

NOTE A. (SEE PAGE 407.)

ON THE VALUE OF THE INDIAN COINS MENTIONED
BY IBN BATUTA.

THOUGH I have not been able to obtain complete light on this perplexed question, I will venture a few remarks which may facilitate its solution by those who have more knowledge and better aids available, and I am the more encouraged to do so because the venerable and sagacious Elphinstone, in his remarks on the subject, has certainly been led astray by a passage in the abridgment of our traveller translated by Lee. He observes (*H. of India*, ii, 208): "In Ibn Batuta's time a western *dínár* was to an eastern as four to one, and an eastern *dínár* seems to have been one-tenth of a tankha, which, even supposing the tankha of that day to be equal to a rupee of Akber, would be only $2\frac{1}{4}d$ (*Ibn Batuta*, p. 149)."

But the fact deducible from what Ibn Batuta really says is, that what he calls the silver *dínár* of India is the *tangah* of other authors, corresponding more or less to the coin which has been called rupee (*Rúpíya*) since the days of Sher Shah (1540-45), and that this *silver* coin was equal to one-fourth of the *gold* *dínár* of the West (*Maghrib*, i.e. Western Barbary); whilst it was one-tenth of the gold coin of India, to which alone he gives the name of *Tangah*. Thus he says: "The *lak* is a sum of 100,000 [Indian silver] *dínárs*, an amount equal to 10,000 Indian gold *dínárs*" (iii, 106), with which we may compare the statement in the contemporary *Masálak-al-Absár* that the *Red Lak* was equal to 100,000 gold *Tangah*, and the *White Lak* equal to 100,000 silver *Tangah* (*Not. et Ext.*, xiii, 211-12). We may also refer to his anecdote about Sultan Mahomed's sending 40,000 *dínárs* to Shaikh Burhanuddin of Ságharj at Samarkand, which appears also in the *Masálak-al-Absár* as a present of 40,000 *Tangahs*. But the identity of Ibn Batuta's Indian silver *dínár* and the silver *Tangah* will be seen to be beyond question when this note has been read through.

The late Mr. Erskine, in his *H. of India under Baber and Humayun*, (i, 544), says that the *Tangah* under the Khiljis (the immediate predecessors of the Tughlaks on the throne of Dehli) was a *tola* in weight (i.e. the weight of the present rupee), and probably equal in value to Akbar's rupee, or about two shillings. And this we should naturally suppose to be about the value of the *Tangah* or silver *dínár* of Mahomed Tughlak, but there are statements which curiously diverge from this in contrary directions.

On the one hand, Firishta has the following passage: "Nizamood-deen Ahmed Bukhshy, surprised at the vast sums stated by historians as having been lavished by this prince (M. Tughlak), took the trouble to