

lised laws of marriage and wise institutions; they have no king; they use no cruelties towards foreigners. They have no dyed clothes; they possess musk, and a stone which heals poisoned bites, etc., also the bezoar. Then they came to BAHĪ. This is a great city and territory, with palm trees, vines, etc. In the city are Mahomedans, Jews, Christians, Magians, and idolaters. They have a green stone which is good for the eyes, and a red stone which is good for the spleen; also excellent indigo. They travelled forty days in this territory.¹ Then they came to KALĪB, in which there is a colony of the Arabs of Yemen, who were left behind by the army of Tobba, after he had invaded the Chinese. They use the ancient Arabic language and the Himyaritic character. They worship idols, and make a drink from dates. The king pays tribute to the King of China.² After travelling for one month through their territory they came to the *Makām ul Bāb* (House or Halting-place of the Gate), in a sandy region. Here is stationed an officer of the King of China, and anyone desiring to enter China from the Turkish countries or elsewhere must ask leave here. He is entertained three days at the king's expense and is then allowed to set out. In the first parasang of the journey the travellers met with beasts loaded with necessaries for them, and then they arrived at the *Wadi ul-Makām* (Valley of the Station or Halting-place), where they had to ask leave to enter, and after abiding three days at the king's expense in that valley, which is one of the pleasantest and fairest regions of God's earth, permission was given.³ Leaving the valley and travelling for a whole day they came to the city of SINDABIL, the capital of China, and where the king's palace is. They stopped the night at a mile from the city. Setting out in the early morning, and making the best of their way for a whole day,⁴ they reached the city at sunset. It is a great city, a day's journey in length, and having sixty straight streets radiating from the

¹ This is probably the *province of Pein*, which in Marco Polo follows Khotan, and is now represented by the town and district of *Bai* between Aksu and Kucha (see p. 545 *infra*).

² The name of this country seems to be corrupt. *Tibet* is probably meant, of which Mas'udi says, "the population is in great part composed of Himyarites mixt with some descendants of Tobba," etc. (*Prairies d'Or*, i, p. 350). He also in his account of the Kings of Yemen speaks of one of them, Malkikarib, son of Tobba al Akran, who "overran various countries of the East, such as Khorasan, Tibet, China, and Sejistan" (iii, 154). *Tobba* was the hereditary title of the ancient Kings of Yemen. They seem to have been as useful to the Arabian antiquaries as the Phœnicians to ours. Samarkand was said to have been built by them, and a Himyarite inscription on one of the gates to testify thereunto (see *d'Herbelot*).

³ This part of the narrative has a kind of verisimilitude, and may be compared with that of Shah Rukh's ambassadors, who were stopt and entertained for a day or two by the Chinese officials, after which they proceeded *through the desert* to the Great Wall, provisions of all sorts being supplied to them, etc. (See the abstract in Note XVII.)

⁴ "*Per totam diem contendimus.*" I do not understand, unless it be meant that getting through the crowded population took them a whole day to move a mile?