

of Ali at Meshed. From this he went to Basra, and then through Khuzistan and Luristan to Ispahan, thence to Shiraz and back to Kufa and Baghdad. After an excursion to Mosul and Diarbakr, he made the pilgrimage for a second time, and on this occasion continued to dwell at Mecca for three years. When that time had elapsed he made a voyage down the Red Sea to Yemen, through which he travelled to Aden, the singular position of which city he describes correctly, noticing its dependance for water-supply upon cisterns preserving the scanty rainfall.¹ Aden was then a place of great trade, and the residence of wealthy merchants; ships of large burden from Cambay, Tana, and all the ports of Malabar, were in its harbour.² From Aden, Ibn

¹ These cisterns, works of a colossal magnitude, had in the decay of Aden been buried in debris. During the last few years some of them have been cleared out and repaired, and they now form one of the most interesting sights of Aden.

² Aden, one of those places which nature has marked for perpetual revival, is mentioned, both by Marco Polo and by Marino Sanudo his contemporary, as the great entrepôt of that part of the Indian commerce which came westward by Egypt, but neither apparently had accurate acquaintance with the route. The former says that "Aden is the port to which the Indian ships bring all their merchandize. It is then placed on board other small vessels which ascend a river about seven days, at the end of which it is disembarked, laden on camels, and conveyed thirty days further. It then comes to the river of Alexandria, and is conveyed down to that city." Marino, after speaking of the route by the Persian Gulf, and the three ports of Hormuz, Kis, and Basra, goes on: "The fourth haven is called Ahaden, and stands on a certain little island, joining as it were to the main, in the land of the Saracens; the spices and other goods from India are landed there, loaded on camels, and so carried by a journey of nine days to a place on the river Nile called Chus, where they are put into boats and conveyed in fifteen days to Babylon (Cairo). But in the month of October and thereabouts the river rises to such an extent that the spices, etc., continue to descend the stream from Babylon, and enter a certain long canal, and so are conveyed over the two hundred miles between Babylon and Alexandria." (*Polo*, iii, c. 39; *Mar. San. Liber Fidelium Crucis*, pt. 1, c. 1.)

Here we see that Marco apparently took the Red Sea for a river, misled perhaps by the ambiguity of the Persian *Darya*. And Marino supposes, as his map also shows, Aden to be on the west side of the Red Sea, confounding it probably with *Suákin*, which was also a port of embarkation for India via Egypt, as I gather from a MS. of the fourteenth century at Florence on the pilgrimage to the tomb of St. Thomas. The *Chus* of