

In the spring of 1866, *Cathay and the Way Thither* appeared, and at once took the high place which it has ever since retained. In the autumn of the same year Yule's attention was momentarily turned in a very different direction by a local insurrection, followed by severe reprisals, and the bombardment of Palermo by the Italian Fleet. His sick wife was for some time under rifle as well as shell fire; but cheerfully remarking that "every bullet has its billet," she remained perfectly serene and undisturbed. It was the year of the last war with Austria, and also of the suppression of the Monastic Orders in Sicily; two events which probably helped to produce the outbreak, of which Yule contributed an account to *The Times*, and subsequently a more detailed one to the *Quarterly Review*.<sup>57</sup>

Yule had no more predilection for the Monastic Orders than most of his countrymen, but his sense of justice was shocked by the cruel incidence of the measure in many cases, and also by the harshness with which both it and the punishment of suspected insurgents was carried out. Cholera was prevalent in Italy that year, but Sicily, which had maintained stringent quarantine, entirely escaped until large bodies of troops were landed to quell the insurrection, when a devastating epidemic immediately ensued, and re-appeared in 1867. In after years, when serving on the Army Sanitary Committee at the India Office, Yule more than once quoted this experience as indicating that quarantine restrictions may, in some cases, have more value than British medical authority is usually willing to admit.

In 1867, on his return from London, Yule commenced systematic work on his long projected new edition of the *Travels of Marco Polo*. It was apparently in this year that the scheme first took definite form, but it had long been latent in his mind. The Public Libraries of Palermo afforded him much good material, whilst occasional visits to the Libraries of Venice, Florence, Paris, and London, opened other sources. But his most important channel of supply came from his very extensive private correspondence, extending to nearly all parts of Europe and many centres in Asia. His work brought him many new and valued friends, indeed too many to mention, but amongst whom, as

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<sup>57</sup> He saw a good deal of the outbreak when taking small comforts to a friend, the Commandant of the Military School, who was captured and imprisoned by the insurgents.