

in the civil strifes that accompanied the decay of Timur's dynasty, acquired the whole of Western Persia), being one day greatly pleased with the acumen shown by Barbaro in judging of a Balass ruby, called out "O, Cathayers, Cathayers! (said you not well that) three eyes have been allowed mankind, and you have got two of them, and the Franks the third!" Barbaro understood what he meant, for he had already heard the proverb (as we have now three times before<sup>1</sup>) from a certain ambassador in the service of the Khan of the Tartars of the Wolga, who had come from Cathay in 1436, and whom Barbaro had entertained in his house at Tana (or Azov) "hoping to get some jewel out of him." From this ambassador he gathered a good deal of detail about Cathay, which he gives in a later part of his work.<sup>2</sup>

113. Somewhat earlier in the century occurred the mission sent by Shah Rukh, the son of Timur, to the court of Chingtsu, the third Emperor of the Ming dynasty. Of this embassy a narrative written by Khwája Ghaiassuddin, surnamed Nakkásh or the Painter, a member of the mission, has been preserved in Abdurrazzak's History of Shah Rukh, and has been translated by M. Quatremère.<sup>3</sup> The embassy took place in A.H. 823-5 (A.D. 1420-22), and was one out of several such interchanged between the courts, of which mention is made in the same history.<sup>4</sup> It is amusing to find the Emperor of China, in a letter carried by one of his embassies, speaking of the steadfastness with which his correspondent's father, Timur, had maintained his loyalty to the Court of China.<sup>5</sup> An abstract of the narrative, with notes, will be found in the sequel.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> From Hayton (in Note XIV), Clavijo, and Conti.

<sup>2</sup> *Ramusio*, ii, ff. 106 v. and 107. See the extracts in Note XVI.

<sup>3</sup> *Notices et Extraits*, xiv, pt. i, pp. 387 seqq. There is a slightly abridged translation in *Astley's Voyages*. Quatremère is mistaken in supposing that the narrative of the Embassy is translated in *Chambers's Asiatic Miscellany*. There is only an extract containing some account of the preceding intercourse between the courts.

<sup>4</sup> See *op. cit.*, pp. 213 seqq., 216 seqq., 304-6. There seems to be some variation as to the correct date. It is not worth going into here, but a comparison of the passage where Abdurrazzak speaks of the embassy in the ordinary course of his history (p. 306) with that where he introduces the special narrative (p. 387) will show the inconsistency.

<sup>5</sup> P. 214.

<sup>6</sup> See Note XVII.