

This and the following chapters contain a few incidental allusions to his homeward journey through the Holy Land. Thus he speaks of the entire destruction of the Temple and of the existence of a Mosque of the Saracens upon its site; he gives a slight description of Bethlehem, with the Fountain of David, and the Cave of the Nativity, and alludes to having visited the Wilderness of the Temptation.

In one passage he quotes as the favourable testimony of an enemy, how

Machomet the accursed, in his Alcoran, in the third *Zora*, speaketh thus: O Mary, God hath purified thee and made thee holy above all women! etc.

The last extract that I shall make is from the same chapter.

Also all the philosophers and astrologers of Babylon and Egypt and Chaldea calculated that in the conjunction of Mercury with Saturn a girl should be born, who as a virgin, without knowledge of men, should bear a son in the land of Israel. And the image of this Virgin is kept in great state in a temple in Kampsay, and on the first appearance of the moon of the first month¹ (that is of February, which is the

¹ "*Prima lumina mensis primi*;" perhaps he means up to the full moon of the first month? The Chinese year commences from the new moon nearest to the middle point of Aquarius. The sun would enter Aquarius, according to the calendar in Marignolli's time, about the 28th of January, so that the Chinese first month would correspond in a partial way to February. The feast to which he alludes is the celebrated Feast of Lanterns, which is kept through the first fifteen days of the moon, but especially on the full moon. The image of which he speaks is doubtless that of the Buddhist personage whom the Chinese call *Kuanyin*, and to whom they give the name of "the Virgin" in conversing with Europeans, whilst conversely they apply the name of *Kuanyin* to the Romish images of the Virgin Mary (see *Davis's Chinese*, ii, 177).. It does not appear however, that the Feast of Lanterns is connected with the worship of *Kuanyin*. Her birth is celebrated on the 19th day of the second moon, and another feast in her honour on the 16th day of the eleventh moon (*Chine Mod.*, ii, 649, 652).