

THE TRAVELS OF IBN BATUTA IN CHINA,

PRECEDED BY EXTRACTS RELATING TO BENGAL AND HIS
VOYAGE THROUGH THE ARCHIPELAGO.

HAVING sailed at last (from the Maldives) we were at sea for forty-three days, and then we arrived in Bengal. This is a country of great extent, and one in which rice is extremely abundant. Indeed I have seen no region of the earth in which provisions are so plentiful, but the climate is muggy, and people from Khorásán call it *Dúzakhast búr ni'amat*,¹ which is as much as to say, *A Hell full of good things!*

He then proceeds to give a number of details as to the cheapness of various commodities, from which we select a few:—

Mahomed ul Masmúdí the Moor, a worthy man who died in my house at Dehli, had once resided in Bengal. He told me that when he was there with his family, consisting of himself his wife and a servant, he used to buy a twelve-month's supply of food for the three of them for eight dirhems. For he bought rice in the husk at the rate of eight dirhems for eighty rothl, Dehli weight; and when he had husked it he still had fifty rothl of rice or ten kantárs.²

¹ Should be (*Pers.*) *Dúzakh ast pur-i ni'amat!* "It is a Hell full of wealth." This is much the way in which Sultan Baber speaks of India, concluding with the summary that "the chief excellence of Hindustan is that it is a large country, and has abundance of gold and silver" (p. 333), and such I fear have been the sentiments of many others from further west.

² In a passage omitted he explains that an Indian dinar was equal to