

Finally, the whole work was most carefully edited in the original, with a translation into French by M. Defrémery and Dr. Sanguinetti, at the expense of the Asiatic Society of Paris, in four volumes, with an admirable index of names and peculiar expressions attached (1858-59). From their French the present version of Ibn Batuta's voyage to China has been made. The plan of the Asiatic Society appears to have precluded a commentary; but a few explanatory notes have been inserted by the editors among the various readings at the end of each volume, and valuable introductions have been prefixed to the first three. In the fourth volume, which contains the whole of the traveller's history from the time of his leaving Dehli on the ill-fated embassy to China, this valuable aid is no longer given; for what reason I know not.

There can be no question, I think, as to the interest of this remarkable book. As to the character of the traveller, and the reliance to be placed on him, opinions have been somewhat various. In his own day and country he was looked upon, it would seem, as a bit of a Munchausen,¹ but so have others who little deserved it.

His French editors, Defrémery and Sanguinetti, are disposed to maintain his truthfulness, and quote with approbation M. Dozy of Leyden, who calls him "this honest traveller." Dulaurier also looks on him very favourably. Reinaud again, and Baron M'Guckin de Slane, accuse him either of natural credulity, or of an inclination to deal in marvellous stories, especially in some of his chapters on the far East; whilst Klaproth quite reviles him for the stupidity which induces him to cram his readers with rigmaroles about Mahomedan saints and spiritualists, when

¹ See in the App. to vol. iii, at p. 466, an extract from the *Prolegomena of Ibn Khaldūn*. It mentions how our traveller, having returned from his long wanderings, was admitted to the court of his native sovereign. The wonderful stories which he related of the wealth and boundless liberality of Mahomed Tughlak excited incredulity. "Those who heard him relate these stories and others of the same kind at the court, whispered to one another that they were a parcel of lies and that the narrator was an impostor." Ibn Khaldun having expressed this view to the Wazir, received a caution against over-incredulity, backed by an apothegm, which seems to have led him on reflection to think that he had been wrong in disbelieving the traveller.