

CHINA in all its wealth and vastness, its mighty rivers, its huge cities, its rich manufactures, its swarming population, the inconceivably vast fleets that quickened its seas and its inland waters; to tell us of the nations on its borders with all their eccentricities of manners and worship; of TIBET with its sordid devotees; of BURMA with its golden pagodas and their tinkling crowns; of LAOS, of SIAM, of COCHIN CHINA, of JAPAN, the Eastern Thule, with its rosy pearls and golden-roofed palaces; the first to speak of that Museum of Beauty and Wonder, still so imperfectly ransacked, the INDIAN ARCHIPELAGO, source of those aromatics then so highly prized and whose origin was so dark; of JAVA the Pearl of Islands; of SUMATRA with its many kings, its strange costly products, and its cannibal races; of the naked savages of NICOBAR and ANDAMAN; of CEYLON the Isle of Gems with its Sacred Mountain and its Tomb of Adam; of INDIA THE GREAT, not as a dream-land of Alexandrian fables, but as a country seen and partially explored, with its virtuous Brahmans, its obscene ascetics, its diamonds and the strange tales of their acquisition, its sea-beds of pearl, and its powerful sun; the first in mediæval times to give any distinct account of the secluded Christian Empire of ABYSSINIA, and the semi-Christian Island of SOCOTRA; to speak, though indeed dimly, of ZANGIBAR with its negroes and its ivory, and of the vast and distant MADAGASCAR, bordering on the Dark Ocean of the South, with its Ruc and other monstrosities; and, in a remotely opposite region, of SIBERIA and the ARCTIC OCEAN, of dog-sledges, white bears, and reindeer-riding Tunguses.

That all this rich catalogue of discoveries should belong to the revelations of one Man and one Book is surely ample ground enough to account for and to justify the Author's high place in the roll of Fame, and there can be no need to exaggerate his greatness, or to invest him with imaginary attributes.\*

68. What manner of man was Ser Marco? It is a question hard to answer. Some critics cry out against personal detail in books of Travel; but as regards him who would not welcome a little more egotism! In his Book impersonality is carried to excess; and we are often

His personal  
attributes  
seen but  
dimly.

\* "C'est diminuer l'expression d'un éloge que de l'exagérer." (*Humboldt, Examen*, III. 13.)