

Geographer, whose works I hold in so much esteem, the disrespectful definition which the adage quoted in my former Preface\* gives of the *vir qui docet quod non sapit*; but I feel bound to say that on this occasion M. Vivien de St. Martin has permitted himself to pronounce on a matter with which he had not made himself acquainted; for the perusal of the very first lines of the Preface (I will say nothing of the Book) would have shown him that such a notion was utterly unfounded.

In concluding these "forewords" I am probably taking leave of Marco Polo,† the companion of many pleasant and some laborious hours, whilst I have been contemplating with him ("*vôlti a levante*") that Orient in which I also had spent years not a few.

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And as the writer lingered over this conclusion, his thoughts wandered back in reverie to those many venerable libraries in which he had formerly made search for mediæval copies of the Traveller's story; and it seemed to him as if he sate in a recess of one of these with a manuscript before him which had never till then been examined with any care, and which he found with delight to contain passages that appear in no version of the Book hitherto known. It was written in clear Gothic text, and in the Old French tongue of the early 14th century. Was it possible that he had lighted on the long-

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\* See page xxix.

† Writing in Italy, perhaps I ought to write, according to too prevalent modern Italian custom, *Polo Marco*. I have already *seen*, and in the work of a writer of reputation, the Alexandrian geographer styled *Tolomeo Claudio!* and if this preposterous fashion should continue to spread, we shall in time have *Tasso Torquato*, *Jonson Ben*, Africa explored by *Park Mungo*, Asia conquered by *Lane Tamer*, Copperfield David by *Dickens Charles*, Homer Englished by *Pope Alexander*, and the Roman history done into French from the original of *Iive Tite!*