

and one mast, and the sails are either of matting or of some miserable cloth. The ropes are of husk.<sup>1</sup>

“Moreover their mariners are few and far from good. Hence they run a multitude of risks, insomuch that they are wont to say, when any ship achieves her voyage safely and soundly, that 'tis by God's guidance, and man's skill hath little availed.

“This letter was written in MAABAR, a city of the province of SITIA in Upper India, on the 22d day of December in the year of the Lord MCCX(CII or CIII).”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Resti*. I am doubtful of the meaning of the word.

<sup>2</sup> The date in the MS. at Florence is obscure, but m.cc.x... at least is legible. Quétif, in his mention of it in *Script. Ord. Prædicatorum*, gives the date as m.ccc.xx. But this is not correctly transcribed. John left Tauris in 1291, and on his way passed thirteen months in Southern India, Hence the date is doubtless m.cc.xcii or m.cc.xciii. It is worth noting that as Marco Polo, if Rashid's statements quoted below be exact, could not have been later than 1292 in visiting Maabar on his way westward, the two Italian travellers may have met in that region.

The “Province of Sitia” is named by no other traveller that I know of. The island or peninsula of Ramisseram was, however, called *Sethu*, “The Bridge” or Causeway, from which the chiefs of the adjoining territory of Ramnad or Marawa derived their title of *Sethupati* or “Lord of the Bridge,” and perhaps this name is disguised under the form Sitia. It is possible that the same name is intended in a passage quoted by Von Hammer Purgstall from the Persian historian Wassaf, where the chiefs of Maabar are mentioned, and where they are unaccountably spoken of (without attempt at comment or explanation on the part of the editor) as “sharing the lordship of the land of *Sind*.” This may have been *سیت* or *سیتو* (*Set*, or *Setú*) misread as *سنت* or *سنتو* (*Sint* or *Sintu*); if it were not *Pandi*, misread as *Sindi*, which is equally possible.

It seems impossible to derive any distinct notion of the political state of this part of the peninsula at the end of the fourteenth century from the confused and mystified genealogies of the Tamul chronicles as exhibited by Professor Wilson and Mr. W. Taylor. Something however is to be learned from Marco Polo and his Persian contemporaries, whose statements are in remarkable agreement as to the leading facts.

Marco tells us that going sixty miles westward from Ceylon you come to the noble province of Maabar, which in his time was divided among five kings who were brothers (*the Ramusian Polo says four kings*). The chief of these, who reigned at Maabar proper, was called SENDER BANDI DAVAR; another, who reigned at Cail, was called ASCIAR (Ishwar?); the names of the others he does not state. It seems also to be implied that