

Spanish explorers a century and a half later, those names are heard of no more. In their stead we have CHINA and PEKING, HANGCHEU and CHINCHEU and CANTON. Not only are the old names forgotten, but the fact that those places had been known before, is utterly forgotten also. Gradually Jesuit missionaries went forth again from Rome. New converts were made and new vicariats constituted; but the old Franciscan churches and the Nestorianism with which they had battled had been alike swallowed up in the ocean of Paganism. In time, as we have seen, slight traces of the former existence of Christian churches came to the surface, and when Marco Polo was recalled to mind, one and another began to suspect that China and Cathay were one.

IX. CATHAY PASSING INTO CHINA.—CONCLUSION.

108. But we have been going too fast over the ground, and we must return to that dark interval of which we have spoken, between the fall of the Yuen dynasty and the first appearance of the Portuguese in the Bocca Tigris. The *name* of Cathay was not forgotten; the poets and romancers kept it in memory,¹ and the geographers gave it a prominent place on their maps. But this was not all; some flickering gleams of light came now and then from behind the veil that now hung over Eastern Asia. Such are the cursory notices of Cathay which reached Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo on his embassy to the court of Timur at Samarkand (A.D. 1403-5),² and John Schiltberger the Bavarian who

¹ E.g., the story of Mitridanes and Nathan in Boccaccio is laid in Cathay. And in the Orlando Innamorato the father of Angelica is King Galafron:

“Il qual nell’ India estrema signoreggia

Una gran terra ch’ ha nome il CATTARO,” x, 18.

² Clavijo speaks of an ambassador whom the Lord of Cathay had sent to Timur Beg, to demand the yearly tribute which was formerly paid. When Timur saw the Spaniards seated below this Cathayan ambassador, he sent orders that they should sit above him; those who came from the King of Spain, his son and friend, were not to sit below the envoy of a thief and scoundrel who was Timur’s enemy. Timur was at this time meditating the expedition against China, in entering on which he died at Otrar (17th Feb. 1405).

The Emperor of Cathay, Clavijo tells us, was called *Chuyscan*, which means “Nine Empires.” But the Zagatays (Timur’s people) called him