

journey. For the head of the Nile is somewhere thereabouts, and the rivers that feed it cross the route, and in winter become greatly swollen by the rains. Now, the winter there is in the time of our summer, extending from the month called by the Egyptians *Epiphi*,¹ till that called *Thoth*: and all these three months it rains with great violence, so as to give rise to a multitude of rivers, all of which discharge themselves into the Nile”² (book ii, pp. 138-140).

Cosmas then proceeds to give an account of an ancient marble throne which he had seen at Adule (then the port of Abyssinia, a little south of Massawa), with Greek inscriptions on it, of which he gives a professed transcript; but I shall not attempt to enter upon this subject, which has been treated by competent commentators³ (pp. 140-143).

3. In a later passage, speaking of the Gospel’s being preached throughout the world, he says:—

“So that I can speak with confidence of the truth of what I say, relating what I have myself seen and heard in many places that I have visited.

“Even in the Island of TAPROBANE in Further⁴ India where the Indian Sea is, there is a church of Christians with clergy and a congregation of believers, though I know not if there be any Christians further on in that direction. And such also is the case in the land called MALE, where the pepper grows.⁵ And in the place called KALLIANA⁶ there is a bishop appointed from Persia, as well as in the island which they call the Isle of Dioscoris in the same Indian Sea. The inhabitants of that island speak Greek, having been originally settled there by the Ptolemies who ruled after Alexander of Macedon. There are clergy there also, ordained and sent from Persia to minister among the people of the

¹ *Epiphi* (June 25th—July 25th) was the eleventh month of the Egyptian year, and *Thoth* (August 29th—September 28th) the first month; represented by the modern Coptic months *Ebib* and *Tut* (see *Nicolas, Chron. of Hist.*, pp. 13, 15).

² Alvise Cadamosto gives nearly the same account of the dumb barter of salt for gold as carried on by negro traders from Timbuktú and Melli with a certain people in the remote interior.

The *Sasus* of Cosmas must also have lain towards the centre of the continent and south-west from Abyssinia. This is shown by the relative position of Agau to Axum (see preceding note); by the fact that the route crossed numerous Nile feeders, apparently those which show so thickly in the map between 7° and 10° N. lat.; and again because the Adule inscription mentioned in the next paragraph of the text speaks of conquests extending *east* to the Thuriferous country, and *west* to Sasus. Cosmas indeed speaks of Sasus as not far from the Ocean. But then he supposes the ocean to cut across Africa somewhere about the equator.

³ See *Salt’s Travels*, and *De Sacy in Annales des Voyages*, xii, 350.

⁴ “Inner.”

⁵ Malabar. Compare the *Kaulam-Malé* of the *Arab Relations*.

⁶ Probably the *Kalliena* of the *Periplus*, which Lassen identifies with the still existing *Kalyáni* on the mainland near Bombay. Father Paolino indeed will have it to be a place still called *Kalyánapuri* on the banks of a river two miles north of Mangalore, but unreasonably (*Viag. alle Indie Orientali*, p. 100).