

may be meant. We know that island to have been called Java by the Mahomedan navigators, as may be seen in Marco Polo, Ibn Batuta, and the Catalan Map, in which last the great island named *Jana* (for Java) seems certainly to represent Sumatra. And, curiously enough, in this map we find towards the north end of the island *Regio Feminarum*, with the effigy of a queen. Also Ida Pfeiffer, during her wanderings in Sumatra, heard that there existed round the great Lake Eier Tau, a powerful people under female rule. *Valeant quantum!*

It is worth while, however, to note what Nikitin the Russian, in the succeeding century, says about a place called Shabat or Shabait, which he heard of in India. It was a very large place on the Indian seas, two months' voyage from Dabul, one month's voyage from Ceylon, and twenty days from Pegu. It produced abundance of silk, sugar, precious stones, sandal wood and elephants. The Jews called the people of Shabait Jews, but they were in truth neither Jews, nor Mahomedans, nor Christians, but of a different religion. They did not eat with Jews or Mahomedans, and used no meat. Everything was cheap, etc. If we could identify this place, perhaps we should find the Saba of Marignolli.

Though the latitude assigned to Saba applies correctly to Java and not to Sumatra, we must remember that Marco Polo there speaks with wonder of the country's lying so far to the south that the Pole Star could not be seen. And in a very curious contemporary reference to Polo,¹ the author says of the Magellanic clouds: "In the country of the Zingi there is seen a star as big as a sack. I know a man who saw it, and he told me that it had a faint light like a piece of cloud, and is

¹ *Petri Aponensis Medici ac Philosophi Celeberrimi Conciliator*, Venice, 1521, fol. 97. This Peter, physician and astrologer, born in 1250 at Abano near Padua, was professor of medicine at the university in that city. He was twice brought up by the Inquisition on charges of sorcery, and the second time he only escaped their hands by death. He was posthumously condemned, but the magistrates objected to further proceedings, and his body was burnt in effigy only.

This curious passage was first pointed out by Zurla (quoted by *Baldello Bono*, *Il Milione*, ii, 486.) But I do not think he notices the woodcut, which is omitted in some editions. It has been thought worth copying here, as an approach at least to an autograph drawing by Marco Polo!