

ginning of the tenth, which was first made known to Europe by the Abbé Eusebius Renaudot in 1718 under the title of *Anciennes Relations de l'Inde et de la Chine de deux Voyageurs Mahometans qui y allèrent dans le IX^{ieme} siecle de notre ère.*¹ The original from which Renaudot had translated was lost sight of, and some of his critics both in France and England went so far as to set his work down as a forgery. But the MS. was discovered some fifty years later by Deguignes in the Bibliothèque Royale;² and in 1845 a new translation and commentary by M. Reinaud appeared, in company with an impression of the Arabic text which had been lying for more than thirty years in the stores of the Government printing office at Paris.

78. The title given by Renaudot is acknowledged to be an incorrect description of the work. It is in two parts indeed, written at different times, and by different authors, but the author of the second part, Abu Zaid Hassan of Siraf on the Persian Gulf, certainly does not profess to have himself travelled in the east. He affords us the date of his predecessor's work as A.H. 237 (A.D. 851), and his own is fixed by M. Reinaud from an apparent mention of him by Masudi³ to about 916. M. Reinaud says that the narrative which forms the basis of the first part of the work is derived from Suleiman a merchant, who had made voyages to India and China, but I have not been able to discover on what grounds this opinion is founded. The introductory passages of the work are missing, so that we are without explanation by the author as to his own identity or the sources of his information. The name of Suleiman is only once mentioned; nor is there any narrative, properly speaking, to be traced throughout the composition, though the first pages, amounting to about one third of the whole, contain a tolerably coherent account of the seas and islands between Oman and China, in the course of which

¹ An English version of Renaudot's translation appeared in 1733 (see Major's *Introd. to India in the Fifteenth Century*, p. xxiii), and has been reprinted or abstracted in Pinkerton and other Collections since.

² *Mem. de l'Acad. des Insc.*, xxxii, 366; *Not. et Extraits*, i, 136 *seqq.* Deguignes himself had fancied the work to be a compilation of Renaudot's own.

³ See *Prairies d'Or*, i, 322.