

also, we may add, sometimes slip in which appear to be purely Oriental, just as is apt to happen with Anglo-Indians in these days.* All this is perfectly consistent with the supposition that we have in this MS. a copy at least of the original words as written down by Rusticiano a Tuscan, from the dictation of Marco an Orientalized Venetian, in French, a language foreign to both.

But the character of the language *as French* is not its only peculiarity. There is in the style, apart from grammar or vocabulary, a rude angularity, a rough dramatism like that of oral narrative; there is a want of proportion in the style of different parts, now over curt, now diffuse and wordy, with at times even a hammering reiteration; a constant recurrence of pet colloquial phrases (in which, however, other literary works of the age partake); a frequent change in the spelling of the same proper names, even when recurring within a few lines, as if caught by ear only; a literal following to and fro of the hesitations of the narrator; a more general use of the third person in speaking of the Traveller, but an occasional lapse into the first. All these characteristics are strikingly indicative of the unrevised product of dictation, and many of them would *necessarily* disappear either in translation or in a revised copy.

Of changes in representing the same proper name, take as an example that of the Kaan of Persia whom Polo calls *Quiacatu* (Kaikhátú), but also *Acatu*, *Catu*, and the like.

As an example of the literal following of dictation take the following:—

“Let us leave Rosia, and I will tell you about the Great Sea (the Euxine), and what provinces and nations lie round about it, all in detail; and we will begin with Constantinople—First, however, I should tell you about a province, etc. . . . There is nothing more worth mentioning, so I will speak of other subjects,—but there is one thing more to tell you about Rosia that I had forgotten. . . . Now then let us speak of the Great Sea as I was about to do. To be sure many merchants and others have

* As examples of such Orientalisms: *Bonus*, “ebony,” and *calamanz*, “pencases,” seem to represent the Persian *abnús* and *kalamdàn*; the dead are mourned by *les mères et les Araines*, the *Harems*; in speaking of the land of the Ismaelites or Assassins, called *Mulhete*, *i.e.* the Arabic *Muláhidah*, “Heretics,” he explains this term as meaning “des *Aram*” (*Harám*, “the reprobate”). Speaking of the Viceroy of Chinese Provinces, we are told that they rendered their accounts yearly to the *Safators* of the Great Kaan. This is certainly an Oriental word. Sir H. Rawlinson has suggested that it stands for *dafátir* (“registers or public books”), pl. of *daftar*. This seems probable, and in that case the true reading may have been *dafators*.