude as rendered that of Venice trifling in comparison. But in the general advancement of knowledge, and in proportion to the opportunities afforded of ascertaining the real state of society and of physical circumstances in remote countries, and to the exercise of rational inquiry, which whilst it detects imposture, serves to rescue merit from neglect, the authenticity and importance of these travels have found enlightened advocates, and in modern times have been generally acknowledged by the most eminent historical and geographical writers. Of those who at the present day declare their want of faith, and make the character of Marco Polo the subject of pleasantry, it is probable that the greater proportion have but superficially read his work; and there is reason to believe that the number of those, who, having deliberately perused it, continue to think the narrative fictitious, is very inconsiderable. The opinion, however, of these latter, small as their number may be, is intitled to the utmost respect, and it is more particularly with the view of removing from such candid and reflecting minds, any doubts of the honest spirit in which the original was composed, that this translation and commentary are undertaken.

It might have been expected that in ages past a less tardy progress would have been made in doing justice to the intrinsic merits of a

General view of  
the work.

work (whatever were its defects as a composition) that first conveyed to Europeans a distinct idea of the empire of China,\* and by shewing its situation, together with that of Japan (before entirely unknown) in respect to the great Eastern ocean, which was supposed to meet and form one body of water with the Atlantic, eventfully led to the important discoveries of the Spaniards and Portuguese.† In accounting for this neglect we must allow that it may have been occasioned in the first instance, by a deficiency of skill in literary composition on the part of the author, who probably laboured under the disadvantage of not possessing a ready command either of his own or any other language current in Europe, and was therefore obliged to have recourse to the assistance of others in the preparation of his materials; but more particularly is it to be attributed to the want of requisite talent or care in the early translators and copiers of his manuscript, during the period of a century and half that intervened between its appearance and the use of printing. By their misconceptions his sense is often obscured, whilst their inaccuracies of orthography render it, in many instances, a matter of the utmost difficulty to recognise the proper names of persons and places. Nor do the first editors in print appear to have been more free from blame than the transcribers, as the endless variety of modes in which these names are presented to us, prove how indifferent they were

\* Amongst the Cottonian manuscripts of the British Museum, notice has been taken of one in the Latin and Saxon languages, referred to the beginning of the eleventh century, which speaks of certain "reges Cattinorum," supposed to mean kings of *Cathay* - from whence an inference might be drawn, that the writer had, at that early period, some knowledge of northern China. But it is obvious that these kings, who are stated to have had an interview with Alexander of Macedon, must be intended for those of the people called *Cathai* by Arrian and *Catheri* by Diodorus, whose country lay between the Hydrates and the Hyphasis, in the neighbourhood of the *Malli* and *Oxydracæ*; and by no means for inhabitants of *Kataia* or *Khatai*. Their European

crowns, indeed, shew that they were depicted without any knowledge of eastern costume.

† Ramusio, speaking of the sources from whence king John II. of Portugal derived his information respecting India, says "E massimamente da quello (libro) del magnifico Messer Marco Polo il qual fu portato in Lisbona dall' illustre Infante Don Pietro fino all' hora che egli fu nella città di Venetia l'anno 1428.... E dicono l'istoric Portoghlesi che fu presentato in Venetia per un singular dono, e che l' detto libro dappoi tradotto nella lor lingua fu gran causa che tutti quelli serenissimi Re s'infiammassero a voler scoprir l'India orientale, e sopra tutti il Re Don Giovanni secondo." Vol. I. Discorso sopra le lettere di Andrea Corsali, fol. 176.



were to correctness. In general also they have used considerable license in abridging passages and even omitting chapters of their original, in order, as it would seem, by concentrating what they regarded as the most interesting matter, to adapt their publication to the taste of that class of readers which was most gratified with whatever had least the quality of plain matter of fact. In this view of the state in which the text is handed down to us, I am justified by the opinion of a distinguished Italian scholar of the present day, to whom the care of the Library of St. Mark at Venice is worthily entrusted. “ It is incredible “ (says Sign. Morelli in a letter to a mutual friend) how much this “ work of the travels of Marco Polo was altered and disfigured during “ the long period of its circulating in manuscript amongst so many “ curious readers. To produce a complete edition, that should be “ worthy of the public attention, must be regarded as an effort of “ extreme labour and difficulty, on account of the scarcity of genuine “ documents, and the pains necessary for ascertaining the degree of “ credit belonging to each. The undertaking demands a full and pre- “ cise acquaintance with the geography of the middle ages ; with the “ travels of those days ; with oriental history ; with the languages pre- “ vailing in early and modern times amongst the Tartars, the Indians, “ and other eastern people ; with the manners, the natural history, “ and the rare productions of those countries ; and at the same time “ with the Venetian dialect of Italian, as well as with the particular “ usages of the city of Venice ; all of which acquirements should be “ brought into use, under the guidance of just criticism and nice dis- “ cernment : advantages which it is nearly impossible to find united in “ one and the same person, however learned and indefatigable he may “ be.” \*

General view of  
the work

d 2

In

\* “ E incredibile quanto sia stato alterata e sfigurata quest' opera dei Viaggi del Polo, la quale andò per lungo tempo in giro scritta per li mani di tanti curiosi lettori. Una edizione, la quale sia compiuta  
“ uta

General view of  
the work.

In the face of so formidable and discouraging a statement of the qualifications requisite for the undertaking, it might be deemed a presumptuous and at the same time a hopeless attempt in any individual, if the expectation should be entertained of his being able to furnish a satisfactory solution of every difficulty, to detect all the errors of geography, history, and language that have found their way into the text, or to reconcile to one authentic and correct standard all the differences known to exist amongst preceding copies. Such are not my vain pretensions: but although every thing that scrupulous criticism demands should not be effected, a confidence might still be felt of the practicability of doing much towards rescuing an early and curious work from the imputations under which it has laboured, and vindicating the moral integrity of its ingenuous, but perhaps, in some cases too credulous author. A strong persuasion of the fundamental merit and genuine character of the relation had impressed itself upon my mind from the time when I first had occasion (about the year 1780) to examine its details on the subject of the island of Sumatra, which it terms Java minor; and it has since been my unceasing wish that the elucidation of its obscurities should engage the attention of some person competent to the task of preparing a new edition from the best existing materials, and of illustrating it with Notes calculated to bring the matter of the text into comparison with the information contained in subsequent accounts of travels and other well-authenticated writings.\* But this wish not having been hitherto fulfilled,

nor

“uta e degna del pubblico, è una delle più faticose  
“e più difficili opere che posso farsi, per la grande  
“scarsezza di monumenti sinceri da aversi, e per-  
“che molti ve ne sono dei quali non bene si può  
“conoscere quale e quanta credenza meritino. Vi  
“varebbero studii e cognizioni esatte di geografia  
“del medio evo, d'istoria orientale, degli scrittori  
“di viaggi de' que' tempi, di lingue anticamente e  
“modernamente usate da Tartari, Indiani, ed altri  
“popoli, di costumi loro, d'istoria naturale e produ-

“zioni poco note, ed anche del dialetto Veneziano,  
“e delle pratiche di questa città, e tutto poi dovrebbe  
“essere usato con buona critica e con fino discerni-  
“mento, le quali cose tutte è quasi impossibile che  
“si trovino in una persona sola, per quanto erudita  
“e laboriosa sia.”

\* “Editio nova, eaque critica, hujus itinerarii  
“emixè petenda est a viris harum rerum peritis.”  
Bibliotheca historica a Meuselio edita, Vol. I. P. II.  
p. 2.



nor any expectation (to my knowledge) held out to the public that such a work is likely to appear, I have been induced to venture upon the undertaking myself, although conscious that, notwithstanding some accidental advantages I may possess, there are many persons in different parts of Europe more fully qualified to do justice to the execution.

General view of  
the work.

It remained then for consideration to which of the texts already known to us, in the Italian, the Latin, or other language, a preference should be given, for copiousness, purity, and consistency; from whence to make a new English version, that should become the subject of comment and illustration. The learned Andreas Müller, of Berlin, who published, in 1671, a respectable edition of the work (which will hereafter be more particularly noticed), adopted for his purpose and copied literally the text of the Latin version printed in the collection of Grynæus, at Basle and Paris, in 1532: but to this choice he may have been influenced, not only by his more familiar acquaintance with that language, but by the opportunity it afforded of collation with a celebrated manuscript in the library of the Elector of Brandenburg containing the more early Latin version of Pipino. With every deference to his authority (if in fact he exercised a discriminating judgment on the question), my opinion leads me to consider the Italian version furnished by Ramusio, in the second volume of his collection of travels, published in 1559 (but of which the preface is dated in 1553), as decidedly superior; and in this I am supported by that of our countryman, Samuel Purchas, likewise the compiler of a valuable collection of early voyages and travels, who says, in his quaint phraseology: "I found this  
" booke translated by Master Hakluyt out of the Latine; but where  
" the blind leade the blind, both fall; as here the corrupt Latine could  
" not but yeeld a corruption of truth in English. Ramusio, Secretarie  
" to the Decemviri in Venice, found a better copie and published the  
" same." To which he adds at the conclusion: "In this admirable  
" voyage

Choice of text  
for translation.

(choice of text  
for translation.

“ voyage of Polo, I confesse *inopem me copia fecit*; the translation  
 “ which I had of Master Hakluyt from the corrupted Latine, being lesse  
 “ than nothing, did me no steed but losse, whiles I would compare it  
 “ with the Latine, and thought to amend it by the Italian; and was  
 “ forced at last to reject both Latine and English, and after much vex-  
 “ ation to present thee this, as it is, out of Ramusio.” Vol. iii. p. 65,  
 107. Testimony to the same effect has also been given in more modern  
 times, by Robertson, Gibbon, and Vincent, the last of whom says :  
 “ I have followed Ramusio, as I always do, in preference to other trans-  
 “ lators.”

As it appears from the foregoing, that an English version from the  
 Italian was made by Purchas, it may be asked why it should not have  
 superseded the necessity for a new one in the present publication? To  
 this it may be answered, that the language of that writer is uncouth,  
 affected, and obsolete, that his translation is in many places deficient in  
 correctness, and that he has paraphrased and abridged the text, as he  
 himself acknowledges, according to his convenience or his fancy.\*  
 “ I have indeavoured” he says “ to give the truth, but have abridged  
 “ some things to prevent prolixitie and tautologie in this so voluminous  
 “ a worke, leaving out nothing of substance but what elsewhere is to be  
 “ found in this worke (meaning his Collection of Travels), and seeking  
 “ rather the sense, than a stricter verball following our authour’s words  
 “ and sentence.” P. 65. Yet this English version, notwithstanding the  
 liberties

\* Of incorrectness there is a striking example in the first sentence of the translation, where he renders the phrase, “ *per nome di Messer lo Dose*,” which means, “ in the name of ” or “ representing the “ Doge,” by the words, “ called *Messer lo Dose* ;” implying that this was either the proper name or the title of the Venetian magistrate who resided at Constantinople. Of fanciful paraphrase an instance presents itself, where our author in describing the custom

of tattowing or puncturing the skin, as prevailing amongst a certain people, observes that they have practitioners whose sole employment it is to perform the operation; but which plain and genuine account is disguised by Purchas in the following ludicrous manner “ And there be professors of this foolish  
 “ art of flesh embroiderie, which use no other trade  
 “ but this needle-worke, and dying of foolcs-skinnes.”  
 Vol. III, p. 94.

liberties avowed to have been taken by Purchas, and however exceptionable in various respects, has served as the basis of that given by Dr. Campbell, in his edition of the Collection of voyages and travels first published by Harris in 1704; for the use of which work the language was modernised and polished, with much general propriety, but without any reference to the Italian or the Latin for correction; so that all the faults above noticed, excepting those of style, were suffered to remain, whilst some mistakes imputable to the moderniser have been superadded.\* Under circumstances of this nature it will be admitted, that independently of the collateral object of a commentary or a critical examination of the matter of the text, a new translation of Marco Polo's Travels was wanting to the literature of our own country.

Choice of text  
for translation.

As much has been said of a diversity prevailing amongst the several transcripts and printed editions of the work, it may be necessary before we proceed further, to apprise the reader of its extent, by observing, that although the orthography of names is found to vary in them considerably, that the dates are in some instances discordant, the division into books and chapters dissimilar, that chapters (for the sake of brevity) are occasionally omitted, and that the style is much more compressed and abrupt in some versions than in others; yet in substance they are all the same, in facts they rarely, if ever, contradict each other, the same general arrangement of the matter is observed in all, the same countries are more or less circumstantially or imperfectly described, the same personages are mentioned, and consequently no doubts can be entertained of the identity of the relation under all its disguises.

With respect to the language in which it was originally composed, there has existed a strong difference of opinion, but the preponderance of

Original  
language.

\* Such as that in which it is said of a certain causeway in China, that "on both sides are great fences," instead of "great *fennes*" (*fens*), as it stands in Purchas; being *palude* in the Italian. See Harris, vol. I. p. 615.

Original  
language.

of authority and argument is in favour of its having been a provincial, and probably the Venetian dialect of Italian. At the head of those who assert that it was first written in Latin, is Ramusio himself, whose preface (which has furnished most of the latter circumstances of our author's life) asserts that Rustigielo, the Genoese, who acted as his amanuensis, composed the work in Latin; and to account for his use of that language, observes that even so late as his time, the people of Genoa were accustomed to employ it in recording their transactions of business; as they found it difficult to express on paper the sounds of their native tongue. Copies, he adds, of this original Latin text, with a preface by the abovementioned Genoese, dated in the year 1298, were presently multiplied, and a translation was afterwards made into the common Italian or *lingua volgare*, with transcripts of which all Italy was soon filled. From that language, he proceeds to say, it was re-translated into Latin, in the year 1320, by Francisco Pipino of Bologna, who, he supposes, was unable to procure a copy of the original.

But however plausible this account of the original circumstances of the work may appear, there are strong grounds for questioning its accuracy on some material points. Not only is the supposition that an existing Latin original could have been unknown to Pipino, or that the numerous and widely dispersed order of friars Preachers to which he belonged and at whose desire he undertook to translate it from the Italian, could not have obtained a copy, in itself improbable, but in the preface written by this monk (which will be found in the sequel) he does not allude to any difficulty of such a nature. On the contrary his words imply that he was executing a new task, for the purpose of enabling persons of education in his own country, as well as foreigners, to read this author's interesting account of the people of the East with more gratification than they could derive from its perusal in the vulgar tongue, or that in which he states it to have been dictated and first given  
to

to the world. Gryneus also, the learned editor of the *Novus orbis*, printed in 1582 (many years earlier than the appearance of Ramusio's collection), says, in his preface to a Latin version distinct from and superior to the version of Pipino: "Et utinam Marcus iste Venetus commodiorem nactus fuit interpretem, aut ipse librum suum Latine scripsisset...Sed multis concivibus suis Venetis gratificari maluit, quam paucis Latine doctis:" evidently shewing his belief that it had first appeared in the native language of his fellow citizens.

In addition to these direct testimonies of the Latin translators, strong proof, although of a negative kind, is derived from the silence of the earliest Italian copies with respect to a Latin original, and especially of the Sorenzo manuscript (to be hereafter noticed more particularly) which is in the Venetian dialect, and bears the mark of considerable antiquity. In the preface to this it is simply mentioned that "at the time when Marco Polo was detained in prison by the *Zenovesi* (Genoese), he caused all these things to be written down by Misier Rustigiolo, a citizen of *Pixa* (Pisa), who was his fellow-prisoner." But had any other language than that in which these two persons usually conversed been employed for this purpose, it would obviously have been stated; and as the native of Pisa must be supposed, from the fact of his imprisonment, to have belonged to the Venetian service, it is fair to presume that he might have been capable of writing the narrative in the words of his brother officer by whom it was dictated, although differing in pronunciation from his vernacular tongue.\* But however probable it may be that the dialect was the Venetian, it will not be thought necessary to contend for the particular idiom. It is

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sufficient

\* The most striking peculiarities of the Venetian dialect, in pronunciation and orthography, seem to consist in the substitution of *z* for *g*, and for *c* before *e* and *i*, as in *zente* for *gente*, *zorno* for *giorno*, *zita-* *din* for *cittadino*, *zerchasse* for *cercasse*, and also of *ch* for the hard *c*, as in *chomo* for *como*, *chossa* for *cosa*, and *chavalcho* for *caralcho*. The letter *x* also is not uncommonly used for *s*, *z*, and the soft *c*.

Original  
language.

sufficient to have shewn that the work was not originally composed in Latin, as Ramusio erroneously understood, but in a dialect of Italian; and in this conclusion I am warranted by the decided opinion of the celebrated Apostolo Zeno, whom his countrymen rank amongst the most diligent and judicious investigators of their early national literature, and who expresses himself in the following terms: “Io sono persuaso che il *Polo* la scrivesse primieramente, non come vuole il Ramusio, in lingua latina, ma nella *volgar* sua natia, e che poco dopo da altri, come vedremo, fosse translata in latino.” Annotazioni sopra la Bibliot. dell' Eloquenza Italiana di Giusto Fontanini, Venezia 1753, p. 270. With respect to the term *volgare*, we may observe that it is sometimes employed in the sense of *national*, to distinguish the Italian language, generally, from the Latin; but often with a more restricted meaning, to denote the language of Tuscany, which had the good fortune to become predominant, as distinguished from the dialects spoken or written in the other parts of Italy, which (with the exception perhaps of the Roman) are considered as provincial.

Authenticity.

Whatever doubts may have existed with respect to the language in which the Travels were written, it is generally admitted that they were first given to the world about the year 1298, or three years after the return of the Polo family to Venice. Of their genuineness in that point of view no doubts have been entertained even by the most sceptical of his readers. That he travelled and that he gave publicity to his observations, are facts not controverted; but, as has already been stated, the credibility of various parts of his narrative was, from its first appearance, the subject of animadversion, whilst to the censure or the ridicule of his countrymen he had nothing to oppose but that which might not be sufficiently known and established, the integrity of his character. Nearly the whole of what he had to tell was new, and consequently strange, and no reference could then be made, as in  
later



later times, to the corroborating experience of others, nor could he venture to appeal to the internal evidence of truth and consistency, where there was no exercise of enlightened criticism. Yet it may with truth be insisted, that the least equivocal proofs of its being an honest, however incomplete account of what he actually saw or learned on the spot, are to be drawn from the relation itself, where numerous instances will present themselves of minute peculiarities noticed by him and confirmed by the testimony of modern travellers, which he could neither have invented nor borrowed from others; and certainly it is the evidence of these coincidences, rather than any force of argument, that is likely to produce conviction in the minds of those who are unwilling to be thought credulous. Instead therefore of entering upon a discussion in this place of the several objections that have been made to his credibility, and which may be distinguished into faults of commission and of omission, I shall endeavour to avoid unnecessary repetitions, by doing little more than enumerating them, and at the same time pointing out those Notes to the body of the work, in which the subjects are more particularly treated.

The most conspicuous amongst those of the former class are, the relation of miracles pretended to have been performed on various occasions, (Notes 119, 144, 1321); an apparent belief in the efficiency of magical arts, (382, 472, 1430); descriptions of animals out of the ordinary course of nature, (884, 1440); and exaggerated statements of the extent and population of cities in China, (556, 560, 1073), of the dimensions of palaces, (538, 542), of the magnificence and number of bridges, (746, 1008),\* of the forces kept on foot, (1058), and of the amount of the imperial revenues, (1076, 1080); to which some have added (although the blame is obviously imputable in most instances

\* In one account of Venice it is said that there are in that city fifteen hundred bridges, and in another, four hundred and fifty stone bridges. Churton's Collection, vol. iv. p. 577. vol. vi. p. 532.



Authenticity. to his transcribers) the barbarous and perverted orthography of proper names, and the want of correctness in dates.\* On the first of these it shall briefly be observed that he by no means vouches for the miracles on his own knowledge, but only repeats what he had been told by the inhabitants of the places where the traditions were current; nor, were it otherwise, would it be fair to accuse him of any uncommon degree of credulity, as the belief in these manifestations of divine interference, was general and unquestioned at the period when he lived and for centuries after. Of this an instance particularly apposite presents itself in the legend of the House of our Lady of Loretto, which was piously believed to have removed itself from Palestine to the place in Italy where it now stands, and this at the precise time when the Polo family, in their return to Venice, were travelling from Persia to Trebisond. "Natalis Deiparæ domus" says Musantius in his chronological tables, of which the third edition was printed at Rome in 1750, "deficiente cultu, ex Asia in Europam cœlestium ministerio transit, ac primò in Dalmatia, mox in Italia considet, a loci domina Laureta, Lauretana dicta, 1294." P. 175. A similar apology may be made for his implied belief in magic. It was the common weakness of the darker ages, and no classes of society were then exempt from its influence. The best and wisest persons did not question the power of enchanters, although they reprobated their practices, and punished them as malefactors. Even in the latter part of the seventeenth century we find an eminent English Judge strongly charging juries on the presumed guilt of

\* Amongst the most striking objections to our author's chronological accuracy, is that which applies to the date of 1162, assigned in Ramusio's text to the elevation of *Jengiz khan* to the Taitai throne, which was, in fact, more nearly that of his birth. See B. I. chap. xlv. p. 194. But in addition to what will be found on the subject of that error in Note 367, it is of importance to observe, that in the ma-

nuscript of Pipino's translation, (of which there is a copy in the British Museum) as well as in the German edition of 1477, the date is 1200, and in the printed edition of the former (without date), 1201, which is nearly conformable to Abu'lghazi, who places the event in 1202. In the Italian editions of 1496 and 1500 it is 1287, and in the Basle edition, followed by Müller, 1182.

of persons tried for witchcraft, and the Jesuit missionaries in China, who were in general men of learning and of superior talents, ascribing the enchantments of the *bonzes* and *lamas* to the agency of evil spirits, instead of exerting their sagacity and skill in physics, to detect the impostures. (See Notes 204, 282, 321, 372.) His prominent faults of omission (if really imputable to himself and not to the loss of a part of the work, or to the omissions of transcribers) are more important as objections and more difficult to excuse, than those of the former class. They are, his silence with respect to that stupendous fabric, the Great Wall of China; the cultivation and general use of tea; the preposterous fashion of bandaging the feet of female children in order to render them small and useless; and the employment (in some provinces) of wheel-carriages impelled by wind. The subject of the first and most important of these omissions will be found discussed at length in Note 446, where it is shewn that on the western frontier of China the Wall had not been built of masonry, but of the sandy earth of the country, and might, even so early as the thirteenth century, have fallen to that state of decay and insignificance in which it is described by P. Gerbillon in 1690. The ambassadors of *Shah Rokh*, the son of Tamerlane, in 1420, are equally silent as to any important barrier of this kind, although, like our author, they speak of strong fortified places in this frontier province. That he entered Kataia or Northern China from the side of Kashghar, Yerken, and the desert (as the ambassadors did, and as was done at a later period by B. Goez), and proceeded by the way of *So-cheu*, *Kan-cheu*, and *Si-ning*, can scarcely be doubted, and if the Wall did not ostensibly or effectively exist, or was not a conspicuous object, his omitting to notice it cannot be matter of surprise. But at the same time it must be admitted, that afterwards,

\* Sir Mathew Hale, who became Chief Justice of the King's Bench in 1671.

Authenticity. afterwards, in the course of his service, he had numberless opportunities of observing this extraordinary mass of building, on the northern frontier, and his not making it the subject of a chapter, or even advert-  
 ing to it incidentally, justly affords ground for animadversion. Yet in the spirit of candid criticism it will not be argued that such omissions, reprehensible as they may seem, are proofs of a want of veracity on the part of the traveller or of authenticity in his work; for who can pretend to say that the whole of what Marco Polo wrote or dictated has been handed down to us? From various considerations, such as those of time and expense, or even from scruples of opinion as to credibility (for those who swallow the greater wonder will often strain at the lesser), the first transcribers of his *Meravegliose cose del mondo* may have been induced to shorten their labours by the suppression of passages that appeared to them tedious or exceptionable. Nor is this a gratuitous supposition; for some of the published versions are professedly, and others manifestly abridgments; and I am not aware of any edition in which there is not a deficiency of one or more chapters that are to be found in others.\* It is also not only possible but nearly evident that some of his original notes, from which chiefly his work was composed, and of which he speaks on more than one occasion, were mislaid and lost.† Yet these imperfections, so far from being evidence of fraud, would not have place in a spurious composition, and are proofs, on the contrary, of the absence of all disingenuous art. Had the narrative indeed been the fabrication of one  
 who

\* Ramusio's version is the least defective in this way, and yet it became necessary in the present work, to supply chap. xxxviii. of the First Book from the Basle edition; in which, on the other hand, four chapters near the end of the Third Book have been omitted. The German edition of 1477 also, which in general is very full in the text, wants several chapters. See Notes 340 and 1497.

† See p. 25 and 508. That the work was principally composed from notes made whilst he was abroad,

and not from subsequent recollection, is rendered evident by this circumstance that he occasionally speaks of the Grand khan *now* reigning (p. 250); whereas he was made acquainted with the death of *Kublai* in his way from Persia to Trebisond. His son also, who died before the departure of the Polo family from China, is spoken of (p. 290) as *inhabiting* one of the palaces in his father's court. The Notes must therefore have been made whilst these persons were living.

who only collected in his closet the accounts furnished by the Arabian geographers or by merchants who had visited the remoter parts of Tartary, and gave them to the world as the fruits of his own experience; such a compiler would probably have become acquainted with a fact of so much notoriety as the existence of this prodigious Chinese rampart; whilst in the work of an actual traveller, abounding with curious and authentic details, the mention of it or of any other object, however singular and striking, might through accident be omitted, without derogating from its authentic character. And here I am led to remark, that whilst so much ingenuity has been shewn, on the one side, in pointing out what wore the appearance of improbabilities, defects, and inconsistencies in his work, and, on the other, in defending it upon general principles, how little has been hitherto done by editors or commentators, towards an examination of the particular details, with the view of bringing them to the test of modern observation; and yet it is upon the unexceptionable evidence of their consistency with known facts, rather than the strength of any argument, that the reader is expected to ground his confidence in the intentional veracity of our author.\*

What Ramusio has attempted to this effect, in his preliminary discourse, amounts to little, and in some instances his conjectures are erroneous.

\* Amongst the numerous descriptions and incidents here alluded to, as affording unobtrusive proofs of genuineness, the reader's attention is called to the following. The state in which the bodies of persons destroyed by the hot wind of the desert are found, p. 96, n. 215; the manufacture of an intoxicating liquor from the infusion of dates, p. 101, n. 220, tradition prevailing in *Badakhshan* of the descent of its princes from Alexander of Macedon, p. 129, n. 263; gigantic figures of idols in a recumbent posture, p. 181, n. 353, description of the *hos grun-niens* or *yuk* of Tartary, p. 221, n. 136; figures of dragons in Katalan or Chinese ornament, p. 251, n. 466; periodical residence of the emperors in Tartary, during the summer months, p. 251, n. 469, 536;

commencement of the Katalan year in February, p. 328, n. 618, ceremony of prostration before the emperor or his tablet, by word of command, p. 330, n. 632; columns or pillars having a tortoise for their pedestal or base, p. 386, n. 744, jurisdiction of Chinese cities subordinate to each other, p. 467, 465, n. 918, 955; manufacture of ropes from the bamboo cane, p. 195, n. 980 and addition, lists of the inhabitants adixed to the doors of houses, in China, p. 542, n. 1074, and addition; mode of preparing sago in Java minor or Sumatra, p. 614, n. 1233; and lastly the ascent to the top of Adam's peak, in Ceylon, being effected by the assistance of iron chains, p. 756, addition to n. 1353.

*Authenticity.* **erroneous.** The other early editors have been contented with giving the text as they found it, and have not attempted to clear it from obscurities. J. Rh. Forster, in his "Voyages and discoveries in the North," has certainly thrown light upon the geography of our author, in that part of Tartary; although his inferences may not always be just. But the person to whom those who feel an interest in the Travels are most indebted (not excepting Dr. Campbell, who modernised the obsolete language of Purchas) is the editor of what are termed Astley's Voyages, who has not only given a judicious abstract of the work, but added several short explanatory notes, in which he displays much discernment and knowledge of his subject. On this occasion it would be unjust to omit noticing the learned and sensible remarks of the author of "Modern Geography," to be found in vol. 1, p. 485 to 499, ed. 1811. Had this successful investigator of the history of the middle ages directed any considerable portion of his labours to the illustration of Marco Polo's work, what is now offered to the public would, I am persuaded, have been rendered unnecessary.

Regrets have often been expressed, and particularly by the late Dr. Vincent, in his "Commerce and Navigation of the Ancients," vol. II, p. 666. that "we have no genuine Map that can be traced to Marco Polo himself." It cannot be denied that such a document would be curious and interesting, as serving to mark the progress of science from its rudest beginnings; but the idea of its having existed, under all the circumstances of the times in which he lived and the nature of his education, appears chimerical. At the present day, a well-instructed traveller with the assistance of a compass and sextant, may be able to delineate his route through unknown countries, where he is suffered to pass unmolested, and does not experience many physical difficulties, or, to correct mistaken positions in former maps of countries imperfectly known; but how this was to be effected by a person who crossed the  
whole

whole continent of Asia, unprovided with any kind of instrument, and to whom even the terms latitude and longitude seem to have been by no means familiar, is not easily to be conceived. It is also to be considered that many of the places, especially in the northern parts of Tartary, of which he speaks, he does not pretend to have visited, and could only have known by reports much too vague to serve for the construction of a map; nor does he in any part of his writings allude to an undertaking of that kind. But whatever may now be thought the degree of improbability, Ramusio intimates his belief, upon the authority of an ancient tradition, that the celebrated map preserved in a monastery of Venice, and of which a splendid *fac simile* has now a place in the British Museum, was copied from an original brought by Marco Polo from Kataia. This story, however, which the internal evidence would be sufficient to confute, is positively contradicted in the minute and elaborate account of the map, published at Venice in the year 1806, under the title of “Il Mappamonda di Fra Mauro, Camaldolese, di San Michele di Murano, descritto ed illustrato da D. Placido Zurla.” By this writer we are informed that the map was planned, drawn, and magnificently illuminated by one of the lay-brethren of that community, an able cosmographer and ingenious artist, about the year 1450,\* or a century and a half later than the appearance of our author’s Travels. These, it is evident, he had studied with some attention and made the groundwork of his own performance, introducing into it all the places mentioned in Marco Polo’s work, and assigning to them positions according to his ideas (by no means correct) of their relative distance and bearings. Much use is also made of information acquired respecting the marches of Tamerlane, the place of whose death is distinctly marked,

f

and

\* There are entries of charges for the cost of materials provided for the map, in the register of the monastery, during the years 1448 and 1449, and again in 1459, when the copy was prepared for the king of Portugal.



Map. and it likewise describes the southern termination of the continent of Africa, with other geographical matter of comparatively modern date. But upon these apparent anachronisms too much stress should not be laid, as the artist might be supposed to have engrafted on his original stock, the progressive knowledge acquired up to his own time. My objections apply to what may be considered as the fundamental part of the map, where situations are given to places that seem quite inconsistent with the descriptions in the Travels, and cannot be attributed to their author, although inserted on the supposed authority of his writings. But however questionable its pretensions may be to an antiquity beyond that of the middle of the fifteenth century, or whatever its defects, it is in itself an extremely curious monument of the state of geographical knowledge at that period, and much credit is due to the public spirit of those by whom a copy was procured (under the sanction of the governments of both countries) and lodged in our national repository, where justice has been done to its importance by the manner in which it is framed and its inspection facilitated.\*

Of what has been said with regard to the originality of Fra Mauro's work, much will equally apply to another but less celebrated map, found also in Venice. "I have in my possession, by favour of Lord Macartney" says Dr. Vincent "a copy of the map in the Doge's palace at Venice, drawn up for the elucidation of Marco Polo's travels, or at least certainly constructed before the discovery of America... I cannot assert that this is the genuine production of Marco Polo: it has

\* The expense of copying this elaborate map, which is nearly circular and about six and a half English feet in diameter, was defrayed by a subscription of the East India Company, Earl Spencer, Earl Macartney, Lord Hobart, the Bishop of Durham, Mr. Strahan, and Dr. Vincent. The transaction is spoken of by D. Placido in the following terms.

S'aggiunga a maggior argomento di commenda-

zione e lustro, la ministeriale ricerca fatta nel 1804 dalla Corte di Londra di lasciarne trar copia, cui fu nostro onore di tosto acconsentire, e l'Inglese Sig. Guglielmo Fraser con perfetta perizia ed eleganza adempì il commesso somigliantissimo lavoro coll' indefessa applicazione di più mesi, e con giusto universale encomio." P. 153.

“ has additions which belong not to his age, and contains much that he  
 “ did not know ; but it is evidently adapted to his travels.” Vol. ii, p.  
 617 : and in another place he adds : “ It is, by internal evidence, later  
 “ than 1550 ; it is not formed on Arabian principles, it has the peninsula  
 “ of India and that of Malacca, in conformity to the Portuguese discove-  
 “ ries ; it has the eastern islands and the Moluccas almost correct ; and  
 “ the only trace of its derivation from an ancient source or an age prior  
 “ to Gama, is, that the first country east of China is Spain ; proving in  
 “ this one instance at least, that it was copied from some authority pre-  
 “ vious to the discovery of America.” P. 666. This map also I have  
 examined, and am satisfied that it has no pretensions to be considered as  
 the work of Marco Polo, although its author may have acquired many  
 ideas from the perusal of his book.\* In more modern times likewise

## f 2

## attempts

\* The Portuguese writers speak of two early maps grounded on the discoveries of Marco Polo, which their princes possessed at a period anterior to the voyage of Barthol. Diaz, by whom the Cape of Good hope was doubled in 1486. One of these the Infante Don Pedro is supposed to have received, along with a manuscript book of our author's travels, from the government of Venice, in the year 1428, and to have presented to his brother Don Henrique, who was ardently engaged in promoting maritime expeditions. The other is that which was for some time preserved in the abbey of Benedictines at Alcobaça, but being removed from thence was, in 1528, in the hands of the Infante Don Fernando, and then presumed to claim an antiquity of one hundred and twenty years ; but with more probability it is thought by the judicious Foscarini to have been the copy of Fra Mauro's map prepared at Venice for Affonso king of Portugal and transmitted to him in 1459. Both of these are said to have contained the delineation of the southern extremity of Africa, and the latter also the straits of Magalhães ; but neither are at present known to exist. See “ *Memorias de Litteratura Portugueza*,” tomo viii. p. 275-304. Mention is there also made of a third map or planisphere, constructed by Andreas Bianco in the year 1436, and preserved in the library of St. Marc (or that belonging to the Doge's palace)

in Venice. It is admitted, notwithstanding, that this contains the West Indian islands called the Antilles. “ From the map of the world by Andrea Bianco the Venetian, 1440, it sufficiently appears” says Pinkerton “ that the discoveries of Polo had, even “ in his native country, been rather diminished than “ increased. See Formaleoni, *Saggio sulla Nautica “ antica dei Veneziani*. Ven. 1783, 8vo. See also “ description of Asia by Pope Pius II. who does not “ appear even to have seen the travels of Polo.” *Modern Geogr.* vol. i. p. 515. The planisphere of Marin Sanudo Torsello, which is referred to the year 1300 or thereabout, appears to be little else than a copy of the distorted map of Edrisi (preserved in the Bodleian library) of which we have an engraving in the “ *Commerce and Navigation of the Ancients*,” vol. ii. if it be not rather taken from that of Ptolemy, the prototype of the Arabian geographers. The work of Torsello, under the title of “ *Liber secretorum “ Fidelium Crucis*” will be found in the “ *Gesta “ Dei per Francos*” of Bongarsius.

It is remarked by Foscarini that this Marin Sanudo detto Torsello, a Venetian and cotemporary of our author, does not make any mention of his Travels, although he derives a large portion of his facts respecting the Tartars, from Haiton the Armenian, another cotemporary ; which he, at the same time, ac-  
 counts

Map.

attempts have been made to form maps of Tartary from his relation and that of B. Goetz; but in the "China illustrata" of Athanasius Kircher, where their respective routes are laid down, we have a striking instance of the errors into which a very learned man may be led, by misapprehending the information afforded by his well-intentioned but obscure guides. It must be observed that amongst the places in the vicinity of the great desert of *Kobi*, on the south-eastern side, there are none whose situations are so well ascertained as those of *So-cheu* and *Kan-cheu*, at the western extremity of the Chinese province of *Shen-si*, where it projects into the country of *Tangut* or that of the *Si-fan*. These two strong frontier towns are clearly spoken of by our author, by the ambassadors of *Shah Rokh*, and by the missionary Goetz, under various corruptions of orthography it is true, but in such a way as to leave no doubt of their identity. Their distance from each other, measured on the Jesuits' map, is no more than forty-two French leagues of 25 to a degree; yet in that of Kircher, whilst we find *So-cheu* or *Sucieu* in nearly its proper situation, *Kan-cheu*, under the name of *Kampition*, one of its numerous corruptions, is placed at the distance of full three hundred and twenty-five such leagues from the former: the one in the route of Goetz, and the other in that of Marco Polo.

Upon

counts for in a way that is quite satisfactory. It appears that from an early period and during the greatest part of his life, he was actively engaged in the political business of the Crusades, encouraging the coalesced powers to persevere in the cause, and pointing out to them the most plausible means of success. For these purposes he lived chiefly out of his own country, visiting many of the courts of Europe, but residing principally in Syria, employed in the collection of materials for his book. In Cyprus, which he is known to have frequented, he would naturally become acquainted with the work (if not with the person) of Hailton, who after serving in the armies of his relative the king of Armenia, relinquished his claim to the throne, and retired, in 1305, to the monastery of Piscopia in that island, and embraced

the order of Præmonstratensian monks. In 1308 his history, written originally in French, was translated into Latin by order of Pope Clement V. Marco Polo's book, as we have seen, was composed about the year 1298, in a Genoese prison, and was not very likely to have come to the knowledge of Torsello. To these observations of the learned Ex-Doge we may add, that even if the manuscript had reached his hands, he might have held it as light as the rest of his countrymen of that day appear to have done, and regarded all that is said about the civilized state of *Katara* and *Manji* (or northern and southern China) and the magnificence of their Grand khan, compared with what he had learned of the Western Tartars, as an improbable romance.

Upon the first view of the subject it might be presumed, that those persons who had opportunities of examining the work at periods the nearest to that in which our traveller lived, must have been the best qualified to form a judgment of his route and to delineate it upon paper; but upon due consideration it will be found that any advantage they might derive from proximity of time was more than counterbalanced by the ignorance and credulity of the age, so unfavourable to just investigation, as well as by the want of fixed points (to be obtained only by celestial observation) for correcting the vague and often inaccurately noted distances by days' journeys. It is in fact only since the reign of *Kang-hi*, the Tartar emperor of China, or about the year 1717, when a survey of the country extending to the interior of Tibet was executed by his order, that the situation of places in that quarter has become known, otherwise than by uncertain report, and it is to the mathematical science transported to Peking by the Jesuit missionaries and to their indefatigable exertions, that we are indebted for the surprisingly accurate information we possess with respect both to the exterior figure and internal details of the Chinese empire, which comprehends a great proportion of the tract described in our author's travels. In order therefore to shew their genuineness and consistency with truth, by referring the corrupted and disfigured names of places to what may be thought their probable originals, it seemed to be the rational mode of proceeding, to examine them by the standard of that knowledge to which we have attained by scientific improvements, and for this purpose to accompany the work with a map of the countries visited or described by him, constructed from the best existing materials (though still avowedly far from perfect in the central parts of Asia), rather than to exercise any degree of ingenuity in combining into a systematic form, the desultory notices in his travels, or in vindicating his dubious pretensions to the authorship of maps, which, with more zeal than judgment, has been attributed to him

Map.

him by Ramusio and some modern writers : objects which, if to be accomplished by superior skill, would be little else in effect, than erecting a monument to error.

In regard to the Map prefixed to this publication, and which has been constructed and prepared for it by very competent persons (one of them the pupil of the late Alexander Dalrymple) under the eye of my estimable friend whose eminence in geography of the highest class is far beyond the reach of my praise, I am aware that the smallness of the comprehensive scale on which it is formed (for which I am myself wholly answerable) will be objected to by some as not giving facility to the means of tracing the particular routes with sufficient distinctness. To this I answer that the extent of our author's travels was so great, and the range of his descriptions so wide, both in latitude and longitude, that no single sheet of any convenient size would adequately serve the purpose ; and that an atlas would be required. It is therefore meant that the map here given should be considered in the light of a general index, by which the reader is to be directed in ascertaining the various countries and principal places that successively become the subjects of remark, whilst for more particular details of the route, he will find it necessary to consult the best local maps and charts pertaining to each country ; and amongst which I recommend in an especial manner, those of the Jesuits, both general and particular, revised and prepared by D'Anville for Duhalde's " *Description de la Chine.*" In so doing I am persuaded that the more circumstantial they are, the more reason he will have to be satisfied with the correctness of our author's work. " This " says Robertson, speaking of the latter " was the most complete survey hitherto made of the East, and the most complete description of it ever given by any European ; and in an age which had hardly any knowledge of those regions but what was derived from the geography of Ptolemy, not only the Venetians but all the people  
" of

“ of Europe were astonished at the discovery of immense countries  
 “ opened to their view beyond what had hitherto been reputed the ut-  
 “ most boundary of the earth in that quarter.” *Historical Disquisition*,  
 p. 122.\*

It will be observed by those who examine the composition of the Notes, that amongst the authorities introduced for the purpose of exemplifying the text, little reference is made to the works of ancient writers who have described some of the countries visited by our author, or have alluded to their physical circumstances or the customs of their inhabitants. Although fully aware that many striking coincidences might have been pointed out, the insertion of which would have tended to embellish, and in the opinion of many respectable readers to give interest to the subject, I refrained from indulging in this species of illustration, because, whilst it added to the bulk of the Notes (already too great) it would not promote the essential object of establishing the authenticity of the travels. This, it is obvious, can only be done by bringing his assertions to the test of authorities which he could not possibly have consulted ; whereas from ancient authors he might, however unlikely in point of fact, have derived a part of his materials, and consequently, to produce corresponding passages from Strabo, Arrian, Xenophon, or Herodotus, or even from the poets, would have the effect of weakening rather than of giving force to the proofs of his originality. To the relations of the Arabian travellers of the ninth century I make indeed a frequent appeal ; but these, which were quite unknown in Europe till within a modern period, are not liable to the same objection,

for

\* I have lately had an opportunity of seeing an engraved Map, intitled “ A copy of part of an ancient M. S. Map, in the British Museum : ” with an observation by the late Mr. A. Dalrymple, that it appears to have been made early in the sixteenth century, because it has *Japan* only vaguely expressed, at a remote distance from the continent, under the name of

*Zipangri*, from the report of *Marco Paulo* : also a copy of Martin Behaim's map, constructed at Nürnberg in 1492, and published by C. T. de Murr, 1778, in which is laid down the northern polar island mentioned by Marco Polo (B. I. ch. L. p. 221), about the situation assigned, in modern charts, to New Siberia.



for if it should be urged that Marco Polo might have seen them in the original, this would go far to establish the point contended for, as such an acquaintance with eastern writings must, in that age, have been the fruit of long residence amongst the people and of distant travels.

Excuse for quotations in the original languages

Should it be made the subject of complaint that so large a proportion of the matter they contain is given in languages with which the English reader is not necessarily conversant, my apology is, that if translations were to be added, they would considerably burthen the page, and if to be substituted for the original passages, they would fail in some degree of their effect, as not being the best evidence that could be produced; because as the versions must be made for a particular object, there would be no security, even to the commentator himself, against the bias they might acquire from preconceived opinions, and their accuracy with regard to the particular circumstance of comparison might remain liable to doubt.

Objections to the use of the word Tartar, answered

Objections will probably be made by some philologists to what may be deemed a want of correctness in the use of the word "Tartar," as a general appellation of the wandering tribes of central or upper Asia. It will be said that the name should be more accurately written *Tatar*, and also that the race properly so called should not be confounded, as it seems to be throughout the work, with that of the Moghuls or Mungals, who differ from them in language and other circumstances. "As a person conversant with languages," says Klaproth, speaking of De Guignes, "his perpetually confounding the *Mongols* with the *Tatars* cannot be excused. *Tatars* are those who speak the Turko-Tataric language, and their original country is that which lies to the south and south-west of the Altaï mountains; the *Mogol* nations, on the other hand, have their own peculiar language, and previously to the tenth century of our era, dwelt on the southern side of the Baikal lake."\*

That

\* Abhandlung über die Sprache und Schrift der Uiguren, p. 8.

That the Persians and Arabians pronounce the word *Tatâr*, I am fully aware, and admit that the introduction of the letter *r* may have been an European corruption, proceeding from a fanciful analogy to the *Tartarus* of the ancients. For the employment therefore of the name of *Tartar*, in which I follow the example of my author, I can only plead custom and the uniform authority of all our historians, from William of Tyre and Matthew Paris, to Robertson and Gibbon. So firmly indeed is the orthography of this word (as well as that of Mahomet for *Muhammed*) established in our language, that a departure from it, unless perhaps in an etymological work or one specifically written on the subject of these tribes, might be thought to savour of pedantry; although in regard to many other names of places and persons less familiarly adopted, and found to vary in the writings of travellers, it may be justifiable to express them by such letters as best accord with the native pronunciation.\*

Objections to the use of the word Tartar, answered.

In answer to the latter and more consequential part of the charge, or that of having confounded the Tartars with the Moghuls, I feel myself warranted in taking a different line of defence, and questioning the validity of the objection, which seems to be founded on an arbitrary and modern appropriation of terms. It is known that the widely extend-

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\* It may be proper here to state that in adapting foreign words written by an Italian, to the powers of our own letters, I use *ch* for the Italian *c* before *e* and *i*, *j* for *g* before the same vowels, *sh* for *sc* or the French *ch*, *n* for the antiquated *m* final, as in *cham* for *kan* or *khan*, and *j* commonly for *z*, which is much affected in the Venetian dialect, particularly at the commencement of words. In all oriental words, the orthography of which is not fixed by custom, I prefer *k* to *c*, as an initial, not only as being a less ambiguous letter, but for the sake of uniformity, as every person who consults an index of the names of places, in an Asiatic publication, must perceive that one half of those which in the original

begin with the Persian or Arabic ك, are ranged under the letter C, and the other half under K, without an appearance of reason for the distinction. Nothing in this branch of literature is more to be desired than a standard of orthography, but nothing seems less likely to be established by common consent, as almost every new work diverges more widely than the preceding, from the models of Pococke, Golius, and Meninski. By one respectable modern traveller the tribe of Tartars so familiarly known to us as *Usbeks*, are named *Oosbucks*, and by another writer the name of *Akbar*, the great and liberal emperor of Hindustan, is barbarously disguised in the orthography of *Uqbur*.

## INTRODUCTION.

Objections to  
the use of the  
word Tartar,  
answered.

ed people to whom the designation of Tartars is commonly applied, are distinguished into three principal and comprehensive classes; each of them speaking a peculiar tongue. These are, first (beginning on the eastern side) the *Manchu* Tartars, who are identified with the far-spreading tribe of the *Tungusi*, and whose celebrity has arisen from their having placed a dynasty on the throne of China: secondly the *Moghuls* or *Mungals*, including *Kalkas*, *Kalmuks*, and *Burats*, whom we may consider as occupying a middle situation, whatever may have been their partial or temporary migrations: and thirdly the *Turks*, *Turki*, or original inhabitants of Turkistan, who, under the denominations of *Jagatai*, *Kapchak*, *Uzbek*, and many other, occupy generally the western portion of upper Asia.\* To this latter class, or to some of its branches, and particularly, I believe, to that which occupies the Crimea, it has become a practice, in latter times, to give exclusively the name of *Tatars*; although not only the European writers of all nations, who have recorded the history of the crusades, but likewise the Mahometans and other orientals, employ it (or Tartar) in the more extensive acceptation. By Abu'lfeda, in his "Annales Muslemici," the subjects, or those who composed the armies of *Jenghiz-khan* and his successors, are, in every instance, mentioned by the name of *Tatars*, and although the words "*Tatari* vel *Mogoli*" are found in Adler's historical index to that work, the latter, I may venture to assert, does not occur in the text: yet it will not be contended that *Jengiz* was Grand khan of *Tatars* only, or of those who spoke dialects of the *Turki* language, and not of *Moghuls*.

\* "They (the *Uzbeks*)" says Mr. Elphinstone belong to that great division of the human race which is known in Asia by the name of *Toork*, and which, with the *Moguls* and *Manshoors*, compose what we call the *Tartar* nation. Each of these divisions has its separate language, and that of the *Toorks* is widely diffused throughout the west of Asia. The *Uzbeks*, the natives of Chinese

"Tartary, as far at least as *Khoten*, and perhaps as far as *Karrakoorum*, the *Kuzzauks*, and other tribes beyond the *Jaxartes*, most of the inhabitants of *Kipchak* and *Crimea*, the *Toorcauns*, and the ruling nations of the Persian and Turkish empires, speak *Toorkee* as their vernacular language. . . . It is thought to be spoken with most purity at *Ferghauna*." Account of Caubul, p. 465.

*Moghuls*. The fair inference is, that Abu'lfeda considered the former as a general and not a specific appellation. Abu'lfaraj, on the other hand, in his "*Historia dynastiorum*," employs both terms convertibly and indiscriminately, in speaking of the same people.\*

Objections to the use of the word Tartar, answered

Those who maintain that the *Moghuls* (and of course the *Manchûs*) are not Tartars or Tatars, appear to rest the distinction chiefly on the genealogical work of Abu'lghazi, who informs us that a certain prince named *Alanza-khan*, fourth in descent from *Turk*, the son of *Japhis*, the son of *Noah*, had two sons, twins, of whom the one was called *Tatar* and the other *Mogull* or *Mung'l*; and that these twin brothers became the parents of the two races which bear their respective names. But even if a filiation so manifestly invented, and at the same time so improbable in itself, could be regarded as of any weight in establishing the propriety of restricting to one of the descendants of *Turk* or of *Alanza-khan* the appellation of *Tatar*, it would be counterbalanced, so far as the authority of this writer is concerned, by other passages in his book, where he treats of "the generations of the *Tatars* from *Mung'l-khan* to *Zingis-khan*;" and in fact although the work professes to be a genealogical history of the people so named, all the historical part, or that alone upon which any sort of reliance can be placed, is employed in recording the actions of the *Moghul* conqueror, his sons, and grandsons. Abu'lghazi, it should be observed, is an author of very modern date, having composed his book, as he acquaints us, in the year 1074, of the *hejrah*, answering to 1663 of our era, and consequently labours under a disadvantage in matters of tradition proportioned to the lapse of time.

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\* In describing the circumstances attending the surrender of the city of *Samarkand* (after a parley) to the forces of *Jengis-khan*, he uses these expressions. "Aillis sibi securitatem polliceri non ausis, etiamsi concessa foret, cum Tartarorum fratre metuerent. . . Illi ergo (sc. deputati) in urbem reversi portas aperuerunt, ingressique Mogulenses," &c. P. 29.

Objections to  
the use of the  
word Tartar,  
answered.

It may be conjectured, indeed, that the change in the application of the names was occasioned by the circumstance of the Ottomans or *Osmanlis* of Brusa and afterwards of Constantinople, but originally from Turkistan, having acquired preeminently, with the historians of Europe, the name of *Turci* or *Turks*, it became necessary, in order to avoid confusion, to distinguish the original tribes, who spoke the same language, by some other appellation, and accordingly that of Tartar, which had been given to all the hordes from the eastern ocean to the Euxine sea, was gradually confined to them; and this has the more readily taken place, because these *Turki* tribes (*Uzbeks*, *Krims*, &c.) were the only description of Tartars with whom, from their western situation, the Christian powers have had any transactions since the close of the thirteenth century; with the exception of such as have arisen out of the Russian conquest of Siberia. From these considerations it will, I think, appear that the proper and original distinction of race and language was between Moghuls and Turks of Turkistan, not between the former and Tartars, and that the charge brought against our author of an erroneous employment of the latter term (and which has also been objected to the celebrated historian of the Huns) rests only upon a modern usage, and is not applicable to the period of which we are treating.

Portraits of  
Marco Polo.  
imaginary.

It would have been highly gratifying to me as an editor, to have been enabled to accompany the work with a portrait of my author, could any well authenticated original have been discovered; but my inquiries to that effect have not been attended with success. In a modern publication at Milan, giving an account of the lives of eminent Italians, we find, it is true, an engraving that professes to be a likeness of Marco Polo. It exhibits a strongly marked character, and is executed in a manner so creditable to the artist, that I should gladly have persuaded myself of its genuineness and employed it for my purpose. It was  
necessary,

necessary, however, to investigate the authority for its pretensions, and from Signor Morelli of Venice, the correctness of whose information is unquestionable, the following history of its origin has been communicated.

Portraits of  
Marco Polo,  
imaginary.

In the year 1762, the grand hall of the Ducal Palace of that city, which had been ornamented with paintings on canvas, representing the various countries and seas, that had been the scenes of Venetian enterprise, underwent a repair. The superintendence of this operation was committed to a person named Francisco Grisellini, who stood high in reputation with his countrymen for his literary talents, but who on this occasion appears to have acted in contradiction to the principles of good sense and good taste. Instead of refreshing and restoring these venerable memorials of the ancient grandeur of the republic, he thought proper to replace them with ornamented charts of modern geography, and to add portraits of celebrated Venetian travellers and navigators, depicted from his own imagination. Amongst these the effigy of our author has a place, with the name annexed; and from thence the Milanese engraving has been copied, without any scrupulous examination of its authenticity. It is further stated by the same learned person, that there does not exist in Venice any representation of this celebrated traveller, that can lay claim to originality or antiquity; their ancestors having been indifferent to memorials of this nature, so interesting to the moderns: nor does the art of portrait-painting, he observes, date its commencement earlier than the fourteenth century. It should at the same time be noticed that we find a portrait prefixed to the second edition of the German version of the work; although not to the first. There is little probability, however, that an original painting of our author, unknown to his own countrymen, should have existed amongst foreigners, or that the professed portrait should be any other than a fabrication.

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Account of  
versions and  
editions.

It now remains to give an account of the several manuscripts and printed editions of Marco Polo's Travels that have come to my knowledge. To collate and critically compare the numerous texts would be a work of immense, if not impracticable labour, so various are the languages, and so little do they correspond in form, division, and quantity of matter, although by no means discordant in substance; but such peculiarities shall be adverted to as distinguish them from, or serve to mark their connexion with each other.

The subject of the language in which the work originally appeared, has already been discussed, and sufficient evidence has been adduced to establish the probability, at least, of its being the Venetian dialect of Italian or native tongue of the author;\* yet as the oldest existing manuscripts of which the antiquity is well ascertained, are in Latin (into which language the Venetian was translated at an early period), it shall have precedence in the enumeration, to which, on other accounts also, it has a just claim.

Latin manu-  
scripts

The first Latin translation appears to have been made about the year 1320, by a monk of the order of Preachers, named Francesco Pipino of Bologna, said to have belonged to the house of *Pepuri*, or *Pepoli*. To the performance of this task he was invited by the Superiors of his Order, in a chapter held by them in the year 1215;† which invitation or command, and the motives that led to it, are fully stated in the preface to his work, which commences in the following manner:

“ Incipit liber domini Marci Pauli de Veneciis, de divisionibus et consuetudinibus  
“ orientalium regionum. Librum prudentis honorabilis ac fidelissimū (viri) domini  
“ Marci Pauli de Veneciis, de condicionibus et consuetudinibus orientalium regio-  
“ num, ab eo in vulgari fideliter editum et conscriptum: compellor ego frater  
“ Franciscus Pipinus de Bononia, ordinis Fratrum Predicatorum a plerisque fra-  
“ tribus, patribus et dominis meis veridica et fideli translatione de vulgari ad  
“ Latinum reducere. Ut qui amplius Latino quam vulgari delectantur eloquio,  
“ necnon et hii qui propter linguarum varietatem omnimodam aut propter diversi-  
“ tatem ideomatum alterius intelligere omnino aut faciliter nequeant, aut delecta-  
“ bilius legant seu liberius capiant.... Ego autem eorum obtemperans jussioni  
“ libri ipsius continenciam fideliter et integraliter ad Latinum planum et aptum  
“ transtuli

\* P. xxxii.

† Or 1302, according to the opinion of Apostolo Zeno. In either case it was during the lifetime of our author.

“ transtuli quem stylus hujusmodi libri materia requirebat.... Liber autem iste in  
 “ tres libros dividitur, qui per propria capitula distinguuntur.” Latin manu-  
scripts.

Of this manuscript, which is without date, a few copies are preserved in the public libraries of different parts of Europe. That one which belongs to the royal Berlin library has been circumstantially noticed by Andreas Müller, who made its readings the subject of comparison with another Latin text which he republished. It is on vellum and bound up along with other tracts, which appear to him to have been all written in France, at a very early period. A second copy, upon vellum also, is in the British Museum. Its three books contain respectively, 67, 70, and 50 chapters, comprised in 45 leaves or 90 pages, and are immediately followed, in the same codex, by the work of Hayton the Armenian. The first chapter commences with the words: “ Tempore quo Balduinus princeps sceptrum  
 “ Constantinopolis imperii gubernabat, anno s. ab incarnatione Domini millesimo  
 “ cc<sup>mo</sup> lli<sup>o</sup> nobiles et honorabiles prudentesque germani inclitæ civitatis Vene-  
 “ ciarum incolæ navem propriam diversis opibus et mercimoniis oneratam com-  
 “ muni concordia in portu Veneto conscendentes, prospero vento flante, Deo duce,  
 “ Constantinopolim perrexerunt.” The work concludes with: “ Explicit liber  
 “ domini Marci Pauli de divisionibus et consuetudinibus orientalium regionum.” From an examination of the character and other *criteria*, Mr. Ellis of the British Museum, one of the Secretaries of the Society of Antiquaries, pronounces it to have been written about the year 1400. It appears also in the grand Catalogue of manuscripts belonging to the Royal library of Paris. A copy is mentioned by Philippus Tomasinus, in his account of the Paduan manuscripts, as being at that time in the library of the Canons Lateran of S. John *de près*. Another, on vellum, is in that of the house of Este (*libraria Estense*) at Milan. Another, that had belonged to Lilius Geraldus, was formerly in the Bentivoglio library at Ferrara. G. E. Lessing, who has described the treasures of the Ducal library at Wolfenbüttel,\* speaks of two copies there, of Pipino's version, besides a third Latin manuscript of the Travels, entirely distinct from it, as well as from the translation published by Grynæus. Of the former, the one is on vellum, and is conjectured by him to have been written about the middle of the fourteenth century; the ~~other~~  
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\* Zur Geschichte und Litteratur. Aus den Schätzen der Herzoglichen Bibliothek zu Wolfenbüttel. Berlin, 1793, 8vo.

Latin manu-  
scripts.

on paper, and supposed to be a century later, but preferable, he thinks, in many respects, and particularly as containing a chapter that describes the constitution of the Tartar armies (chap. xlviii. of Book I. in this edition) which is wanting in the copy on vellum. In Müller's edition also, as he observes, this chapter is wanting; but it has a place in the manuscript of Pipino in the British Museum, as well as in the printed copies of that library and of the library belonging to Trin. Coll. Dublin, and also in the Italian version of Ramusio. The omission of it by some transcribers and editors, has proceeded, I have little doubt, from its being thought too circumstantial and (erroneously I trust) uninteresting.

With regard to the third Wolfenbüttel manuscript, which Lessings pronounces to be still more recent than the second, it appears from the extracts he has furnished, to be rather an abstract or sketch of the work, than a copy from any original; and although in some few instances the proper names are more correct (or, perhaps, only more modern, as *Layas* for *Giazza* and *Acry* for *Ancon*), they are, in general, at least as much corrupted as in the preceding texts. It happens indeed that one of the examples given of additional information derived from this manuscript, is peculiarly unfortunate; namely, that the emperor *Kublai* had a brother named *Ambaga*, who ruled over the eastern Tartars; this being meant for *Abaka* or *Abaga*, the son and successor of *Hulagu*, and who was consequently, not the brother but the nephew of *Kublai*. The words with which it commences are: "Nobiles et discretus vir Dm. Marcus Paulo de Venetiis cum xxvi. annis continuis in partibus majoris Asiæ permanisset, &c." Lessings supposes this to have been one of the manuscripts employed by Ramusio in perfecting the text of his translation. An abstract of a similar nature is found in Dublin College library, many portions of which have been obligingly copied for me by the learned Dr. Barrett, the Vice Provost of the University. It begins with the words: "Nobiles duo germani, civitatis Venetiarum, Nicholaus et Matthæus, navem ascendentes, &c." and adheres more closely to the text than the manuscript described by Lessings. An anonymous Latin version, distinct from Pipino's, is also mentioned by Apostolo Zeno, from the "Scriptores Ordinis Prædicatorum" of Echard, t. i. p. 540.\*

Amongst

\* "Quanto all'altro interprete Latino, l'unica " nella cui Biblioteca degli scrittori del suo ordine  
" notizia che se ne abbia, ci viene del Padre Echard, " leggesi la prefazione di quel anonimo traduttore,  
" indiritta

Amongst the books which made their appearance in the period between the in- Latin editions.  
vention of the art of printing and the close of the fifteenth century, was one, in small quarto, containing the Latin text of Pipino's version. Of this there is a copy in the British Museum, and another in the Dublin College library. It is without date, place, or name of the printer, but in the opinion of persons conversant with early typography, it was printed in Rome or Venice between the years 1484 and 1490. It commences with the words: "In nomine domini nostri Ihsu Christi filii Dei vivi et veri Amen: Incipit prologus in libro domini Marci Pauli de Veneciis de consuetudinibus et condicionibus orientalium regionum;" and then proceeds, as in the manuscript, with: "Librum prudentis, honorabilis, ac fidelissimi viri, &c." but styling himself "ego frater Franciscus *Pepuri*," instead of Pipino. Both have the same number of books and chapters, and the texts in general run parallel, although with some occasional differences in the position of words in the Latin construction, as well as in the orthography of proper names. At the conclusion we find the words: "Explicit liber domini Marci de Veneciis. Deo gracias." The copy in the British Museum is followed by a work intitled; "Johannis de Monte villa (Mandeville) Itinerarius in partes Iherosolimitanas, et in ultiores transmarinas." In the unprinted leaf appears an accidental date of ownership, "25 Octobris 1503." The copy preserved in the library of T. C. D. is the last of a miscellaneous collection of tracts, marked Bonaventuræ Dialogus, but containing also amongst others, the travels of John de Mandeville. They are all without date, and appear to Dr. Barrett to have been printed at the same period and previously to the year 1500. At the end of the tract containing our author's travels, is written: "Iste liber constat Thomæ Hackett vicario de Work-sopp;" but the collection belonged to the library of the venerable Archbishop Ussher. From the bibliographical catalogues it appears that the book is also found in the Imperial library of Vienna, the Royal library of Paris, and in some other great collections; but that it is extremely rare may be inferred from the circumstance of its being unknown, not only to Müller, who, speaking of Pipino's manuscript,

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says:

"indiritta al Principi e gran signori del mondo, ed "ne danno più che liv." Annotazioni, p. 272. The  
"è affatto diversa da quella di *Fra Pipino*, e piu preface here spoken of is that of the *Sorenzo* ma-  
"conforme al codice *Soranzo*, anzi nel fine del terzo nuscript, from which it is likely this Latin version  
"e ultimo libro si stende sino al numero di lxxiv was made.  
"capitoli, là dove i comuni volgarizzamenti non ce

Latin editions. says :—" *Hæc ergo prima versio erat, sed nunquam typis publicis edita ;* " but also to Lessing, who tells us it is " noch ungedruckt, und nur aus den Lesarten des " *Andr. Müller bekannt ist,* " still unedited, and known to us only by the readings of Müller."\* On the subject of this edition it is proper to notice a mistake of Meuselius, who in his *Bibliotheca Historica* (Vol. i, P. ii, p. 9.) says : " *Latine Pauli nostri opus, primum, quantum scio, prodit sine loco et anno, sæculo forte decimo quarto,* " obviously for *decimo quinto*.†

The next Latin version, made with better taste and more knowledge of the language than was possessed by the monk of Bologna, is that which appears in the *Novus Orbis*, of Simon Grynæus, but which is said by Müller to have been published separately (at Basle) before the appearance of the latter work. It was probably executed by a person named Joannes Hutichius, whom Grynæus employed to prepare the matter for the *Novus Orbis*; the expence of which was defrayed by Joannes Herwagius. Its title in this collection is : " *Marci Pauli Veneti de regionibus orientalibus, libri III.* " and its first chapter commences with the words : " *Balduino principe inclyto regni Constantinopolitani sceptrā tenente, anno scilicet ab incarnatione Domini MCLXIX. duo viri nobiles et prudentes, &c.* " ‡ This celebrated collection of travels was printed at Basle and at Paris, in 1532, and again at Basle in 1537 and 1555. According to Foscarini the work was not published at Basle until five years after the appearance of the Paris edition; but this (which is improbable in itself), is disproved by the fact : for although the copy in my own possession professes to be printed at Paris, my friend Mr.

Musgrave,

\* Even the diligent and well-informed Apostolo Zeno speaks of it as known to him only from the *Annotazioni* of the Abate Salvini. P. 273.

† In the *Bibliotheca Beauclerkiana* or Sale-catalogue of the books of Topham Beauclerck's library, London 1781, P. ii, p. 15, No. 430, we find " *Jo. de Mandeville itineraria: Dom. Ludolph. de itinere ad Terram Sanctam; M. Paul. Venet. de regionibus orientalibus. Liber rariss. Zwollis 1483, 4to.* " This obviously refers to the first Latin edition, above-mentioned; but how the learned collector was enabled to ascertain the place of printing and the date, does not appear. I have in vain endeavoured to trace the purchaser or present possessor of the book. For the notice, I am indebted to Sig. Morelli.

‡ The preface is pedantic; beginning with the words : " *Præter Quintum Curtium, qui gesta conscripsit Alexandri Magni, &c.* " More to the purpose is that which follows the last chapter of Marco Polo, on the same leaf, and belongs to the History of Haithon the Armenian : " *Idem accidit Haythono quod Marco Paulo Veneto: uterque enim primo librum suum vernacula scripsit lingua, ille in Italica, iste vero in Gallica, deinde ut seculum illud nihil præter barbariem coluit, uterque infelicem et incultum nactus interpretem, rudiori stylo Latinis legendi traditi sunt, quam ut teneribus auribus simplicitas illa arridere possit. Sed veritatis simplex est oratio.* "

Musgrave, at Lisbon, gives me information of a copy in the Jesus Convent of that city, dated Basilæ, apud Io. Hervagium, anno MDCXXII. As Grynæus, the learned editor, was Greek professor at Heidelberg in 1523, it may indeed be presumed that the *Novus Orbis* was actually printed at Basle, in his vicinity, and that for the purpose of ostensible publication at Paris also, an alteration was made in the title. In the orthography of proper names this version is not more correct than the text of Pipino; the date of 1269 is stated as that of the commencement of the first journey, when in reality it was the year in which the elder Poli returned to the coast of the Mediterranean; and the chapter on the subject of constituting the Tartar armies is here omitted. The text throughout is, with very few exceptions, much less circumstantial than that of Ramusio——“*Marci Pauli Veneti Itinerarium, seu de rebus orientalibus libri iii*” (*Chronico Hierosolymitano*, t. ii.) Reineri Reineccii. Helmæstadii 1585, 4to. 1602, 4to. This is little else than a re-impression of the Basle edition in a different form; the three books containing the same number of chapters, and each beginning and ending with the same words. In a marginal note, however, the date of 1269, at the commencement, is conjectured to be a mistake for 1259——“*Marci Pauli Veneti, historici fidelissimi juxta ac præstantissimi, de Regionibus Orientalibus libri iii. Cum codice manuscripto bibliothecæ Electoralis Brandenburgicæ collati, exque eo adjectis Notis plurimum tum suppleti tum illustrati.*” Cura Andreæ Mulleri. Coloniz Brand. (Berlini) 1671, 4to. In this edition likewise, the Basil text is strictly followed, the different numeration of the chapters of the first Book being merely a typographical error in the latter. The editor, who was himself an oriental scholar, has added to his work (which contains also “*Haithoni Armeni historiam orientalem*”) some instructive, although pedantic, dissertations and elaborate indexes, and we are indebted to him for the collation of the Berlin manuscript; whilst at the same time the existence of a printed edition of the same text was unknown to him. He seems to have been unacquainted also with any other Italian version than that of Ramusio; and if in fact he had read the work, he has not availed himself of the help he might have derived from a comparison throughout with the more circumstantial text of that industrious collector.\* In the orthography of proper names his edition, likewise, is not

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\* Lessing is of opinion that Müller's knowledge of this text was only through the medium of Purchas, his translator: but in his preface, he quotes a part of the first chapter of the Italian version.



Latin editions. more correct than the earlier Latin, and in other respects also, he has done little or nothing towards clearing up obscurities, by applying to them the lights of modern knowledge. But such was not his object: what he undertook he executed in a respectable manner, and this, the latest of the Latin editions, has been deservedly held in much estimation.

Italian manuscripts.

Of Italian manuscripts, whether in the *lingua volgare* or less cultivated dialects, the one which lays claim to the first degree of antiquity, is, without question, that which in the last century was preserved in the collection of the noble Roman family of *Sorenzo*, and of which the learned Apostolo Zeno has given an account. He informs us that at the time when he composed his *Annotazioni*, or about 1750, the manuscript was at least three hundred years old, which would carry it back to something before the middle of the fifteenth century, or to a period about fifty years later than the age assigned to the Latin manuscripts that have been described. It is written in the old Venetian dialect; is divided into chapters, but not into Books; and is partially defective at the end, wanting the last short chapter on the subject of Russia, and a small part of that on the Region of Obscurity. The specimens he has given of its *prologo* or preface (supposed to have been written by *Rustigielo*), and of the commencement of the work, are curious, and will be found in the subjoined note.\* In the latter we find the name of the Podestà, who, jointly with

\* " Qui comenza il prologo del libro chiamato de  
" la iustitione del mondo." " Vui signori impera-  
" dori, duchi, marchesi, chonti, e kavalieri, e tanta  
" zente quale volete intender e chonosser le diverse  
" gienerazione de li homeni e del mondo, lezete  
" questo libro, in lo qual troverete de grandissimi  
" miracholi e diversità, de l'Armenia mazore, de  
" Persia, e de Tartaria, e de molte altre provincie,  
" secondo chomo nara, e avertamente ve chonerà,  
" chomo misier Marcho Polo zitadin de Venexia  
" queste tutte chosse, che con li suo ochi ed orecchie  
" vete ed aldi da homeni degni di fede. Si che in  
" questo quele chosse chel dito vete, meterem chomo  
" chosse vedude, e quele che lui aldi, chomo chosse  
" aldide, adcio chel nostro libro sia chonsonante ad  
" zashuno che aldirà, hover lozerà, siche ognuno li  
" dara fede; e sapiè che dal tempo che Dio chredè  
" Adagi ed Eva, qual fo el primo homo al mondo  
" fine al presente, non fo mai algun christian, sa-  
" raxino, tartaro, indian, over homo de alguna giene-

" razione, el qual chotanto tempo zerchasse le diverse  
" parte del mondo, e vedesse tante chosse, chomo  
" fexe missier Marcho Polo predito, onde el dito  
" determinò di meter tuto quello che havea visto ed  
" aldido in scrittura, adcioche la zente, che non a  
" vezudo nè sapudo, per questo libro possa saver;  
" e dicho chel dito missier Marcho Polo stete in  
" queste diverse parte e provincie ventise ani, e  
" questo per poter saver queste tal chosse, le qual  
" siando destegnudo in charzere de Zenovessi, tute  
" ste chosse feze schriver per misier Rustigielo ci-  
" tadin de Pisa, lo qual era ne la dicta prizione con  
" el dito missier Marcho Polo, e fo schrito le dite  
" chosse nel ano del nostro Signor Jesu Christo  
" mille duxento e nonanta nuove." " Nel tempo  
" de Baldoia imperador de Chonstantinopoli e dè  
" misie Ponte de Venexia, el qualle in quel tempo  
" rezeva Chonstantinopoli per nome de la duchal  
" signoria de Venexia nel ano mile duxento cin-  
" quanta, misie Nicholo Polo, el qual fo padre de  
" Marcho.

with Baldwin, governed Constantinople on the part of the Republic, and which does not elsewhere appear. Italian manuscripts.

In the library of the British Museum, amongst the Sloane manuscripts, there is one of Marco Polo, bearing the date of 1457, which may be thought an abbreviated transcript of the preceding. It contains thirty-nine folio leaves, closely written on both sides of the paper, in double columns, and is in perfect condition, but written in a hand so extremely difficult to read, that the deciphering a portion of it for my use, by a gentleman at the Museum to whom ancient characters are familiar, was attended with much trouble and some uncertainty in a few of the words.\* Many other Italian manuscript copies are known to exist in different public and private collections. That which belongs to the Accademici della Crusca, and is said to be described in some of the latter editions of their dictionary, professes to be more copious and complete than the copies used by

Ramusio ;

" Marcho, e sier Mafo Polo suo fratello, chon le  
 " lor merchadantie iera vegnudi da Venexia a  
 " Chonstantinopoli, ed era nobilissimi merchadanti  
 " e omeni de sotil inzegni, onde li vene in la dita  
 " zitade, e stando li alcuni zorni li vene in chur di  
 " voler andar nel mar mazore per dispensar le lor  
 " merchadantie e comprar molti zoiceli, e fato che  
 " iebe el pensamento se partirono da Chonstantino-  
 " poli chon una nave, ed andar nel mar mazore, ed  
 " in pochi zorni zonsse a *Soldaria* e dismontò dela  
 " nave, e stete molti zorni in quella tera, e vezando  
 " che in quella nou nera alcuna chossa per loro, de-  
 " terminò di andar piu avanti, e partisse dela dita  
 " *Soldaria* e chavalchò molte zornade, che lor non  
 " trovò chossa alguna, e finalmente li vene a cha-  
 " pitar a *Bracharchan* una zitade, la qual signori-  
 " zava una parte de Tartari, &c." It is evident  
 that the name of the prince, *Barkah-khan*, is here  
 mistaken for that of the city.

\* The following specimens of the commencement and of the concluding words will give an idea of the text of this copy. " Marco Polo, Veneto, digli  
 " Regioni Orientali. Quelli che desiderano de inten-  
 " der le meravigliose chosse de la grande armenia  
 " perssia e tartaria ed indie e diverse parte del mon-  
 " do, legerano questo libro ed intenderano quello  
 " che il nobel zitadino viuziano messer Marcho Pollo  
 " avendo zerchato tute le dite provincie vollse tute  
 " meravigliose (chosse) in quello trovate a deletto

" dei lettori in questo libro scriver, ed azo che  
 " questo libro sia delectevole e veritavolle, nuj dire-  
 " mo le chosse vezude per vezude e le aldice per le  
 " aldice, e azo chel non se perdi errore e che le  
 " chosse se dirano non sia reputade favolle, e da  
 " intender che messer Marcho Pollo fo in tute so-  
 " pradite provincie, ne mai per presente fo trovato  
 " homo Latino che in tante e ssi diverse parte del  
 " mondo fosse chomo lui, ne tanta abillita avesse di  
 " vedere ed intender ed aucho, per i processi de la  
 " vita soa pore intender ed giudicare quel nobel zi-  
 " tadino per stato de... inzegno per o che si...  
 " signori prinzipe dove el capito e fo appressi ato ne  
 " i qual diti luogi el stete anj xxv... chome per il  
 " dito messer Marcho nele prisone de Zenoa fo no-  
 " tade e sscritti nei anni del nostro Signor Ihsu  
 " Christo *mcclxxxviii*:" (for 1298). " Nel tempo  
 " che Baldouino era imperadore de Chonstantinopoli  
 " nel 1250 due nobel zitadini Veneziani, zoe messer  
 " Mafo e messer Nicolo Polo fratelli chapitono nel  
 " dito luogo de Costantinopoli con le lor marcha-  
 " dantie, e erano homeni sapientissimi et deliberono  
 " de andare con le lor merchadantie in mar mazore  
 " per guadagnare, e con quello montono sopra una  
 " nave e chapitano in *Saldadia*." " Esplizit liber  
 " *Milionis* zivis Veneziarum. Questo libro scrisse  
 " salvador paxucj del 1457. Aviazo de baruti pati on  
 " messer rabual volassero chapit. messer Polo bar-  
 " barigo."

Italian manu-  
scripts.

Ramusio; but these assertions of superiority often prove, upon examination, to be the effect of partiality to a supposed exclusive possession or discovery. Paul Colomiés, for instance, says: "M. Vossius m'a fait voir un exemplaire des voyages de M. P. Venitien, in 8vo. d'ancienne edition, contenant plusieurs particularitez, qui ne se trouvent point dans ceux que Ramnusio a mis dans son recueil." Colomesii Opera, Hamburgi 1709, 4to. p. 323. But this boasted edition could be no other than that of Pipino's version (without date), which has generally been held in little esteem, excepting for its rarity.\*

Italian edi-  
tions.

The earliest printed edition in the Italian language is that of Venice, 1496, in small 8vo. the character of which is remarkably distinct and purely Roman. The dialect is Venetian, but much more modern than that of the Sorenzo manuscript. The words of the title-page are: "Marco Polo da Veniesia de le meravegliose cose del Mondo;" and at the conclusion: "Finisse lo libro de Marco Polo da Veniesia de le meravegliose cose del mondo. Impresso in Venetia per Zoanne Baptista da Sessa Milanese del MCCCCXCVI. a dì XIII. del mese de Junio regnando lo illustrissimo Principe Augustino Barbarigo inclyto Duce di Venetia." Its division is not into Books, but chapters only, of which the last is numbered CXLIII. Immediately following the title is a preface or sort of preliminary chapter, but not included in the numeration, beginning with the words: "Incomenza el libro de le meravelose cose del mondo le quelle ho  
" trovato

\* Some brief notice of such unedited manuscripts occurs in the following passage from the *Annotazioni* of Apostolo Zeno: "Il terzo volgarizzamento è scritto in buona favella Toscana, allegato nella *Crusca* col titolo di *Storia di Marco Polo detto Milione*; e a parer del *Salviati* (Arverim. vol. i, lib. ii, cap. 12.), fu dettato l'anno 1298. Ma quest'anno sarebbe l'anno posteriore a quello in cui il Polo avea scritto il suo libro: quest' epoca dell' autore può essere, che sia passata dal testo Latino nel volgarizzamento Toscano, e abbia indotto il *Salviati* a crederlo pari di antichità al testo originale. Antico certamente, ma non di tanto, convien supporlo, non solo perchè il testo veduto dal *Salviati* presso *Domenico Mazzuoli*, detto lo *Stradino*, vien qualificato da lui per *oltre modo antico e corretto*, benchè mancante il principio e la fine; ma perchè il testo, che adducono gli Accademici nell'ultima

loro edizione, apparteneva già tempo a *Pietro del Riccio*, che ne fu il primo possessore, e vi notò sopra, che quel codice era stato scritto di mano di *Michele Ormanni* suo bisavolo da lato di madre, il quale era morto nel 1309." The reader will probably suspect with me that the extreme antiquity here boasted of, is a fallacious pretension. Foscarini also speaks of "Un Codice a penna del Sig. Marchese Poleni, ornamento dello studio Padovano, e un altro conservato nella libreria dei Padri Scalzi." *Letterat. Venez.* p. 415, n. 261. "Anche io" says Signor Morelli, in a letter to Mr. Grenville "nella mia biblioteca privata posseggo un codice scritto al principio del secolo XVI<sup>o</sup>, trascritto da altro codice manoscritto, ed esso contiene viaggi di varii, e fra casi anche questi del Polo, con buone e varie lezioni nel testo, ma con li suoi errori ancor esso."

Italian editions.

“ trovato mi Marco Polo da Venesia e maximamente in le parte de Trabesonda  
 “ erali uno homo loqual conduceva quarantamilia pernise, &c.” It then proceeds  
 to relate a very childish story of this man and his partridges, that has no connexion  
 whatever with the travels of our graye author, but is in fact the first chapter of  
 those of Friar Oderic of Portenau. Then follows this short introduction to the  
 book: “ Qui comenza el libro de Marcho Polo da Venesia como l’ando cerchan-  
 “ do tutto lo levante el mezo di e ponente e le conditione de le provincie, el suo  
 “ vivere ei soi costumi de de grado in grado. Capitolo I. Quando lo grande chan  
 “ signor de tutti li Tartari e de tutte le sue provincie e regione e regni zoe de una  
 “ gran parte del mondo hebe inteso le conditione de li christiani, monstro in lo  
 “ viso che molto li piacesse, e disse contra a li soi baroni che ello voleva mandar  
 “ uno suo messo over ambasciadore a miser lo Papa.” In this abrupt commence-  
 ment we perceive that all the matter relating to the early part of the journal of the  
 elder Polo has been omitted, and that the subject opens with their audience of the  
 Tartar emperor of China. The publication is in fact no more than a popular  
 abridgment of the work, calculated to surprise and amuse an ignorant reader,  
 whilst it had the effect of depreciating the travels in the opinion of the better in-  
 formed. As it regards the history of early typography, the edition is highly  
 curious. The copy now before me belongs to the collection of the R. H. Thomas  
 Grenville, and was, with much difficulty, procured by him from Italy, for the  
 purpose of rendering the present work, in which he has taken a friendly interest,  
 more worthy of the attention of the literary world and more creditable to its  
 author.\* It will appear in the sequel that this is not the only valuable document  
 with which his kindness has been the means of furnishing me.— The next  
 edition in the order of time has the same title, with a slight variation of ortho-  
 graphy: “ Marco Polo da Venesia de le maraveliose cose del Mondo;” (over a  
 frontispiece

\* The extreme rarity of this first Italian edition will appear from the following passage in a letter from the venerable Signor Morelli, dated Venice 26 Feb. 1817: “ Tosto che mi pervenne la richiesta di ac-  
 “ quistarli il Viaggi di Marco Polo in volgare, di Ve-  
 “ nezia 1496, in 8vo., mi sono accorto che si cerca  
 “ un libro rarissimo, il quale manca sempre anche in  
 “ questa Imperiale Biblioteca sino a questi ultimi  
 “ tempi, ne quali ho potuto collocarvelo, avendolo

“ trovato in una biblioteca di Frati soppressi. E per  
 “ verità usata ora da me ogni diligenza, ho il dispiacere  
 “ di doverle dire che il libro non si trova da ac-  
 “ quistare, ed anzi in tutta Venezia non se ne trova  
 “ altro esemplare che il suddetto. Tuttavia mi ven-  
 “ gono date speranze da alcuni che lo ricercano al-  
 “ tre volte a mia raccomandazione.” Fortunately his  
 zealous research was at length attended with success.

Italian editions.

frontispiece representing a pilgrim); and at the conclusion, the words: "Impressa la presente opera per el venerabile miser pre Batista da Farfengo, nella magnifica cita de Bressa (Brescia) a di xx December mcccc." At the back of the title we read: "Tractato delle piu maraveliose cose e delle piu notabile che si ritrovano nelle parte del mondo: *redutte e raccolte sotto breuita nel presente compendio dal strenuo miser Marco Polo Veneto, &c.*" The first chapter then begins: "Io Marco Polo Veneto havendo cerchato molte e diverse parte del mondo: ho deliberato per noticia e per declaracion de molte persone chi hano piacer de simel cosa notar quelle in questo libro: e prima come fui conditto ne la Tartaria dove signoreza el gran can. E quando lo grande Chan signor de tutti li Tartari...hebe inteso &c." This edition also is so scarce as not to be mentioned in any of the great bibliographical catalogues. The copy which I have used belongs to the collection of Mr. Roger Wilbraham, by whom it has been obligingly communicated to me. With the exception of the introductory passages, it is almost literally the same as the preceding, of 1496;\* but with more fairness professes itself to be (what the other actually is) an abbreviation or epitome, not a transcript or version of the work. In point of typography it is inferior. It equally contains one hundred and forty-four chapters.—Another edition in small 8vo., to which, being without date, its proper place cannot be strictly assigned, has for its title: "Marco Polo Venetiano. In cui si tratta le meravigliose cose del mondo per lui vedute, del costume di varii paesi, &c." After an address from the printer to the reader, in which a declaration is made of the genuineness of the edition,† it proceeds in nearly the words of that of 1496,

\* At the beginning of chap. cv, on the subject of reducing the city of *Siang-yang-fu*, after a long siege, by means of engines constructed by our Italians, we find a small immaterial diversity. In the first edition the words are: "Dapoi che lo gran chan aquista la provincia de *Mangi*, certamente la fo prisa per industria de miser Nicolo e Mafo e Marco, como vediro. Lo capitano del hoste scrisse al gran chan che la cita non se posseva pigliar: onde el se turbo molto forte." In the latter it is said, more briefly: "La cita de *Mangi* fu acquistada per industria de miser N.e M.e M. como vediro. Lo capitano de l'hoste scrisse &c." In both, the name of the province or kingdom is substituted for that of the city; yet such were the documents upon which the readers of those days

were to form an opinion of the authenticity of the work.

† "Al benigno lettore, Mathio Pagano. Io non ho voluto discreto lettore, farvi leggere il presente libro in lingua piu limata e tersa di quel che fece l'istesso Autore, si per farvi o dirle sue parole istesse procedute dalla natia favella come per non voler con altre parole forse men chiare che le sue, disturbar l'autorita di Marco Polo Venetiano, il quale nel descriver i paesi per lui veduti, e nel nararvi sinceramente la verita non hebbe eguale al suo tempo, pigliatelo per esser opra d'un tant' homo, e poi per esser novamente revisto, corretto de suoi errori espurgato, ed in miglior stampa di quanti ne siano anchora stati impressi, dato in luce."



1496, gives the story of what passed at *Trabesonda* from the travels of Odericus, and enters upon the proper subject of the book, in the same abrupt manner. At the conclusion we find: "In Venetia per Mathio Pagan, in Frezaria, al segno della "Fede." It is printed in what we call the Italic character; and belongs also to Mr. Grenville's collection. Besides these, the following editions, equally epitomes, although in different forms, have come, more or less directly, to my knowledge: Venetia 1508, fo. (according to Muselius and Stuck, but 8vo. according to Zeno); 1553, fo.: *Treviso or Trevigi*, 1590, fo. mentioned by Bergeron (*Traité des Tartares*, p. 53), and by Pinkerton, who says it is divided into one hundred and forty-six chapters, contained in fifty-seven leaves: Venetia, 1597, 8vo. per Marco Claseri: Venetia 1611, 8vo. noticed by Meuselius: a copy in the British Museum, with the title of "Marco Polo Venetiano delle Meraviglie del Mondo per lui vedute; di nuovo ristampato, Venetie e poi en Trevigi, 1267" (for 1627), small 8vo. it has the address to the reader that appears in the Venice edition without date, and begins with the spurious chapter respecting *Trabesonda*: lastly, an edition printed at Trevigi, 1672, noticed by Foscarini.

Whilst these abbreviated copies were circulating, and from time to time reprinted with all their imperfections, that valuable work, the "Raccolta di Navigationi et "Viaggi" of Ramusio (or Rannusio as the name is frequently written by his countrymen) made its appearance; in the second volume of which we find his version of our author's travels, under the title of "Viaggi di Messer Marco Polo, "gentilhuomo Venetiano." It is preceded, in the first place, by his own preface, dated in 1553, containing much useful information respecting the traveller and his work; secondly, by an "Espositione" or explanation of certain words at the commencement, that respect the political relations of Venice with Constantinople; thirdly, a "Dichiaratione" or discourse on the names of some places mentioned in the Travels, with an account of the rhubarb plant; fourthly, a table of latitudes and longitudes from Abu'lfeda; fifthly, an Index to the matter of his second volume; sixthly, an abbreviated translation into modern Italian, of the preface in the Venetian dialect, which is supposed to have been written by the person who assisted to compose the work, and is preserved in the *Soranzo* manuscript, with the date of 1298; and seventhly, a similar translation of the preface by Pipino to his Latin version, dated in 1320. This version of Ramusio is divided, as

in



Italian editions.

in the Latin copies, into three Books, which are subdivided into 55 (should be 56) 79, and 45 chapters ; the first of which contains the whole narrative of the travels (the remainder of the work professing to be descriptive), and commences with the words : " Dovete adunque sapere, che nel tempo di Balduino imperatore di Constantinopoli : dove all' hora soleva stare un Podestà di Venetia, per nome di Messer lo Dose, correndo gli anni del N. S. 1250. M. Nicolo Polo padre di M. Marco, &c."

We are not directly informed by Ramusio from what specific original he made his Italian version ; but as he was persuaded (however erroneously) of the work having been at first composed in Latin, there can be no doubt of his having used a copy in that language as the basis of his performance. He only tells us that he availed himself of the aid of several manuscripts written more than two hundred years before his time, which he describes as being much more full and correct than the editions in circulation.\* By the *Accademici della Crusca* it is indeed asserted that even his version is less full than an ancient manuscript in their possession : but had they thought proper to give the whole of their text to the public, it might perhaps be found that the merit of superior fulness belonged only to certain selected passages. Lessings is of opinion that one of the manuscripts alluded to by Ramusio was that which he particularly describes as the third of Marco Polo in the Wolfenbüttel collection. By this writer, who has shewn much acumen in his examination of several of the texts, a distinguished preference is given to the Italian of that venerable editor,† who was secretary to the council of the *Decemviri* of Venice ; and I have therefore to add the sanction of his respectable authority to the motives assigned in a former part of this Introduction (p. xxix) for making it the subject of my own translation.‡

French version.

A manuscript copy in old French, belonging to the public library of Berne in Switzerland, has been circumstantially described in the following publication :

" Catalogus

\* " Hor veduto che tante particolarità al tempo nostro di quella parte del mondo si scuoprono, del-  
" laqual ha scritto il predetto messer Marco, cosa  
" ragionevole hò giudicato, di far venir in luce il suo  
" libro col mezo di diversi esemplari scritti già più  
" di dugento anni (a mio giudicio) perfettamente cor-  
" retto, et di gran lunga, molto più fidele di quello  
" che fin hora si è letto." Prefazione, p. 2. He wrote his preface in 1553, and died in 1557.

† See p. 288, 290, &c. of his *Zweiter Beytrag*.

‡ The following are the editions of the " Naviga-  
" tion et Viaggi raccolte da Gio. Batt. Ramusio :"  
Vol. I. Venetia 1550, 1554, 1563 ed. 3, 1588 ed. 4.  
1606, \*1613 ed. 5. Vol. II. 1559, 1565 ? 1574, \*1583,  
1606. Vol. III. 1565, 1583, \*1606, 1613 ? Those  
in my own possession are marked with an asterisk,  
and that of \*1583 is the edition from which the  
translation is made.

“ *Catalogus codicum manuscriptorum Bibliothecæ Bernensis, annotationibus criticis illustratus; addita sunt Excerpta quamplurima et Præfatio, curante I.R. Sinner, Bibliothecario.*” Bernæ 1770, 8vo. T. ii. p. 419. “ *Codex membran. olim Bongarsii: nitidissime scriptus, auro et picturis ornatus. Continet versionem gallicam Itinerum variorum. Ordo autem operum iste:*” 1. ‘*Le Voyage de Marc Pol de Venise.*’ “ *Præfatio operis sic habet.*” \* “ *Totum Marci Pauli Itinerarium absolvitur, in nostro codice, capitibus 194, paginis vero 180, seu foliis 90. In fine legitur: ‘Explicit le Roumman du Grant Kaan de la grant cité de Cambalut.’ Postea hæc leguntur:*” †

i 2

If

\* “ Pour savoir la pure verité des diverses regions du monde si prenes cest livre si trouveres les grandes merveilles qui sont escriptes de la grant Ermenie et de Perse et des Tartas et de Ynde et de maintes autres provinces si comme nostre livre vous contera tout par ordre des que Messire *Marc Pol* sages et nobles cytoiens de Venise raconte pour ce que il les vit. Mais auques il y a choses que il ne vit pas mais il entendy d’ommes certains par verité. Et pour ce mettrons nous les choses veues pour veues et les entendues pour entendues, a ce que nostre livre soit vraye et veritable sans nulle mensonge. Et chascun qui ce livre orra ou lira le doye croire pour ce que toutes sont choses veritables. Car je vous fais assavoir que puisque nostre sire deaus fist Adam le premier Pere ne fu onques homme de nulle generation qui tant sceut ne cerchat des diverses parties du monde comme cestui Messire *Marc Pol* en sot. Et pour ce pensa que ce seroit grant maus se ce ne feist mettre en escript ce que il avoit veu et oy par verité. A ce que l’autre gent qui ne l’ont veu ne oy le sachent par cest livre, et si vous dis que il demoura a ce savoir en ces diverses parties bien xxvi ans. Lequel livre puis demourant en la prison de Genes fist restraire par Messire *Rusca Pysain* qui en celle ancienne prison estoit au tems qu’il couroit de Crist Mil cc et lxxxviii (tor 1298) ans de l’incarnacion.” Cap. I. “ Comment les deux Freres se partirent de Constantinoble pour encherchier du monde.” “ Il fu voirs que au temps que un Balduin fu Empereur de Constantinoble ce fu a Mil ccl. ans de Crist. Messire Nicolaus Pol qui pere Messire *Marc* estoit, et Messire *Mafé* qui frere Nicolaus estoit. Ces deux freres es-

toient en la cité de Constantinoble alé de Venise avec leur marchandise noble et sage et pour neant estoient sans faille. Ils orrent conseil entre enx et issirent daler au mar majour pour gaignier. Ils achesterent plusieurs joyaux et se partirent de Constantinoble et alerent par mer en *Soldaye*.” † “ Vêes ci le livre que Monsr. Thybault Chevalier Seigneur de Cepoy, que Dieux absoille, requist que il en eust la copie a Messire *Marc Pol* bourgeois et habitant en la cité de Venise; et le dit Sire *Marc Pol*, comme très honnorable et bien acoustumé en plusieurs regions et bien morigné, et lui desirans que ce qu’il avoit veu fust sceu par l’univers monde, et pour l’honneur et reverence de très excellent et puissant Prince Monseigneur Charles fils du Roy de France et Conte de Valois, bailla et donna au dessus dit Seigneur de Cepoy la premiere copie de son dit livre puis qu’il l’eut fait et moult lui estoit agreables, quant par si pseudomme estoit avancies et portés es nobles parties de France. De laquelle copie que ledit Messire *Thybault* Sire de Cepoy apporta en France, Messire *Jehan* qui fut son ainsné fils et qui est Sire de Cepoy après son decès, bailla la premiere copie de ce livre que onques fu faite puis que il fu aportés en royaume de France a son très chier et très redoubté Seigneur Monseigneur de Valois, et depuis en a il donué copie a ses amis qui l’en out requis. Et fu celle coppie baillé du dit Sire *Marc Pol* audit Seigneur de Cepoy quant il ala a Venise pour Monseigneur de Valois et pour Madame l’Empereris sa femme Vicair General pour euls deux en toutes les parties de l’empire de Constantinoble. Ce fut fait l’an de l’incarnation nostre Seigneur *Jhesucrist* 1307, au mois d’Aoust.”

Catherine,

French version.

If it were an unquestionable fact that M. Thybault de Cepoy, about the year 1307, received this copy from the hands of Marco Polo himself, in order to its being presented to Prince Charles of Valois, it would indeed be a singular curiosity; but the evidences, or rather the assertions of such a transaction, are not strong enough in my judgment, to countervail its obvious improbability. Whether the language of the manuscript, although old, be really so ancient as the commencement of the fourteenth century, is a point to be determined by French antiquaries; but we may ask on what grounds it can be supposed that our Venetian should have had in his possession a French copy of his own work, in which it is termed a *roumman*. It will not be contended that, instead of Italian or Latin, it was originally composed in that language, and yet we are not told, in the preface or the postscript, by whom, or under what circumstances, the translation was made.\* Its pretensions to originality are sufficiently disproved by the manuscript's containing also the travels of Sir John Mandeville and others; and upon the whole we may pronounce it, in the words of Apostolo Zeno, "*antico certamente, ma non di tanto.*" By comparing the words of its preface with the specimen of the Italian manuscript in the British Museum, distinctly dated 1457, as well as with that of the *Soranzo* manuscript, supposed to have been written about 1450, the reader will perceive a resemblance between them so striking, as to warrant the conclusion that one of them must have been translated from the other; but whether the Italian was a version from the French or *vice versa*, is a question of probabilities. Sinner remarks a similarity between the text of the Berne copy and that of Ramusio. In the orthography of proper names, the former is in general more corrupt.

From M. Langlès, who has charge of the manuscripts in the Royal Library of Paris, I received information of one which contains Marco Polo's travels, found  
in

Catherine, the granddaughter of Baldwin II. who was dispossessed in 1261 and died in 1274, married Charles of Valois, brother of Philip the Fair, King of France, and conveyed to him her hereditary rights. The Sieur Cepoy appears to have been the administrator of their ideal empire.

\* It is stated, indeed, by M. Malte-Brun, "qu'il s'en trouve dans la bibliothèque de Berne une traduction française faite en 1307, par le chevalier Theobald Cepol." Précis de la Géographie

Universelle, t. i. p. 444. But this intelligent writer appears to have assumed the probability for the fact; as the extracts furnished by Sinner do not any where assert that he translated the manuscript. The learned geographical work of M. Malte-Brun has but very lately reached my hands. Had I been so fortunate as to have become acquainted with his remarks upon the travels of Marco Polo at an earlier period, I should have derived much satisfaction from a liberal comparison of our respective ideas.

in that rich collection, written in old French, and bearing date about the year 1300; offering at the same time, in the most obliging manner (for which I take this opportunity of expressing my acknowledgments) to obtain for me every necessary facility for my becoming acquainted with its contents. Some untoward circumstances however, which I regret extremely, have prevented me from procuring a copy or any further knowledge of this interesting document, and I am therefore unable to ascertain whether it be a manuscript hitherto unknown; a duplicate of that described by Sinner, with which it agrees in such circumstances as have been mentioned to me; or, possibly (as it does not appear in the Paris Catalogue) the identical codex that, in the year 1770, belonged to the public library of Berne.

French ver-  
sion.

The earliest edition in the French language is that which was printed at Paris in the year 1556, with the title of: "*La Description géographique des provinces et villes plus fameuses de l'Inde Orientale, meurs, loix, et coustumes des habitans d'icelles, mesement de ce qui est soubz la domination du grand Cham empereur des Tartares. Par Marc Paule gentilhomme Venetien, et nouvellement reduict en vulgaire François.*" 4to. This translation appears to have been made from the Latin of the *Novus Orbis*, published at Basle and Paris in 1592, and is divided into the same number of Books and chapters, although with some mistakes in the numeration. The first chapter commences with the words: "*Lorsque Bauldoyn prince Chrestien tant fameux et renommé tenoit l'empire de Constantinople, assavoir en l'an de l'incarnation de nostre Sauveur mil deux cens soixante et neuf, deux nobles et prudens citoyens de Venise, extraictz de la noble et ancienne lignées des Paules, &c.*" The work is contained in 123 double pages, exclusively of an epistle dedicatory, a preface, and a concluding *advertissement*, in which the translator expresses his opinion that a part of the original work has been lost. The copy which I have examined belongs to the collection of Mr. Roger Wilbraham. It is also found in the British Museum, Bodleian, and other public libraries.

French edi-  
tion.

Its second appearance in French was in the Collection of "*Voyages faits principalement en Asie, par Pierre Bergeron*;" à la Haye, 1735, 4to. where it is intitled: "*Les Voiages très-curieux et fort remarquables, achevées par toute l'Asie, Tartarie, &c. commencées l'an 1252. par Marc Paul, Venitien, historien*"  
"recommandable

French editions.

“recommandable pour sa fidélité,” &c. In this publication the Latin edition of Müller, in 1671, although not mentioned in the title, is strictly followed, and a translation is also given of the valuable preface of that writer. The words with which it commences are: “L’an de Jesus Christ 1269, sous l’empire du prince Baudoin, empereur de Constantinople, deux gentilshommes de la très-illustre famille des Pauls à Venise, &c.” Upon this version Richarderie (Bibl. des Voyages) remarks: “La traduction Française du voyage de M. P. dans le recueil de Bergeron, n’est rien moins qu’élégante, et quelquefois même manque de fidélité.” The abstract of the Travels which appears in “L’Histoire générale de Voyages,” together with the notes, (T. 1x. of the Amsterdam edition), is translated from Astley’s Collection of Voyages (Vol. iv).

German editions.

We are not informed of any early manuscripts of the work in the German language or other Teutonic dialects, although it is probable that such exist; but on the other hand the proud distinction of having given to the world the first printed edition, indisputably belongs to Germany. It came from the press of F. Creussner, at Nürnberg, in the year 1477, and begins with these words in place of a title: “Hie hebt sich an das puch des edeln Ritters und landtfarers Marcho Polo. In dem er schreibt die grossen wunderlichen ding dieser welt. Sunderlichen von den grossen künigen und keysern die da herschen in den selbigen landen, und von irem volck und seiner gewonheit da selbs.” At the conclusion it is said: “Hie endet sich das puch des edeln Ritters und landtfarers Marcho Polo, das do sagt von mangerley wunder der landt und lewt, und wie er die selbigen gesehen und durch faren hat von dem auffgang piss zu dem niedergang der sunnen, Seliglich. Diss hat gedruckt Fricz Creüssner zu Nurmberg nach Cristi gepurdt Tausent vierhundert und im sibem und sibenczigte iar.” The preface is substantially the same as those which belong to the *Soranzo* manuscript and the Italian of the British Museum;\* from which circumstance, as well as from the orthogra-

phy

\* The following are specimens of the preface and first chapter of the German version: “Allen edeln und hochgeporn fursten freyen grafen rittern und knechten zu lob und ern allen edeln und reynen herczen die da willen haben zu versten die grossen wunder dieser welt, die nemen für sich und lesen das puch, dar innen ir vindt die grössen wunder und wunderliche ding und werck des almechtigen

“unsers schopffers d’welt. Als uns dan schreibt und offenbart der edel ritter herr Marcho Polo, nach dem als er mit seynen augen gesehen hat. Und auch mer andre ding die er nicht gesehen hat, abir die von erbern weysen leuten und wirdigen hern vernumen hat. Da mit unser puch gerecht und von cynen iglichen ungetroft sey. Dar umb nemet die gesehen für die gesehen, und

“die



phy of proper names throughout, (corrupt as they are) it is evident that the translation was made from an Italian rather than from a Latin original. It is described as consisting of fifty-seven leaves, in fo. printed in whole lines, without pagination, catch-words, or typographical signatures.

The copies of this first edition are rare in the highest degree. The only one distinctly pointed out by bibliographers is that which has a place in the Imperial library at Vienna, and which, during the last occupation of the Austrian capital by a French army, had been conveyed to Paris, but in consequence of ulterior events, been since restored to its former situation. The impossibility of finding a copy for sale, after much research, induced Mr. Grenville (who was desirous of procuring one, for the most liberal purpose) to apply, through his Excellency Lord Stewart, the British ambassador, for permission to have a *fac simile* of the book, in manuscript; which was graciously accorded. A letter from the Chev. Scotti states the difficulty that attended the finding a person who was well acquainted with the ancient character, and otherwise qualified to make a copy, in which the same orthography and same abbreviations should be observed, “et qui ne differât absolument “ni d’une syllabe, ni d’une virgule de ce que contenoit l’original.” The work, however, was ably and handsomely executed under the superintendence of Herr B. Kopitar, the Director of the library, and its accuracy is attested by him in the most authentic form, under the seal of the establishment.\* This curious and interesting copy reached England and was deposited in my hands, in the month of October

last;

“die gehorte für die gehorte. Aber sicher und  
“warlich ich sprich und glaub, sider Adam unser  
“ersten vater von unserm hern Jhesu Cristo be-  
“schaffen ward nye keyn man geporn ward, der in  
“dysen welt mer gesehen und gesucht hab dan  
“d’edel ritter Marcho Polo. Und dar umb das dy  
“grossen wunder und gescheft des almechtigen gotz  
“nich verswigen und verporgen pleyben, Er sie hat  
“wollen offenbarn und kunt thun aller menig, und  
“auch das schreyben und pringen zu eyner ewigen  
“gedechtnusz.” “Icy den zeyte des hochgeborn  
“hern und keyser genant Baldouino ein keyser der  
“edeln stat Constantinopel in den iaren nach Cristi  
“gepardt tawsent zweyhundert und funfzig iar Als  
“aus furn zu Venedig Nicholo Polo des vorgenan-  
“ten ritters Marcho Polo vater, und Maffeo Ni-

“cholo Polo prnder, die zwen pruder fürnem und  
“weysz man warn in allen sachen, nit minder in  
“kaufmanschacz dan in andern dingen, ausz zugen,  
“nit kaufmanschacz zu treiben, sunder allein zu  
“sehen, un fremd land zu suchen, &c.” In the  
latter part of this sentence the word *allein*, only,  
seems to be misplaced, and the sense to be, that  
they travelled *not only* for the purposes of commerce,  
but for the sake of exploring foreign countries.

\* “Apographum collatum cum prototypo, quod  
“in Bibliotheca Palatina Vindobonensi adservatur:  
“illo quidem qui descripsit, recitante ex prototypo,  
“me vero hoc apographum inspectante. Respondet  
“pagina paginae, versui versus, et syllaba syllabae.  
“Vindobonae die 29 Augusti 1817. B. Kopitar, Bib-  
“lioth. Palatinae Vindob. scriptor.” L. S.



German editions.

last; at which time the greatest part of the present edition had been printed off. It is not divided into Books, nor are the chapters numbered, but they amount to eighty-one. Its text is in general more circumstantial than that of other versions, and even, in several instances, than Ramusio's; but there are occasional indications of the translator, or a preceding copyist, having introduced words of his own, without marking the distinction; whilst at the same time there are numerous instances of omission and curtailment.\* It is not a little surprising that the existence of this German version should have escaped the research of so diligent an inquirer as Andreas Müller; which is clearly shewn by his preface.†—The

second

\* The following are amongst the passages that appear to have been interpolated. In the first chapter, where it is said, that "no persons have more ample opportunity of exploring distant countries than merchants, and especially the Venetians:" in the fourth, where *Giassa* is said "to lie between the Holy Land and *Turkey*; the greater part of the country, including *Damasco*, *Jherusalem*, *Cayer*, and *Alexandria*, being in possession of the Soldan of *Babylonia*;" and in the same chapter, that *Marcho* was by the Grand Cham of *Cathay*, created "a knight:" in the thirty-fourth, where he (or the German translator) says, in the first person, "I mean Italian miles, five of which are equal to one of ours:" and particularly at the conclusion of the last chapter, where these remarkable words are used: "I shall now say no more to you of foreign regions. Let those who are desirous of further information have recourse to that great instructor, the king of *Egypt* (*Ptolemy*), who has not only given a description of the Earth, but also of the Heavens, with their stars, and of the whole firmament."

† The text being less commonly known than that of any other version of equal importance, unless perhaps of the *Sorenzo* manuscript, the proper names shall here be given, as they occur in each chapter; which will enable the critical reader to make a comparison with the text and notes of the present edition.—Ch. I. *Soldania*, *Bochaam*, *Barcha*, *Elaw*, *Euciacha*. II. *Buchera*, *Barach*, *Alau*. III. *Ghathathal*, *Giassa*, *Cremeru*. IV. *Balghana*, *Arghon*, *Jasa*, *Achatu*. V. *Ermia*, *Lagiassa*. VI. *S. Blas*, *Gorghania*, *Navidamelech*. VII. *S. Linhart*, *Eufates*. VIII. *Momul*, *Chardi*. IX. *Baldracha*, *Barcha*, *Ghysa* (*Ku*), *Bastra*. X. *Elaw*. XI. *Tor-*

*ris*. XII. *Persia*, *Peristaur*. XIV. *Chasum*, *Chnidiistum*, *Larabo*, *Cielstam*, *Istanich*, *Zerazi*, *Sunchara*, *Timochar*. XV. *Landi* or *Laudi*, *Crechinam*, *Grezia*, *Chamandi*, *Reobarle*, *Caraunos*, *Forinosa*, *Carinos*, *Amedam-Achomat*. XVI. *Crecia* or *Grezia*, XVII. *Cobinam*, *Chunathanaym*. XVIII. *Mulettia*, *Alaudi*. XIX. *Alanchera*. XX. *Sapurghan*, *Balach*, *Tanicham*, *Schasesen*, *Balastina*, *Cultorue*. XXI. *Balastia* or *Balastina*, *Bastra*, *Cresymur*, *Belor*, *Chasor*. XXII. *Lamarthaw* (*Samarhand*), *Cagathay*. XXIII. *Charchan*. XXIV. *Camul* or *Chamul*, *Mon-guilhane*. XXV. *Chinugiatalas* or *Chuingatasal*. XXVI. *Canpion*, *Azino*, *Tanghut*, *Corothoan*, *Mechan* (*Unchan*), *An-chichius* (*Chingis*). XXVII. *Chuichan*, *Bachiuchan*, *Longiuchan*, *Alchul*, *Patighay*. XXVIII. *Carathon*, *Dalchin*, *Barcha*, *Tenghut*, *Arghacul* or *Arghaul*, *Agrighaya*, *Tanghut*, *Tendut*, *Sindraw*, *Cianchannoi*, *Cianchay*, *Orchiuch*, *Chiuchsthaan*, *Chublicham*, *Chunistaan*, *Naiam*, *Achaydu*. XXX. *Granbelu*, *Manghy*, *Transu*, *Pansu*, *Chaichui*, *Dor*. XXXI. *Chattamora*, *Chatciensu*. XXXII. *Giansu*, *Mangialan*, *Archalechmongi*, *Mungi*. XXXIII. *Tenulo*. XXXIV. *Ghanbatu*. XXXV. *Echluhay*, *Chinchin*, *Temull*. XXXVII. *Dissidiffa*, *Sidiffa*. XXXVIII. *Manghathan*, *Tebbet*. XXXIX. *Gaudi* or *Ghamdi*, *Brius*. XLI. *Charaan*, *Sentnur*, *Chachatin*. XLII. *Ardanclan*, *Ichaan*. XLIII. *Charniam*, *Vochoam*, *Neschardin*. XLIV. *Nuem* (*Mien*). XLV. *Balghana* (*Bangala*). XLVI. *Mangighu*. XLVII. *Amu*. XLVIII. *Tholoman*. XLIX. *Ginghui*. L. *Chatenau*, *Zianglu*, *Gattheyo*, *Chaam*. LI. *Tandiffa*, *Singhai*, *Chinchian*, *Chaichui*. LII. *Fachaur*, *Baiam*, *Charraghwi*, *Chorghanghui*, *Panchin*, *Chaidole*, *Triede*, *Gianbai*, *Chinehui*, *Ciangui*. LIII. *Nanninglu*, *Sniansu*, *Baiam*, *Singione*, *Quiam*. LIV. *Ziangui*, *Ghanbatu*.

second edition in the German language was printed in the year 1481, at Augsburg, in fo. likewise; not separately, but at the end of a romance or "history of Duke Leupold and his son Wilhalm, of Austria." The whole book consists of 133 leaves. On the reverse of the 74th is a portrait (wood-cut) of our author, which fills the page. At the bottom are the arms of Venice, and round the margin or border, the name and quality of the person depicted. On the first page of the 75th leaf, are the words: "Hie hebt sich an das buch des edlen ritters und landtfarers Marcho Polo; &c." This is immediately followed by a short preface, and then by the Travels, which occupy the remaining leaves. At the conclusion are the words: "Hie endet sich herczog Wilhalm von Osterreich, und das buch des edeln ritters und landtfarers Marcho Polo, das da sagt von mangerley wun-der der land und leut, &c." "Diss hat gedruckt Anthonius Sorg zu Augspurg, nach Christi gepurt tausend vier hundert und jm LXXXI jare." This information respecting a book which I have not had an opportunity of seeing, is derived from Panzers Annalen, where it is said that a complete copy is found in the "Ebnische bibliothek," and one that contains the Travels only, in the "Solgerische."

Another German version, in fo. was published at Strassburg, in 1534, by Michael Herr. This has no connexion with the preceding, but is a translation made from the Latin of the Novus Orbis, which had appeared two years before.—A version equally distinct from the others, was made from the Italian of Ramusio, by Hieron. Megiserus, and published at Altenburg in 1609, and Leipzig 1611, 8vo., with the following title: "Marcus Polus; wahrhafte Beschreibung seiner wunderlichen Reise in die Tartarey, zu den grossen Can von Chatai verrichtet. Aus

k

" dem

LV. Giansu, Warsachys, Cinghingui, Elavo (Alani). LVI. Singhui. LVII. Quisai, Chansu, Sinisu. LIX. Quinsieu. LX. Fiuanghui, Choncha, Charzen, Tinghui. LXI. India. LXII. Compangiu, Abatam, Vassamemi, Cin. LXIII. Zachon, Cianbay or Zianbai, Jawa, Schudar, Chondut, Lochay, Pentray, Maltium, Panthera, Jawa men, Bassina, Samuria, Draghuam, Jambu, Sanfur. LXIV. Naziuarau, Anegaman. LXV. Zilanohe. LXVI. Schudar, Churos, Dafur, Mabaar, Gioni, S. Thomas. LXVII. Murso, Mabur. LXVIII. Urdabag. LXIX. Larr, Abraiamin. LXX. Capperum, Mabur. LXXI. Cuman (Comar), Milibor. LXXII. Gaczurach, Channa, Kanbao, Se-mar, Resmachoram. LXXIII. Sinachoram. LXXIV. Schorra. LXXV. Madachuschar. LXXVI. Carabachar (Zanzibar), Mabur, Cesmatola, Cianbui, Muczufl. LXXVII. Bassia, Adamo (Adel). LXXVIII. Adamo (Aden), Yserr. LXXIX. Natichan. LXXX. Tartarey. LXXXI. Reyseen. It should be observed, that although the work is not in this version professedly divided into three books, the distinction is evidently marked, both at the end of the first, where the words, "An dem endt dieses puchs" occur, and also at the end of the second, where the subject changes to India.

German edi-  
tions.

“ dem Italianischen.” Thus it appears that the most modern of the German editors who published in their own language, having the choice of two versions already made, so far preferred that of Ramusio to both, as to occasion his undertaking a new translation from the Italian.\*

Portuguese  
edition.

The literature of Portugal boasts an edition so early as of the year 1502, published at Lisbon, in fo. gothic letter, by Valentim Fernandez Morano, a German of Moravia, who belonged to the household of Leonor or Eleanor, third wife of D. Manoel king of Portugal, to whom it is dedicated. In his preface he gives the reader to understand that it was translated from a copy of Marco Polo's book (if not the original itself) presented by the government of Venice to the Infante D. Henrique, when he visited that city in 1428. Along with the work of our author, he printed two others, as will appear in the following title summarily given in the “ Catalogue de Santander: ” “ Marco Paulo de Veneza das condições e “ costumes das gentes e das terras e provincias orientaes. Ho livro de Nycolao “ Veneto. O trattato da carta de huū genoves das ditas terras. Imprimido per “ Valentym Fernandez Alemaão. Em a muy nobre çidade de Lyxboa. Era de “ mil e quinhentos e dous annos. Aos quatro dias do mes de fevreyro.” In the “ Memorias de Litteratura Portugueza,” t. viii. p. 26, it is termed *obra rarissima*, of which a copy is preserved in the Royal Library.† Instead, however, of its being translated, as Fernandez presumed, directly from the original, or at least from a copy of the original, it is clearly no other than a translation from the Latin version made by Pipino of Bologna, in the year 1320, and consequently D. Henrique himself must have been deceived with regard to the rarity, although not as to the intrinsic importance of the Venetian gift, which, as we have seen, was accompanied

\* Müller, in reference to this edition, says: “ Hieronymus Megiserus ex Palco, quem Ramusius ediderat textu, Chorographiam Tartariæ fecit, “ ediditque Lipsiæ anno 1611.” This would seem to relate only to a map accompanying the work.

† The following titles to different parts of the work have been obligingly transcribed for me by Mr. Musgrave, at Lisbon. “ Começa-se a epistola “ sobre a trattadaçaõ do livro de Marco Paulo, feita “ per Valentym Fernandez escudeyro da Eccellen- “ tissima Rainha Dona Lyanor, endereçada ao se- “ renissimo e invictissimo Rey e Senhor Dom Ema-

“ nuel o Primeto, rei de Portugal e dos Algarves, “ &c.” “ Começa-se a introduçãõ em o livro de “ Marco Paulo.” “ Seguese o prologo daquelle que “ trattadou o Marco Paulo da lingua Ytaliaua em “ Latim.” This must refer to the prologue of Pipino's Latin version. “ Este livro se parte em “ tres partes, as quaes som repartidas per seus pro- “ prios capitulos.” “ Começa-se lo livro primeyro “ de Marco Paulo de Veneza, dos condições e cus- “ tumes, &c.” I have also been furnished with the heads or titles of all the chapters.

accompanied with a map. This is to be inferred, not only from the prologue given by Fernandez as that "of the person by whom the work was translated from Italian into Latin" (which Pipino tells us he did), but also from the circumstance of its three Books being divided precisely into the same number (67, 70, and 50) of chapters; as well as from the agreement in the titles of the chapters respectively. It appears likewise to be extremely probable that the version in the *Novus Orbis*, upon the history of which Grynæus has observed a mysterious silence, and which differs in phraseology rather than in matter, from the earlier Latin, was in fact a re-translation in 1532, from this Portuguese edition of 1502, which, from its supposed connexion with the maritime discoveries of that nation, had acquired great celebrity. I am not informed of any subsequent edition of the *Travels* having made its appearance in Portugal.

Portuguese  
edition

In Spanish also there is an ancient edition, of which Meuselius speaks in these exaggerated terms: "*Raritate vero ipsa rarior est versio Hispana, hoc ornata titulo:*" "*Marco Polo libro de las cosas maravillosas que vido en las partes orientales, conviene saber, en las Indias, Armenia, Arabia, Persia, e Tartaria, e del poder del Gran Can, y otras reys; con otro Tradato de Micer Poggio Florentino e trata de las mesmas tierras y islas.*" Sevilla 1520, fo. In Stuck's "*Verzeichniss*" the title of the same book is given with some variation: "*Libro del famoso (Marco) Polo Veneciano de las cosas maravillosas, &c.*" Not possessing any extracts or further description of the work, I have not the means of ascertaining with what earlier version it is connected; but in treating of the English editions, we shall find indirect evidence of its having the preface which belongs to the earliest Italian copies, and consequently of its being a translation from that language.—In the "*Epitome de la Bibliotheca oriental y occidental*" of Piñelo, appears the following imperfect notice of what is probably intended for the same work, although the dates of publication do not exactly accord: "*M. Rodrigo de Santaella, que fue Confesor de los Reys Catolicos, Arçobispo de Zaragoza, tradujo de Italiano esta Historia en Castellana, impresso 1518, fo. y 1529, fo.*" He also mentions: "*Epitome de la historia de Marco Paulo, Veneto, M.S. en 4to., estaba en la libreria del Conde de Villaumbrosa, segun Pardo Maldonado en su Catalogo; y otra con el titulo de, 'Epitome de la historia oriental,' que parece el memo.'*" P. 19. He has likewise a brief notice of a translation

Spanish edition.